



Your contribution to the America's River Initiative enables Ducks Unlimited to conserve the habitats important to waterfowl that migrate and winter in the valley, as well as to conduct important science, public policy, and outreach efforts.



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### AMERICA'S RIVER NEEDS YOU NOW

Your gift to Ducks Unlimited is invaluable, and it is truly the greatest contribution you can make to secure the future of wetlands and waterfowl. Every dollar you give to Ducks Unlimited is leveraged multiple times to create a conservation impact far beyond your initial gift. In addition, we invest at least 80 cents of every dollar received in our conservation mission. Start making a difference right now for waterfowl, outdoorsmen, and future generations of wildlife and people by making your gift to DU's America's River Initiative. Join us in *Banding Together for Waterfowl*. Help us *Rescue Our Wetlands* today.

Don't wait.  
Call DU at **(601) 956-1936** today to speak with our fundraising staff for your area.



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RESCUE OUR WETLANDS  
*Banding Together for Waterfowl*

AMERICA'S RIVER INITIATIVE



RESTORING THE GLORY OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER FLOODPLAIN BY CONSERVING KEY WINTERING HABITAT FOR MILLIONS OF WATERFOWL AND REINFORCING THE REGION'S RICH WATERFOWLING LEGACY

The majesty of the mighty Mississippi River—America’s most iconic waterway—has pulled at the hearts of those who have gazed upon it since long before our country’s founding. Once a 25-million-acre floodplain forest, the lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley (MAV) was an extraordinary wetland system with abundant and diverse wildlife. But after years of drainage and clearing, only about 20 percent of the original forests remain, and the floodplain has been significantly altered.

Though widespread land conversion from forested floodplain to agriculture and other land uses has altered the MAV’s wetland functions and values, the birds have adapted, and the region continues to be the continent’s most important wintering habitat for mallards and wood ducks. The new MAV landscape also continues to attract a great diversity of waterfowl, including northern

pintails, green-winged teal, and northern shovelers, as well as snow and white-fronted geese. Louisiana’s internationally known Catahoula Lake winters approximately 15 percent of North America’s canvasbacks.

To address the losses in the MAV, Ducks Unlimited’s America’s River Initiative specifically targets areas where public and private lands managed for waterfowl provide crucial migration and wintering habitat for millions of birds traveling the Mississippi Flyway. This region boasts some of the best and most storied waterfowl hunting in the country, and its forested wetlands also have some of the highest densities of nesting wood ducks in North America. There is much here to cherish and enjoy, but also much that could be lost without your support of DU’s important conservation efforts in this region.



### AMERICA’S RIVER INITIATIVE IMPACT

The America’s River Initiative is a crucial part of Ducks Unlimited’s *Rescue Our Wetlands* campaign, a seven-year, \$2-billion effort aimed at changing the face of conservation in North America. *Rescue Our Wetlands* is the largest wetlands and waterfowl conservation campaign in history.

Covering the heart of the lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley and its major tributaries, the America’s River Initiative focuses on the restoration, enhancement and protection of wetlands used by millions of waterfowl each year.

#### INITIATIVE STATES

Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee

#### INITIATIVE GOALS:

Your contribution toward the America’s River Initiative is part of the *Rescue Our Wetland’s* Wintering and Migration Landscapes target of **\$484 million**. Visit [www.ducks.org/rescue](http://www.ducks.org/rescue) for details.

Supporting the America’s River Initiative is pivotal in fulfilling DU’s vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever.

### DU’S PLAN FOR AMERICA’S RIVER

Conservation work under the America’s River Initiative will focus on the restoration and enhancement of key private and public lands with state and federal partners, as well as the long-term protection of high-quality waterfowl habitat (especially forested wetlands) on private lands that contribute toward landscape goals. Another key focus will be working with rice producers and the rice industry to develop a sustainable agricultural program that benefits wintering waterfowl.

Contributions to the America’s River Initiative enable Ducks Unlimited to conduct important science, public policy, and outreach efforts, as well as conserving the breeding habitats important to waterfowl that migrate and winter in the valley. DU’s research and evaluation efforts are the foundation upon which our direct conservation programs and our policy and outreach work are based.

### CROSS-BORDER CONSERVATION



Waterfowl are a continentally shared resource, and Ducks Unlimited has worked across North America since 1937 to ensure a strong future for ducks and for waterfowl hunters. By contributing to DU’s America’s River Initiative, you will be supporting important waterfowl habitat conservation in the Mississippi River floodplain, as well as in the breeding grounds of the Prairie Pothole Region and Western Boreal Forest of the United States and Canada, where the vast majority of birds are produced before beginning their journey to the wintering grounds.



### A LEGACY OF PERMANENT PROTECTION

For decades, Ducks Unlimited has used conservation easements to protect important waterfowl habitat from high-density development across the nation. These easements provide permanent landscape protection while allowing landowners to retain and enjoy their lands. In the MAV, privately owned habitats often include some of the last remaining forested wetland complexes in the region, making easements a key part of our conservation strategy.

Conservation easements also serve double duty by providing permanent habitat protection and serving as an asset when Ducks Unlimited seeks public funding. The monetary value of the easements provides DU with an important non-federal match when applying for North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants or other state and federal funding programs.

### MAXIMIZING THE POWER OF A DOLLAR

In many instances, your conservation investment allows DU to leverage your gift with other private, public and contractual funds, sometimes matching it as many as seven or eight times.