

CAROLINA CONNECTION



Waterfowl Conservation from the Palmetto State to the Prairies

For over seventy years, Ducks Unlimited (DU) has been focused primarily on delivering habitat conservation across North America. Although our on-the-ground conservation efforts will always be a mainstay of DU's work, we realize that we cannot meet the needs of waterfowl, other wildlife and society using direct habitat conservation alone. To meet this challenge, DU has a Vision and the strategic means to accomplish it.

DUCKS UNLIMITED'S VISION: WETLANDS SUFFICIENT TO FILL THE SKIES WITH WATERFOWL TODAY, TOMORROW AND FOREVER

In order to achieve this Vision, DU must expand its influence in the realm of public policy, expand on-the-ground habitat conservation in key landscapes and increase scientific capacity and capability to support policy and habitat work. *Carolina Connection* recognizes the importance of DU's Vision to protecting, restoring and enhancing wetland habitat in South Carolina and the important prairie habitats that provide critical breeding areas. South Carolina has lost nearly one-third of its original wetlands and nationwide we still lose 80,000 acres of wetlands each year. Simultaneously, on the breeding grounds, we continue to lose thousands of acres of native grasslands – the key habitat for nesting hens. The scope of the problem is continental in nature. If we just work in South Carolina, we will fail to conserve the most important habitat for waterfowl – the prairies – but more importantly, we will fail to attain our Vision.

Carolina Connection is a sponsor initiative to raise **\$2.5 million dollars by the end of 2010** to support DU's conservation efforts, both in South Carolina and on the breeding grounds where our waterfowl originate.

All DU sponsors – from Bronze to Wetlands Guardian levels – that commit to *Carolina Connection* will help us reach our goal.



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This initiative will help support all three elements of our Vision as follows:

DIRECT HABITAT CONSERVATION

Under *Carolina Connection*, our on-the-ground conservation delivery programs will protect, restore and enhance a minimum of 5,000 acres of critical waterfowl habitat at both ends of the flyway. Projects will cover a variety of landscapes and regions in South Carolina and the prairies.

PUBLIC POLICY Effective support of public policy will be essential to realize our Vision. With the stroke of a pen, legislators can undo decades of conservation efforts. Key policy issues such as agriculture, water, wetland regulations and climate change all have impacts – both good and bad – on waterfowl and their habitats.

Carolina Connection will help support our policy efforts on these key issues. Our regional and national policy experts are dedicated to making sure that waterfowl have a voice in Washington, DC.

SCIENCE Without a strong science foundation, we lack the guidance and technical information to deliver effective habitat conservation programs and public policy efforts. *Carolina Connection* will also support ongoing prairie research like modeling grassland loss rates, estimating waterfowl nest success and assessing factors that affect nest success at different scales. Continuing to refine our science leads to better decisions about where to work and the kind of work we need to be doing, thereby maximizing your investment as a DU sponsor.

Wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever is not only our Vision but also our singleness of purpose. However, DU can only achieve sufficient wetlands and abundant waterfowl if our conservation efforts can exceed losses in the places where we work. Your investment in *Carolina Connection* will help secure this Vision.

Conservation today...Wetlands for Tomorrow!

