



★ HORICON COASTAL CONNECTION PHASE II

A \$2 million grant provided by the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA). Matching funds from public and/or non-governmental organizations will be used to conserve, restore, and enhance over 5,000 acres in southeast Wisconsin. The project is part of Ducks Unlimited’s (DU) Great Lakes Initiative and will focus on a patchwork of wetlands and grasslands, supporting both waterfowl and upland bird habitats. Other wildlife species such as the American woodcock, whooping cranes, and a variety of songbirds will also benefit from this conservation initiative. Impacted areas include Upper Winnebago Pools, Rush Lake, and Horicon Marsh. Migratory birds will be able to use these wetlands for refuge. They will also support breeding pairs of waterfowl as well.

★ RICHARD BONG SRA EXPANSION

Richard Bong State Recreation Area is now 132 acres larger after DU purchased an adjacent parcel that protects a mix of important wetland and upland habitats for waterfowl and other wildlife. It also opens new land to public access. Funding from NAWCA, We Energies Foundation, Bong Naturalist Association, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, Pheasants Forever and National Wild Turkey Federation were used to complete the acquisition. The land will be donated to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), which will manage it as a part of Richard Bong.



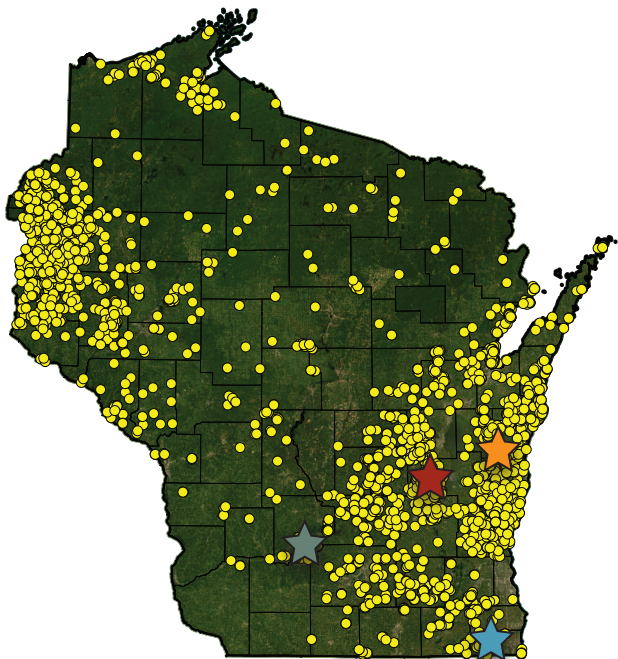
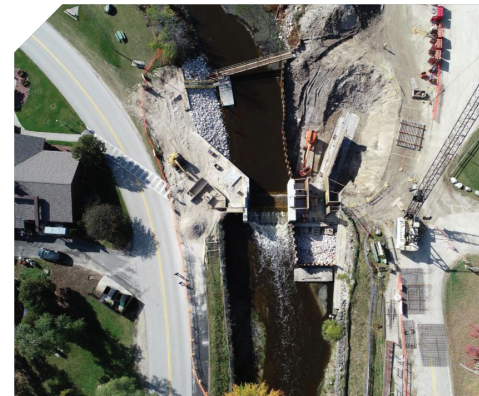
★ MORE HABITAT AT WALKING IRON

A 300-acre restoration project along the Lower Wisconsin River will provide nesting, brood rearing, and migratory habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, grassland birds and a variety of other wildlife. DU, Dane County and the USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program teamed up to convert the land from row crops to emergent wetlands and native prairie at Walking Iron Wildlife Area. The site is part of the Lower Wisconsin River Important Bird Area and the Lower Wisconsin Riverway Ramsar Wetland of International Importance. Waterfowl, deer and turkey hunting are allowed within the 948-acre wildlife area.



★ WATER LEVELS UNDER CONTROL

Sheboygan Marsh has a new \$3.2 million dam that will allow managers to draw down and replicate natural water level fluctuations at the 14,000-acre emergent marsh. The original dam was installed in the late 1960s and limited the ability to manage water levels. The new dam includes a 25-foot-wide crest gate that will manage large flow events and reduce the likelihood of significant water level fluctuations from storms. Two 8-foot-wide stainless steel slide gates have also been installed to manage water levels during low flow. The new dam maximizes water level management and achieves habitat goals while providing superior ecological services and mitigating costs. Dislodged cattail mats have been problematic in the past, clogging the natural flow of water at the marsh. With the new dam system, invasive plant growth can be controlled.



**Ducks Unlimited
PROJECTS**

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● Completed Project(s)

 Note: Project points may represent more than one project.

NRCS ALLOCATES \$8.8 MILLION FOR WISCONSIN WETLANDS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) incentivizes voluntary, partnership-driven conservation on working agricultural lands. In Nov. 2023, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) awarded DU an \$8.8 million RCPP grant to conserve 800 acres in southern Wisconsin.

The project will restore and protect wetlands and upland areas, improving water quality, carbon sequestration and biodiversity.

“This isn’t just an investment in habitat or agriculture, it’s a down payment on the long-term sustainability of our land, wildlife and natural resources,” said DU Chief Conservation Officer Dr. Karen Waldrop. “From helping to sequester carbon and improve soil health to preventing erosion and filtering and storing water, each of these projects offers an immense amount of value to our environment that far exceeds the habitat benefits alone. These grants will help DU magnify that impact on a larger scale.”

The purpose of this RCPP is to protect, restore and enhance wetlands degraded due to agricultural development. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) pays private landowners fair market value to enroll acreage into a permanent easement.

DU is collaborating with NRCS to support the program’s delivery. Technicians work one-on-one with private landowners to facilitate RCPP enrollment, develop wetland restoration designs, facilitate engineering and oversee construction management associated with the restoration of these wetlands.

“We have a long-standing partnership with NRCS aimed at restoring and protecting priority habitat in the state,” said DU Manager of Conservation Programs – Great Lakes Initiative Brian Glenzinski. “DU is very excited to take this partnership to the next level through this RCPP opportunity and continue the conservation of Wisconsin’s wetlands. WRE is one of the biggest and best tools for securing and restoring native habitat.”



DUCKS UNLIMITED conserves, restores, and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America’s waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people.

WISCONSIN CONSERVATION STAFF

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WISCONSIN NUMBERS

2023

- 10,615 acres conserved
- \$4,666,465 invested

HISTORICAL

- 158,358 acres conserved
- \$54.3 million invested



**GREAT LAKES /
ATLANTIC REGION**

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