



SOUTH DAKOTA

2026 STATE REPORT AND FACT SHEET



WORKING GRASSLANDS PROGRAM GAINING STEAM

In late 2023, DU was awarded \$25 million from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) for the Working Grasslands Partnership. This partnership was designed to provide incentives for restoring grasslands across South Dakota and providing infrastructure for rotational grazing systems on planted grasslands and existing adjacent grasslands. The Working Grasslands Partnership model provides a unique incentive payment while planted grasses establish.

Since starting in mid-2024, the project has been hugely successful. To date, project partners have signed 69 agreements with cooperators across South Dakota to plant over 13,000 acres back to grass, and to integrate another 14,000 acres of existing grassland into rotational grazing systems, already obligating almost \$7 million to cooperators.



To learn more about the program, you can watch a short video by scanning the QR code. South Dakotans interested in enrolling in the program can visit tinyurl.com/WGP-RCPP or reach out to Bruce Toay at btoay@ducks.org.



HANSON COUNTY WETLANDS COMPLETED

DU recently completed the restoration of 52 acres of drained wetlands in Hanson County, where DU biologists and engineers were able to expand upon a wetland restoration project completed over 20 years ago. As a result, there are now collectively over 104 acres of restored wetlands functioning as a dynamic wetland complex. And, because the watershed area upstream of the restored wetland complex is relatively large, each restored wetland embankment now includes a water control structure to manage water levels and wetland habitat conditions to mimic natural wetland water level fluctuations that otherwise would not be possible during times of prolonged and static high water levels. Native and restored grasses surrounding these wetlands provide nesting sites for ducks and other upland nesting birds and forage for grazing livestock.

HEALING LAKE MITCHELL

Lake Mitchell is one of the city's most popular areas for wildlife and recreation, but at 90 years old, sedimentation and algae blooms have created water conditions not suited for recreational activity. After exploring other options, the City approached DU for ideas and its engineers developed a plan to develop wetland habitats along Firesteel Creek, a tributary to the lake, that would capture sediment and filter phosphorus.

DU completed the surveys, design, planning/permitting process, and construction management. Now, areas along the stream will eventually fill in with natural wetland vegetation to reduce stream flow and capture sediment when the creek runs higher than average.

All told, in a short window of time, DU created approximately 37 acres of wetland habitat that will also help filter and manage sediment loads and phosphorus levels, which will eventually lead to a cleaner and healthier lake.



GREAT PLAINS REGION

ducks.org/south-dakota



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MEMBERSHIP

Grand Total: 6,429
Members: 6,091
 General Members: 5,084
 Greenwings: 339
 Legacy Greenwings: 364
 Sponsor Members: 304
Major Sponsors: 338
Feather Society Members: 59

STATE FUNDRAISING

Total event income dollars raised:
\$849,277
 Number of committees: **43**
 Number of fundraising events: **79**
 Local chapter volunteers: **503**

FY25 FALL FLIGHTS INVESTMENTS TO CANADIAN PROJECTS

Total Contributions: **\$388,665**

Location of projects:

Saskatchewan: Missouri Coteau Biome, Missouri Coteau Biome-Dirt Hills & Lake Alma Landscapes, Coteau Legacy Conservation Program , Saskatchewan PPR Target Areas

US CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

Total Acres Conserved in the state (historically since FY1984): **1,109,734**
 Total Acres of Conservation in the state (FY2025): **90,650**
 Amount spent on projects in the state: **\$120,078,200**
 Amount spent on projects in CEN Flyway (through FY2025): **\$747,353,027**

Primary waterfowl species:

Mallard; Gadwall; Canada Goose; Blue-Winged Teal; Northern Pintail; American Wigeon; Canvasback and Redhead.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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For Information on DU Events:

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For Information on Becoming a Major Sponsor:

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For Information on DU's Gift Planning Program:

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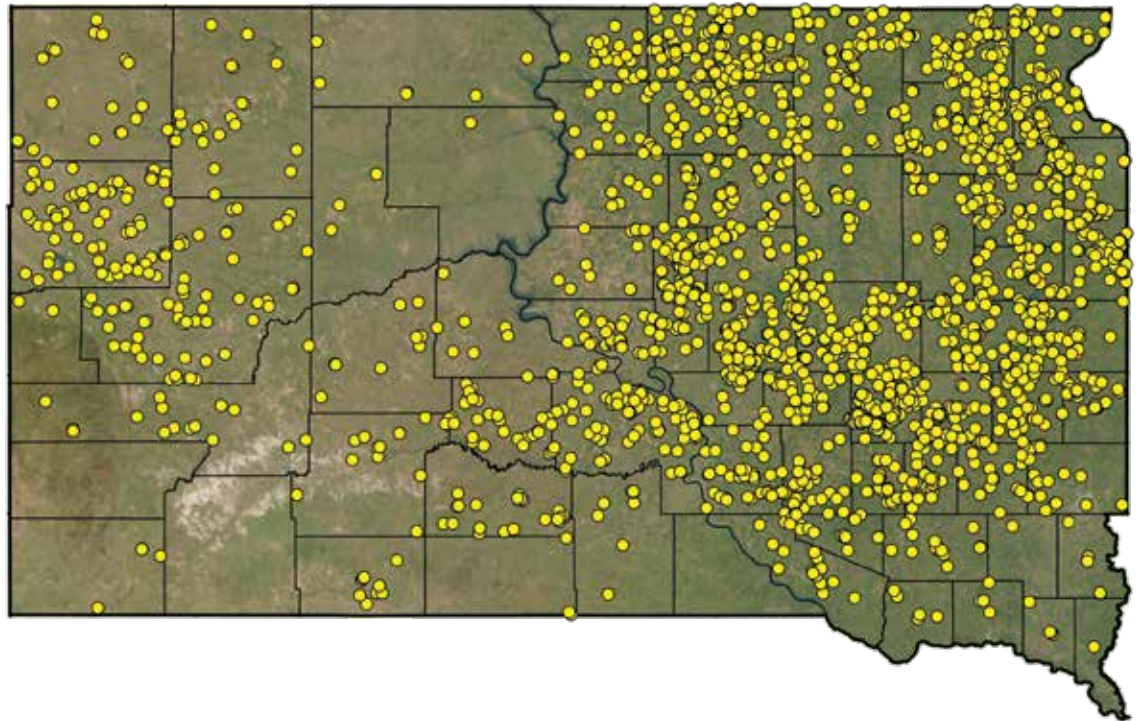
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Ducks Unlimited PROJECTS

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 ● Completed Project(s)

 Note: Project points may represent more than one project.



GREAT PLAINS REGION

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For more information about DU's work in your state visit
ducks.org/south-dakota