

PROJECT

Nicholson Marsh



BC PEACE COUNTRY 19 km northeast of Fort St. John.



Eared Grebe

COMMON WILDLIFE

- Trumpeter Swans
- Mallard
- Black Bear
- Moose
- American Wigeon
- Blue-Winged Teal
- Canada Goose
- Ring-Necked Duck
- Ruddy Duck
- Eared Grebes
- American Coot
- Cinnamon Teal

Highlights

The Nicholson project consists of 17 hectares of shoreline wetlands along Cecil Lake, and approximately 80 hectares of treed parkland and uplands under annual cultivation for cereal production.

It is surrounded by other Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) projects and lands held by long-term conservation partners, helping to consolidate a contiguous habitat area of 4 quarter sections around the regionally-significant wetland habitats of Cecil Lake.

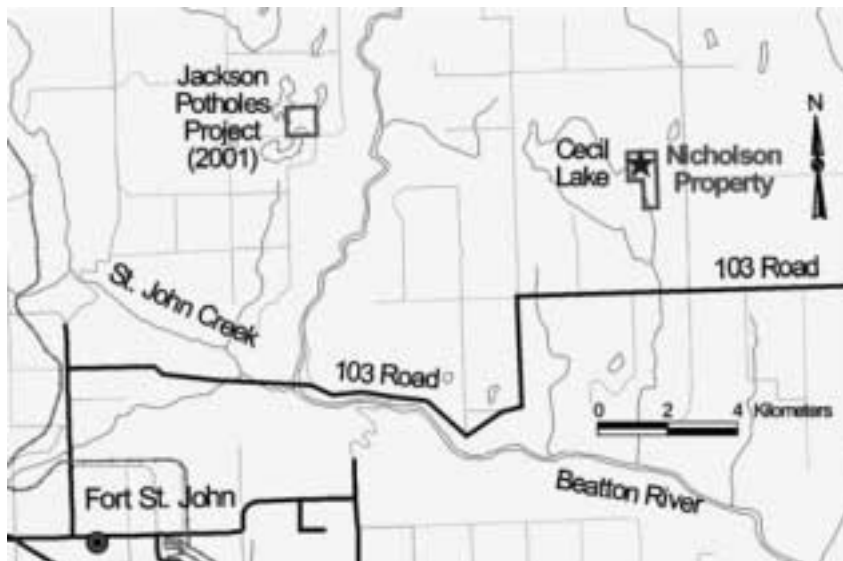
This land acquisition provides an opportunity to improve upland nest cover, one of the priorities of DUC and other BC Prairie Care partners.



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Ducks Unlimited Canada conserves, restores and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people.

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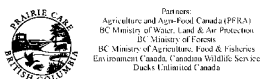
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Background

The Nicholson project lies along the eastern shoreline of Cecil Lake, a regionally-significant waterfowl staging area in both spring and fall. It is also a major dispersal area for pairs which breed in the smaller ponds and marshes of the region, and a late summer marshalling area for local broods. Cecil Lake has been recognized as an 'Important Bird Area of Canada' by the Canadian Nature Federation and Bird Studies Canada. According to the IBA website, "Cecil Lake supports nationally significant numbers of breeding Eared Grebes. Based on most estimates, there were thought to be 1,000 breeding pairs of Eared Grebes at Cecil Lake throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. This represents over 1% of the Canadian population. At least two pairs of nesting Trumpeter Swans are found on the lake each year, along with many ducks, geese, coots and other waterbirds. During years of low water levels the exposed organic soil attracts thousands of shorebirds."

The Nicholson Project land purchase complements other land reserves and DUC projects around Cecil Lake. Three other quarter sections adjacent to the lake are Crown Land, and are managed as wildlife reserves by the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection (WLAP). In the late 1970's, DUC constructed approximately 130 nesting islands and 13 satellite ponds in the marshes of the lake, and though many islands have eroded and many ponds grown-over, they still provide some habitat values. In addition, DUC and the local Wildlife Branch jointly operate a waterfowl feeding station on the west side of the lake.

The current project involved the acquisition of a key shoreline property, of which DUC holds title. The land consists of a mix of natural aspen parkland, areas of regrowth, and agricultural fields cultivated annually for cereal production. DUC has converted cultivated areas to perennial grasses to improve year-round ground cover for wildlife. These areas may, on some years, be rented to a local farmer for the use and management of the hay crop.



THIS PROJECT IS THE RESULT OF COOPERATIVE EFFORTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:

- BC Habitat Conservation Trust Fund
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (PFRA)
- BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection



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Ducks Unlimited Canada, founded in 1938, is a private nonprofit charitable organization dedicated to the conservation of wetlands for the benefit of North America's waterfowl, wildlife and people.