

DUCKS UNLIMITED CANADA

PROJECT

Patterson Marsh



BC PEACE COUNTRY Located 25 kilometres north of Dawson Creek.



Northern Pintail

COMMON WILDLIFE

Trumpeter Swans
Mallard
Northern Pintail
American Wigeon
Red-Tailed Hawk
Moose
Blue-Winged Teal
Mule & White-Tailed Deer
Canada Goose
Red-Necked Grebe
Nelson's Sharp
Tailed Sparrow

Highlights

The Patterson Project consists of 259 hectares of wetlands, aspen bluffs and extensive grasslands currently managed as livestock pasture.

The wetland, although partially drained, is the only large remaining wetland in the Doe River Valley north of Dawson Creek, and its acquisition represents an opportunity to restore a high priority wetland, adjacent pasturelands and native cover. Ducks Unlimited Canada and its partners have been interested in this wetland area for 25 years, and purchased the adjacent forested property in 2001 to supplement this habitat complex.

Many of the wildlife-friendly agricultural practices and wetland restoration techniques promoted through the BC Prairie Care Program are featured at this project, and because it is easily accessible, it has high potential as a demonstration site.



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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.

Patterson Marsh



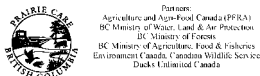
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Background

The Patterson Project wetland has two adjoining basins: a southern part which has been almost totally drained, and a northern part which is maintained by an active beaver population. The rest of the land is upland or shallow ephemeral wetlands. Before it was partially drained, this wetland was a very productive waterfowl breeding site and was also used by thousands of northern pintail during migration. Although little nesting activity had occurred in the southern basin since its drainage, the northern basin consistently supports many dabbling duck pairs, geese, grebes, and coots and is used by up to 100 swans during spring migration.

All of the uplands and most of the wetlands in this landscape of rolling hills and pothole basins have been used for livestock grazing for many decades or converted to annual cereal production, all of which have been detrimental to local nesting waterfowl populations.

The DUC project consisted of the land purchase, in partnership with the BC Habitat Conservation Trust Fund, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (PFRA). Improvements in this project involved the construction of a dam and control structure on the southern wetland to impede drainage and restore water levels, the construction of fencing to keep cattle from sensitive habitats such as wetland edges, and the development of a management strategy to restore upland habitats to provide adequate ground nesting cover. Parts of this project in natural parkland cover will be left in their current state. Some pastureland will eventually be planted in dense nesting cover and left for wildlife use. The previous landowner is currently grazing livestock on the property via a license agreement stipulating specific stewardship practices such as the provision of alternative livestock watering sources, and rotational grazing systems to regulate the time livestock spend in specific fields to allow the rejuvenation of degraded sites.



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)
- Leonard and Connie Patterson



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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.