



ALASKA

2026 STATE REPORT AND FACT SHEET



TEEN VOLUNTEERS LEAD A CONSERVATION COMEBACK

Two Alaska teens are proving that the future of conservation is in good hands. Arne Nedwick (17) and Cole Bridge (19) recently led the revival of the Ducks Unlimited Girdwood Chapter, drawing on years of growing up around DU events and their shared passion for waterfowl conservation. After approaching DU Alaska Regional Director Dave Weber with a plan to restart the chapter, the pair set their sights on hosting a major inaugural fundraising event.

Held at Turnagain Fish Co., the event exceeded all expectations, drawing more than 120 attendees—far surpassing the venue's capacity—and generating strong community support through raffles and a live auction. By night's end, Nedwick and Bridge had raised \$17,000 for Ducks Unlimited, officially reestablishing the Girdwood Chapter and demonstrating the powerful role young leaders can play in advancing wetland conservation.



HOW VOLUNTEERS ARE HELPING EMPEROR GEESE THRIVE

After duck season ended in January 2025, Ducks Unlimited Alaska State Chair Tim Truitt and DU Alaska Youth Engagement Chair Justin Talley found new inspiration while listening to a Ducks Unlimited podcast about bird banding and citizen science. The conversation sparked an idea: the close of hunting season didn't have to mean stepping away from conservation. Instead, hunters could stay engaged by trading shotguns for cameras and spotting scopes to support research on the near-threatened Emperor Goose.

Beginning in February, Truitt and Talley launched a citizen-science effort to re-sight banded Emperor Geese, carefully documenting locations, dates, photographs, and band numbers. Their detailed observations were combined with original banding information and organized into a centralized database, providing biologists with valuable data on survival rates, population trends, and migratory behavior. Their consistent volunteer efforts are helping scientists better understand Emperor Goose population dynamics while demonstrating how DU leaders and hunters can make meaningful conservation contributions long after the season ends.



BRANDT MEIXELL JOINS DU AS ALASKA BORN TO FLY INITIATIVE COORDINATOR

Ducks Unlimited has hired Brandt Meixell as the new Alaska Born to Fly Initiative Coordinator, strengthening DU's conservation leadership in one of North America's most important waterfowl regions. With nearly 25 years of experience working across Alaska—including the Bering Sea, Izembek Lagoon, Minto Flats, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, and the Copper River Delta—Meixell brings deep expertise in waterfowl research and wetland conservation. In this role, he will help expand DU's conservation footprint while building partnerships with public agencies, Native communities, and industry leaders to protect Alaska's critical wetlands and waterfowl habitat.

ALASKA BORN TO FLY INITIATIVE: A BOLD STEP FORWARD

Ducks Unlimited CEO Adam Putnam announced a major expansion of the Alaska Born to Fly Initiative at the Alaska Oil and Gas Association's annual conference in Anchorage last year. The expanded effort reinforces DU's long-term commitment to conserving Alaska, the most important waterfowl production area in the Pacific Flyway. The initiative will prioritize collaboration with industry leaders, Native communities, and public agencies to protect the landscapes that sustain waterfowl, people, and local economies.

Alaska is one of only four regions designated by Ducks Unlimited as a Level I waterfowl breeding area, the highest conservation priority in North America.

Building on decades of conservation success, the Alaska Born to Fly Initiative will expand DU's investments in science, wetland monitoring, and waterfowl surveys while strengthening its in-state presence with dedicated conservation staff. The initiative will support science-based best management practices and efforts to maintain hunting access and outdoor opportunities. Through strong partnerships and applied conservation, DU aims to ensure Alaska's wetlands remain resilient and productive for generations to come.



WESTERN
REGION

ducks.org/alaska



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MEMBERSHIP

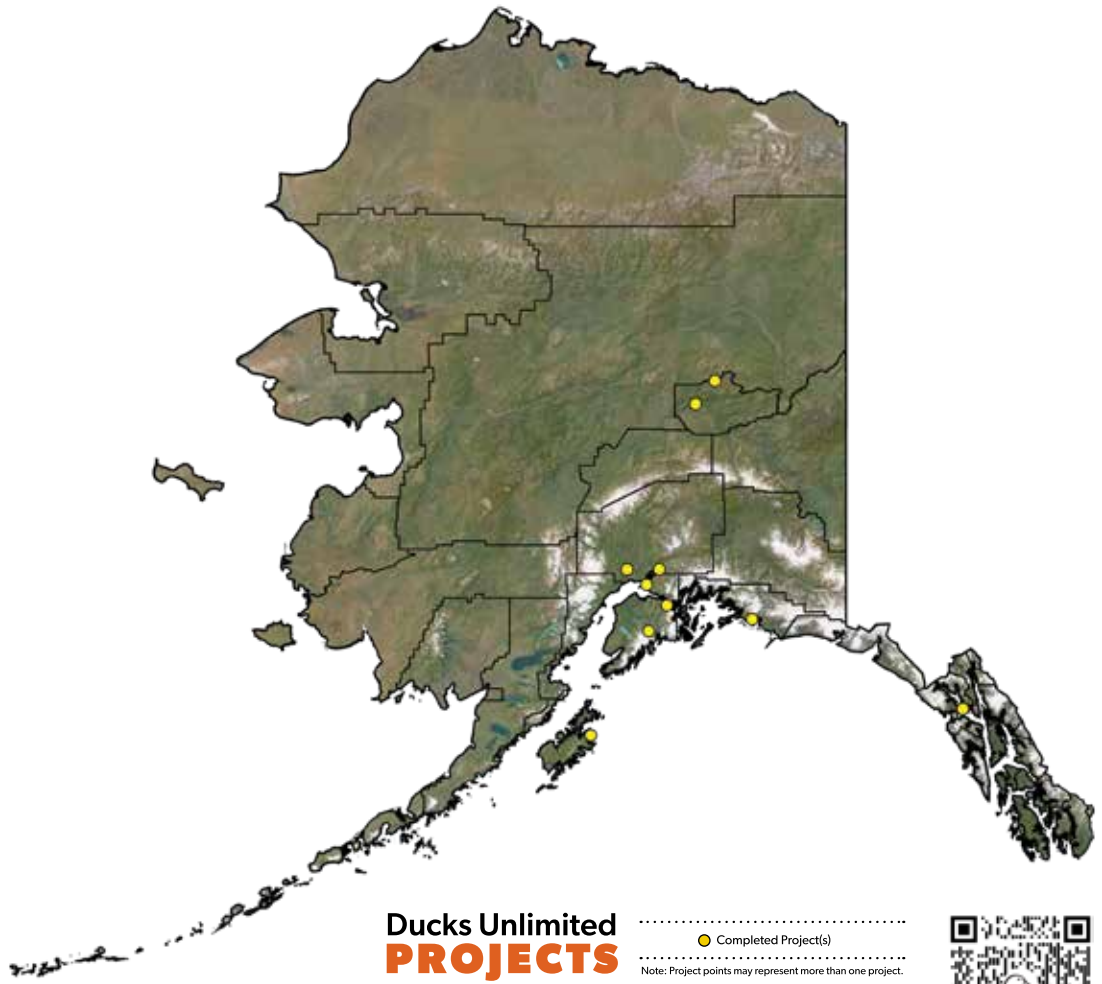
Grand Total: 4,067
Members: 3,970
General Members: 3,709
Greenwings: 64
Legacy Greenwings: 40
Sponsor Members: 157
Major Sponsors: 97
Feather Society Members: 30

STATE FUNDRAISING

Total event income dollars raised:
\$807,579
Number of committees: **33**
Number of fundraising events: **123**
Local chapter volunteers: **414**

US CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

Total Acres Conserved in the state
(historically since FY1984): **5,792**
Amount spent on projects in the
state: **\$10,599,125**
Amount spent on projects in
PAC Flyway (through FY2025):
\$739,317,624
Primary waterfowl species:
Green-Winged Teal; Mallard;
Northern Pintail; American
Wigeon; Greater Scaup; Dusky
and Taverner's Canada Goose;
Emperor Goose and Black Brant.



Ducks Unlimited PROJECTS

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WESTERN REGION

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For more information about
DU's work in your state visit
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