

Ducks Unlimited Canada – Manitoba
Conservation Programs



Natural Partners

Ducks Unlimited Canada & Farmers



Ducks Unlimited
Canada

Allow us to **reintroduce ourselves...**

Ducks Unlimited Canada has been part of the nation's conservation culture for a long time – 80 years, in fact. Over time, we've changed and grown.

Our non-profit was created by hunters who struggled to save the pastime they loved from the Dust Bowl drought of the 1930s, but has evolved into a science-based organization dedicated to conservation and the environment.

We conduct scientific research, deliver public education and help shape wetland protection policy. But one element of our success hasn't changed – the passion of our staff and volunteers. That includes our conservation programs specialists. They deliver programs that offer landowners like you financial incentives to help us reach our goal.

That goal is to restore and protect wetland and upland habitat for the benefit of waterfowl, wildlife and people – including farmers, ranchers and other landowners. **We can't rescue our wetlands, and the wildlife habitat they provide, without you.**

DUC offers a variety of incentive programs that keep your land productive while conserving nature.

Wetland Benefits



- + **Hold water on the landscape** and release it gradually, reducing impacts of downstream flooding, nutrient runoff and erosion
- + **Provide forage and water** for livestock during drought
- + **Improve water quality**
- + **Provide habitat** for waterfowl and other wildlife
- + **Recreation**, such as hunting, fishing and canoeing
- + **Wetlands include sloughs and ponds**



Why is DUC interested in conservation work on my land?

You and your land are important.

Southwest Manitoba is part of the Prairie Pothole Region, named after the shallow wetlands that dot the landscape. The Prairie Pothole Region is among the best waterfowl breeding areas on the planet. It's home to more than 600 species of plants and animals, including more than 50 that are at risk.

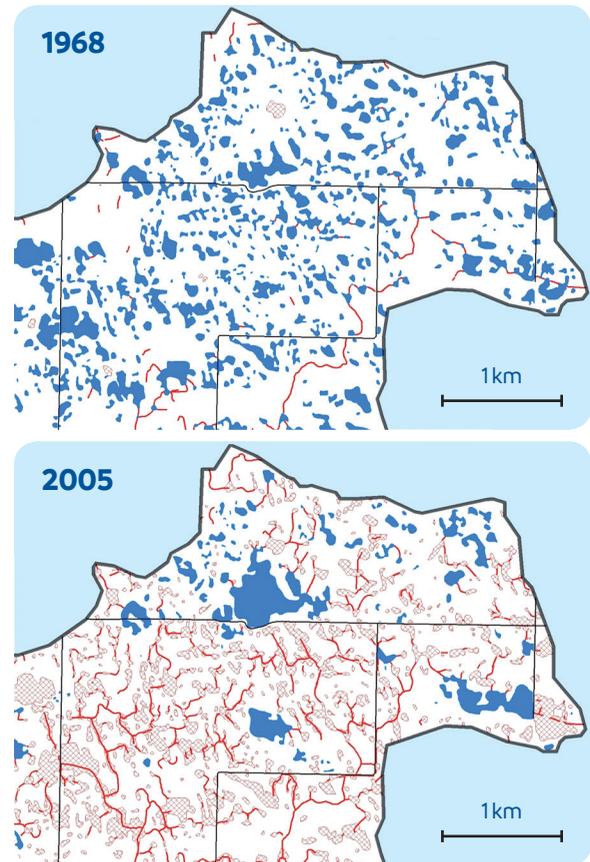
Wetland drainage contributes to a decline in water quality downstream, damage to private and municipal infrastructure, flooded farmland and loss of wildlife habitat.

The good news is that – with your help – wetlands can be restored and protected.

Research shows that up to 70% of wetlands in the province's farmlands have been lost or degraded, and pressure to drain them remains. Manitoba continues to lose 3.6 hectares (nine acres) – or about 4.5 CFL football fields – per day.

Broughton's Creek

Ducks Unlimited Canada partnered with the University of Guelph and Texas A&M University to study wetland drainage in this watershed north of Brandon. The study found wetland loss during a 37-year period had dramatically increased water flows downstream, boosted nitrogen and phosphorus levels in the stream, released 34,000 tonnes of climate-changing carbon and reduced waterfowl production by 28 per cent.



The maps above compare a portion of the Broughton's Creek watershed in 1968 and 2005. Blue areas represent wetlands, red cross-hatching indicates drained wetlands, and red lines show drainage ditches.





80 years of experience at work

*We know you work hard.
Let us work with you.*

Ducks Unlimited Canada has partnered with farmers, ranchers and landowners since 1938 as they've built their businesses, supported their families and served as stewards of the land.

We have the knowledge and programs to help your farm be successful and sustainable. When you work with DUC, you work with a team of biologists, agronomists and researchers supported by donors and volunteers.

Conservation has been our business for eight decades. More than 3,000 landowners have partnered with DUC in Manitoba.

Our programs provide a variety of incentives for eligible producers and landowners in target areas identified as high-quality waterfowl habitat:

- + **Conservation Agreements**
- + **Wetland Restoration**
- + **Revolving Land Conservation Program**
- + **Forage & Hay**
- + **Grazing Clubs**
- + **Winter Wheat**

Call our Brandon Field Office at 204-729-3500, or email du_brandon@ducks.ca to learn more about how our programs can benefit you.



Leave a legacy that lasts

Conservation Agreements

For some, a wetland is a place where memories live. Perhaps these natural areas are where they played as a child, or learned to hunt with a parent, or spent quiet hours away from work.

Producers who have a strong connection to their land can protect those memories in perpetuity with a **Conservation Agreement**. Under the agreement, landowners maintain ownership while agreeing to keep wildlife habitat intact. Wetlands may also be restored as part of the agreement.

Landowners who sign an agreement receive a one-time lump sum payment. Payment depends on the property and is based on fair market value.

While you can graze and hay without restriction, any wetland and upland areas that form part of the agreement can't be broken or drained (with the exception of "occasionally cultivated wetlands", which can be broken during dry periods).

Land for a Conservation Agreement may also be donated to DUC. Please contact a DUC representative to learn more.

Receive payment, retain ownership

- + Landowners choose what natural areas to include.
- + Landowners receive a one-time, lump sum payment.
- + Size of payments are based on land appraisals and vary between agreements.
- + Payments have increased over time with the price of land.
- + Donating or partially donating a parcel of land for a Conservation Agreement can bring significant tax benefits.



Example of a **Conservation Agreement**

(Highlighted areas represent acres included within an agreement.)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p> Existing ditch</p> <p> Ditch plug</p> <p>Conservation Lands</p> <p> Wetland (occasionally cultivated)
Haying/grazing permitted. Basins can be cultivated when dry. Cannot be filled or drained.</p> | <p> Wetland (no break/no drain)
Haying/grazing permitted. Cannot be drained, cultivated or filled in.</p> <p> Restored wetland (occasionally cultivated) – Haying/grazing permitted. Basins can be cultivated when dry. Cannot be filled or drained.</p> <p> Restored wetland (no break/no drain)
Haying/grazing permitted. Cannot be drained, cultivated or filled in.</p> | <p> Upland native/natural pasture
Haying/grazing permitted. Grass area cannot be cultivated.</p> <p> Upland tame grass pasture
Haying/grazing permitted. Grass area can be cultivated every 10 years for rejuvenation.</p> |
|---|--|--|

It pays to restore wetlands



Wetland Restoration

Running a farm is hard work, but with DUC's wetland restoration program we do the work and you get a cheque.

Under our 10-year restoration agreement program, we'll restore partially- or fully-drained wetlands, at our labour and expense. We also cover expenses such as surveying costs and legal fees.

Landowners receive an incentive payment for wetland restoration. In exchange, they agree not to drain the wetland on their property for 10 years (when the agreement expires, regulations or legislation that restricts wetland drainage still apply).

During the term of the agreement, wetlands and restored wetlands can be hayed and grazed. Restored "occasionally cultivated wetlands" may be worked during dry periods.

Wetland restoration can also be part of a conservation agreement or forage program.



Above: A wetland is restored by blocking the drainage ditch with an earthen plug.

Protecting wildlife habitat, supporting agriculture

DUC is finding new ways to work with farmers, and our latest program keeps land in the hands of local producers.

Through the **Revolving Land Conservation Program**, DUC buys land, restores its wetlands and uplands, then sells it back to farmers with a conservation agreement on the title. The proceeds from the sale provide DUC with funds to buy additional property to restore, and the cycle of conservation continues.

For farmers, it's a chance to acquire affordable land close to home.

While the wetland area is being restored — before it's resold — the cropland is rented to nearby farmers. That keeps the land in agricultural production and weed-free.

The Revolving Land Conservation Program is an alternative to DUC buying and keeping lands. Under this program, habitats can be protected and lands are returned to agriculture.

Arable acres on RLCP lands are available for producers to rent. Tenders close on March 20 of each year. Please contact us for more information.



"I found DUC very easy to work with. The process was straightforward and simple. I'm really happy with the way things worked out."

— **Wade Unrau**
southwest
Manitoba
farmer





Beef up your cattle business

DUC Forage Program

Get paid to seed forages on your land! DUC has once again teamed up with Proven® Seed to offer ranchers another reason to seed perennial forages. Landowners receive an average of \$8,000 toward their establishment costs. Producers may select either a 10- or 15-year agreement term.

This is yet another way that DUC and landowners can benefit by working together – cows and ducks both need the same two resources: grass and water. Quality forage helps to keep cattle healthy and allows producers to boost productivity and profit, while providing wildlife habitat, particularly for nesting waterfowl.

DUC Grazing Clubs

For almost 20 years, grazing clubs have brought livestock producers together to find ways to make their farms more profitable. Clubs bring in high-profile experts to speak on topics such as soil health, cover crops, financial planning and grazing manage-

ment, just to name a few. Internationally acclaimed speakers have included Gabe Brown, Dr. Allen Williams and Ian Mitchell-Innes.

Grazing club members visit local farms that have successfully increased their profits with innovation. Recent tours have included the farms of local leaders like Clayton Robbins, Ryan Boyd and Brian Harper. These farmers show how they've incorporated high-sugar crops, cover crops, mob grazing and many other practices to increase profitability on their farm.

New members are always welcome.

DUC Hay Tender Program

DUC has lands for haying. About 5,000 acres of forage is available each year through a public tender. Properties are posted at ducks.ca each June, and look for cards with more information at your local post office. Haying may begin after July 15.

Winter Wheat



Boost profits as you provide habitat

DUC wants you to be more profitable while your land provides important habitat for waterfowl and other game birds. The best way to do that on your cropped acres is by growing winter wheat.

Winter wheat has excellent yield potential and return on investment, making it one of the most profitable crops you can grow in Manitoba. Winter wheat fits well into crop rotations as the weed and disease control it provides increases yield in crops that follow.

Is excess moisture an issue on your land? Winter wheat uses excess moisture in the fall and early spring when other crops are not growing. And during wet springs when you can't get on your land to seed spring crops, it's nice to know you've already planted winter wheat.

New high-yield varieties such as Wildfire are available, and variants with improved disease tolerance and protein content are introduced each year. Agronomists are available to offer producers support for winter wheat growers in Western Canada.

DUC has directly funded winter wheat research for more than two decades. We currently partner with Bayer and Richardson International Ltd. on the Western Winter Wheat Initiative. Learn more at growwinterheat.ca



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ducks.ca

