

Ducks Unlimited Canada—Manitoba

# Landowner PROGRAMS & INCENTIVES



Ducks Unlimited  
Canada



# Farm LESS | Earn MORE



Winter wheat harvest on a farm partnering with DUC near Sandy Lake MB

## Science and Soil

We help to make your farm more profitable and more sustainable, with DUC programs backed by scientific research and on-farm testing.



Funded by the North American Wetlands Conservation Council (NAWCA), we restore and protect habitat that benefits waterfowl and wildlife. Those same wetlands and grasslands are critical for sustainable farming.

When we share a vision for the land, everyone wins.

### Drained Basins Don't Pay

Researchers found in 2020 that wetland basins drained for crop production return an average of \$55/acre, compared to \$203/acre average profit for non-wetland areas. In many cases, drained basins produce a loss that is overlooked when reviewing profits at the field or farm level.

### Pollinator Benefits

More wetlands on your property will increase the number of pollinators, which means better crop pollination and higher yields. Research shows that wetlands are home to nearly 100 species of insects which benefit pollination.

### Pest Management

Pollinators and insects found in wetlands can destroy common pests in croplands - flea beetles in canola, for example. A diverse farmscape can suppress destructive pests, reduce the need for pesticides and increase returns.

### Flood Mitigation

Wetlands ease flooding by holding water. When wetlands are drained, more precipitation and water from melting snowpacks run off into local creeks and rivers. This makes water levels even higher in flood years, with increased erosion and property damage.

### Empty Dugouts, Parched Crops

Draining wetlands lowers the water table, which can cause reduced levels in dugouts and less sub-surface soil moisture reaching crops. If you leave the water table intact, soil water moves upward during the winter, increasing availability for annual crop production.

### Nutrient Loading

A 2008 DUC study in Manitoba determined that restoring drained wetlands can reduce nitrogen and phosphorus running off farm fields into creeks, rivers and lakes. The Broughton's Creek watershed experienced a 30 percent increase in nutrient loading over 40 years due to wetland loss. Nutrient runoff means farmers pay more to reapply.

### Improve Marginal Areas

A five-year study shows perennial forages can effectively manage kochia and foxtail barley, while also mitigating saline issues in marginal areas.

### Beat the Heat

Wetlands can cool the air temperature by up to three degrees Celsius in summer. This helps crops prone to heat stress, including canola, which becomes increasingly important as the growing season in western Canada is impacted by global climate change.



Science shows that wetlands provide important eco-diversity that helps crops and cattle flourish



# OPTIONS for every farm

## Grasslands (Tame)

Get paid to protect for 10 years or longer. Continue haying and grazing. [Pg 5-6](#)

## Restore Wetlands

Receive incentives to restore drained ponds. DUC covers all project costs. [Pg 7](#)

## Marginal Areas

Battle salinity and weedy areas with DUC's custom forage mixes and agronomics. [Pg 10](#)

## Winter Wheat

DUC provides funding to seed, plus marketing assistance and on-farm advice. [Pg 11](#)

## Grazing Clubs

Learn from other area cattle producers. Free to join. Speakers and farm tours. [Pg 12](#)

## Improve Rangelands

Incentives to increase pasture productivity, plus field maps and grazing tips. [Pg 11](#)

## Seed Forage

Seed grass and DUC will help pay establishment costs. Custom seed mix available. [Pg 10](#)

## Conserve Wetlands

Preserve natural ponds and get compensation based on market land values. [Pg 5-6](#)

## Buy and Sell Land

DUC pays market value for duck-friendly land, conserving and selling back to farmers. [Pg 8](#)

## Grasslands (Native)

Preserve unbroken prairie grass areas while still haying and grazing. [Pg 5-6](#)





Early morning at a DUC conservation area near Rapid City MB

## Conservation Agreements

Wetlands are places where memories are made. Perhaps you remember playing among the cattails with your friends, or learning to hunt with your parents, or skating on a frozen pond with your own children.

Protect those memories by protecting the land.

A Conservation Agreement is a legal tool that allows landowners to protect natural areas on a piece of property. You maintain ownership and receive a one-time payment from DUC based on market value. The average landowner payment last year was \$98,000.

While you can graze or hay without restriction, a Conservation Agreement prevents the breaking or draining of wetlands or uplands, in perpetuity. The exception is “occasionally cultivated wetlands”, which can be broken during dry periods. Tame uplands can be cultivated for rejuvenation once every 10 years.

DUC has Conservation Agreements with hundreds of Manitoba landowners, covering thousands of acres. Preserve natural areas. Conserve wildlife habitat. Protect your land and your memories, forever.

## You Choose What to Conserve

A DUC Conservation Agreement works with your land management plan to protect important habitat. You decide what's in.

DUC will pay incentives based on the market value of the land being conserved. The average one-time payment is \$98,000. Donating land to DUC in your will is another option, with significant tax benefits.

### Drained Wetlands

Restore drained ponds to natural water levels; incentives increase for longer term protection.

### Grasslands (Native)

Protect in perpetuity from cultivating or breaking but still graze and hay.

### Ponds and Sloughs

Preserve natural ponds in perpetuity and retain the option to seed ponds in dry years.

### Grasslands (Tame)

Cultivate at 10 year intervals to guard against weeds, plus graze and hay annually.







DUC wetland restorations typically involve a small earthen plug.

## Wetland Restoration

Simply, we restore natural occurring water levels on drained or altered wetlands. Landowners can hay and graze the restored wetlands during the term of the agreement but cannot drain the land.

Sign a 10-year restoration agreement and receive up to \$2,000 per acre. Get up to \$4,000 per acre with a perpetual agreement. We cover all project-related expenses including surveying and construction.

Wetland restoration can also be part of a conservation agreement or forage program. It all starts by discussing a shared vision of the land with a DUC representative.

## GROW Shallow Wetlands Incentive Program (SWIP)

Protect smaller wetlands which only hold water at certain times of the year and you may qualify for annual payments based on the property value or rental rate. Call us to talk about options.

SWIP is a 10-year term and can be combined with both DUC wetland restoration agreements (10 year or perpetual) and with DUC's forage program. And, you can still cultivate in dry years.

DUC funds SWIP, which is delivered by the Assiniboine West, Central Assiniboine, Souris River, and Pembina Valley watershed districts.

## Land Sales - Revolving Land Conservation Program

Each year in Manitoba, DUC buys about 1,000 acres to conserve the ponds and natural habitat before selling the land back to local producers.

The Revolving Land Conservation Program (RLCP) works like this. DUC will:

- ◆ Purchase land at fair market value
- ◆ Restore the wetlands and grasslands
- ◆ Place a conservation agreement on the land title
- ◆ Sell the land to producers
- ◆ Use funds from these sales to buy other property to restore and sell

For farmers, the RLCP is a win-win.

Firstly, the land is rented to farmers while the wetlands are being restored. This keeps the land in-production and weed-free. Secondly, when the restoration is complete and DUC brings the land back to market, farmers have an opportunity to acquire affordable land.

RLCP is an alternative to DUC buying and keeping land. Under this program, habitats are protected and land remains in agricultural use.

Arable acres on RLCP lands are available for rent. Tenders close on March 20 of each year. Contact us for information.



Second year seeding on RLCP property





DUC grazing property  
near Shoal Lake, MB

## Forage Program

Get paid to seed forages on your land.

Our Forage Program is prorated for early buyout and you can rotate forage after five years.

DUC agrologists can assist with selecting the right seed blend and provide advice on establishing a successful forage stand.

## Marginal Areas Program (MAP)

DUC pays grain farmers to convert marginal areas within annually cropped fields to perennial forage.

MAP helps you manage salinity, improve water infiltration and provide competition against foxtail barley and kochia. Biodiversity increases, including

habitat for pollinators that help your crops grow.

Boost your profits while farming fewer acres and improve crop insurance averages by removing poorly performing acres from production.



DUC receives funding for forage programming, MAP and wetland restorations from Manitoba's Conservation Trust.

## Hay Tenders

Every year, DUC offers approximately 4,000 acres in Manitoba for haying and grazing by tender.

In drought years, we do our best to make even more acres available.

Property lists and bid forms are available in May, online at [ducks.ca](https://ducks.ca) and [ag.ducks.ca](https://ag.ducks.ca). Also, watch for information cards at your local post office or notices in community newspapers. Haying can begin after July 15.

## Grazing

Interested in high stock density grazing?

We work with cattle producers on intensive rotational grazing and have been growing our rentable acres. Contact us about opportunities on DUC land in your area.

Before

After



Near Shoal Lake MB





ACC Goldrush winter wheat harvest near Oakburn MB

## Winter Wheat

Winter wheat is a must-grow in Manitoba. With excellent yield potential and return on investment, farmers have found winter wheat to be one of their most profitable crops.

DUC's Winter Wheat Program offers farmers these incentives:

- ◆ Payments averaging \$4,000 to participating producers
- ◆ Crop nutrition planning from Western Ag's PRS CropCaster Tool
- ◆ Grain marketing advice from FarmLink Marketing Solutions
- ◆ DUC agrologist support from seeding to harvest

Winter wheat reduces the stress of spring seeding and fall harvest. New varieties including Wildfire offer high yields, improved disease tolerance and better protein content.

## Rangeland Programs

Get paid to leave habitat on your land intact for 10 years.

DUC has a number of programs designed to improve your pasture productivity. Use the funds to benefit your operation where you want. We'll also provide a field map and grazing tips.

## Grazing Clubs

For over 20 years, grazing clubs have brought Manitoba livestock producers together to find ways to make their farms more profitable.

Introduced by DUC in 1999, grazing clubs hold informal gatherings to learn from experts and researchers about soil health, cover crops, financial planning and grazing management. Internationally acclaimed speakers have included Gabe Brown, Ray Archuleta, Dr. Allen Williams, Steve Kenyon and Dr. Christine Jones.

Club members visit local farms to see first-hand how their neighbours have increased profits and sustainability with innovation. Previous tours have

included the farms of Ted Unruh, Ryan Boyd and Joey Bootsman. These farmers show how they've incorporated innovative practices such as inter-cropping and high stock density grazing.

No membership fee. New members are welcome.

For information or to receive notices about upcoming events, contact Michael Thiele at [mthiele@mymts.net](mailto:mthiele@mymts.net).

Grazing club presentations are now online! Search "Manitoba Grazing Clubs" on YouTube to find the latest.



Organic cattle on a 63 acre restoration near Souris MB



# Landowner TESTIMONIALS



*You should be trying to align yourself with nature rather than working against it. Conventional agriculture, in a lot of ways, works against nature and you usually don't win against nature.*

Colin and Cheryl Bialkoski  
Rossburn MB

*First and foremost, it was the DUC rebate for winter wheat. It also eased up the spring workload. We had a lot of neighbours that were jealous. A lot were wishing they had done it.*

Ryan Downey  
Coulter MB



*It's perfect for us. From both a financial and a conservation angle, it works with what we're doing in our operation.*

Sean Murphy  
Souris MB

*We just like to keep the land as we see it. Preserving the land to its natural state and protecting it for future generations is important to us.*

Angelan and Tony Prynne  
McAuley MB



*Dad saw the farming practices around him, with neighbours bulldozing sloughs to put more ground into production, and he didn't like it. He wanted the farm to become natural habitat with whomever it was we decided could do that. We decided that Ducks Unlimited would be the best.*

The Hamel family  
Alexander MB

*We need cultivated land but we also need natural habitat and grasslands to remain the way they are, so in future years our great grandchildren can look out and not only see crops waving in the fields but also see cattle grazing along with wildlife of all kinds...two of my favourite things.*

Dale and Linda O'Greysik  
Elkhorn MB







## DUC program target areas

Ducks Unlimited Canada delivers conservation programs within areas of high wetland density. These "target landscapes" are identified on the map below.



Ducks Unlimited  
Canada

Contact our Brandon Office

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