



## GRAY LODGE WILDLIFE AREA WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

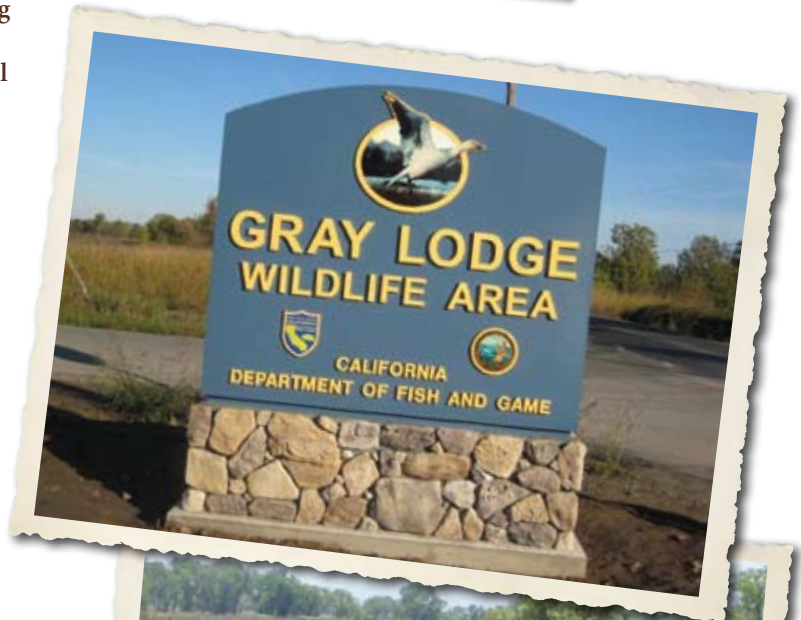
A major California wetland, the 9,200-acre Gray Lodge Wildlife Area is extremely important to Pacific Flyway waterfowl and hunters alike. The existing water delivery system was degraded, inefficient and dependent on agricultural drain water and groundwater. The water conveyance infrastructure needed major improvements to facilitate better habitat management.

DU and its partners developed a comprehensive plan to renovate the entire water distribution system. Work was divided into six phases and completed in 2009. DU was responsible for survey, design, contracting, construction management and securing funding from start to finish. More than 30 miles of canals were improved or constructed. More than 350 water-control structures were installed and more than 30 pumps were integrated into the system. Additionally, more than 7,000 tons of road gravel was strategically placed to improve access for habitat management and public recreation.

Overall, the project made high-quality water available throughout the area, reduced pumping costs; provided infrastructure to handle future increases in water supplies; improved water and habitat management capabilities on more than 7,000 acres open to public hunting; and improved opportunities for wildlife-oriented recreation such as fishing, wildlife watching and educational tours.

As many as 1 million ducks, including mallards, pintails, green-winged teal and hundreds of thousands of Ross' geese and snow geese make the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area their winter home before flying on to their nesting grounds in the north. The wetland refuge also hosts sandhill cranes; tundra swans; bald eagles; wood ducks; and mammals such as deer, fox, beaver, coyote and rabbit.

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**PARTNERS:** California Department of Fish and Game, North American Wetlands Conservation Council, Wildlife Conservation Board and Ducks Unlimited