



ILLINOIS

STATE NEWSLETTER

Don Marold

ILDU State Chairman

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A Word From Our Chairman

October 2022

The dog days of summer are coming to an end and the fall temperatures are sure welcome! Our fall fundraising season is coming to a close but we still have a few events in October and November. If you have an event in your area, try to attend and bring a friend or two. For those of you hosting the event, try to fill the hall. Try to remember the first three letters in fundraising spells FUN!

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As I attend different events around the state it is very interesting to see all the innovating ideas and games that our volunteers put together to raise money for the ducks. If you can, please bring a new volunteer and have them assist you at your event. One of the best places to recruit volunteers is at an event since everyone in the room is a DU supporter. I think you will find the only reason some people don't join a committee is because they have not been asked. We have recruiting materials to use at an event if you are interested.

I recently attended the DU National Convention in New Orleans. I was both proud and blessed to be the person to represent Illinois. With all of your hard work and support for DU, we were fortunate to be recognized in quite a few categories. Keep in mind, we are competing with the other 49 states. The awards we received were #1 Events All Incomes, #1 Top Event in the Nation All Income (Lake Forest Chapter). A huge THANKS goes out to Bryan Wiesner and Jim Calaway for raising \$3,345,407.00 in an event in the Chicago area! Other awards we received #2 Event Income, #3 Event Income Percentage Growth, #4 Attendance Growth, #5 Attendance, #8 Attendance Percentage Growth, #8 Volunteers, and last but not least the Silver Award in the State Excellence Awards! The only thing that kept us from being gold is that we were down in volunteers. There were only two states in the nation that increased in volunteers. The fact that we were eighth in volunteers shows how important volunteers are to event fundraising. This was one of the few times if not the first time Illinois was #1 in a category. It was overwhelming to be able to represent Illinois on the stage and accept this award in front of several hundred people representing all the states. As I was returning from the stage to my seat, people I had never met were shaking my hand and giving me high fives and congratulating me. This truly reflects how the DU volunteers and staff are truly family! Please keep in mind that only #1 in each category is able to go upon stage to receive an award.

I am sorry to announce that Matt Richards, Regional Director in Northern Illinois, has resigned to pursue other interests. Fortunately, we were able to have Rodney Schlafer join our team. Some of you will remember him from a few years ago when he was a Regional Director for Northeast Illinois. He is going to be a huge asset for our DU family. Please welcome Rodney to our Illinois team!

Once again, Thanks to everyone and enjoy your time in the marsh. Be safe and I hope to see everyone at the State Convention the last weekend in January. We truly have something huge to celebrate. Just please remember THERE IS NO DU WITHOUT YOU!!!

Don

IL DU Communications

Tom Tomlinson

IL DU State Communication Chairman

Former IL DU State Chairman

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Fall Update

Hunters! The time most of you have been waiting for is almost here. For some of you it started already with dove season and perhaps deer season. The true testament to our DU success will be evident in this fall's migration. CEO Adam Putnam's article "Taking Nothing for Granted" is a wonderful read and so appropriate for this time of year. Likewise, a companion piece in DU's Fall Magazine entitled "Duck Chase" is also very enlightening and well describes the duck survey process. Here's hoping that what is anticipated by all our hunting members comes true and that everyone involved will see the benefit of all the ground conservation efforts that are expended each year! 85 Conservation years, and over 15 million acres conserved are truly impressive!

IL DU was recognized for a variety of awards at the National Convention in New Orleans, and I'm not going to steal Don's thunder by reiterating what those were. Please be sure to read his article and if he has left something out, please ask him. However, IL would have been even higher in the state by state ranking if our members and, just as importantly, our volunteer numbers had been growing. As fall arrives, many chapters around the state are holding their fall banquets. Please take one or two new attendees to these events; please help introduce an attendee or two to look into volunteering some time and talent to that event as well. I think once they get involved, they will stay involved. Remember to ask them as I doubt they will volunteer on their own.

And, while on the subject of taking a friend or two along to a banquet, please be sure to take a greenwing or two (or more) to the marsh as well. Start them young. Look to help them participate in a youth waterfowl hunt near them too and you will be hooked as well!

Please be sure to read the answers to the 2 "Ask IL DU" items later in this Newsletter and let us have additional questions. If you have a question, chances are others will have the same question, so help us out and ask it!

Still don't have any volunteers to assume my Communication Chair position next summer. Please give it some thought and let me know or let our leadership know of your interest.

Thanks for reading this Newsletter and good luck on your fall hunts!

Tom

IL DU 2023 State Convention—Dates Set!

Dennis French

IL DU State Convention Chairman

IL DU State Chairman Elect

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Good day to all the Illinois waterfowl and conservation enthusiasts. The weather is changing, and this is a great time to get gear and guns ready for the upcoming seasons in the outdoors. The state convention planning committee has been at work planning a great time for the attendees at the end of January. If you have not attended a state convention previously, please consider it for January 27-28, 2023 at the Par-A-Dice Hotel and Casino in East Peoria.

The state convention is much more than any event that you have attended previously. Registration for the entire convention is \$100 and pre-registration is requested. Beth and Ski Verdun will have you ready to enjoy the weekend once you get registered. The camaraderie is awesome, with complementary beverages and snacks available from Friday afternoon through late Saturday night in the hospitality suite. The hotel staff and accommodations are top notch with excellent room rates (\$115/night). We will anticipate that our vendors will have new items and old favorites that you will want to peruse. The Friday night welcome party with Bill Reynolds hosting the DU "it's not your mama's bingo" games will be great fun. Last year the entire hall buzzed with players excitement over the games and DU prizes to be won!

Saturday morning will be filled with committee meetings, and these are very informative. The DU conservation team is doing really great things across our state, and they will be presenting work that has been done as well as their future plans. It is exciting and motivating to see what our dollars are doing for wetlands conservation. Other committees that will meet include leaders and people interested in the next iteration of the DU calendars, state campaign recruitment, as well as the youth and education.

The lunch hour will be filled with State Chairman Don Marold presenting Chapter awards for the great work that you have been doing throughout 2022 and the keynote address will be given by Bob Spoerl. Mr. Spoerl and his wife Kim are shining examples of the spirit of conservation. Bob began working with Ducks Unlimited at the grassroots level as a committee chairman for the Stevens Point, Wisconsin, chapter over 30 years ago. Bob is now First Vice-President and former SVP (Flyway) of Region 3, serving the states of WI, MN and MI. He is a John E. Walker III Society member and a Grand Slam Benefactor. The path to these amazing accomplishments began way back when Bob was a boy growing up outside Milwaukee. "There were two small wetland ponds near the town I grew up in," Bob recalls. "They weren't very big, about an acre each. I would see diving ducks there every year, every diving species you can think of. Developers came in and drained the ponds. Everything was gone in a flash. That's when I knew I had to do my part to save that habitat in the future." Saving habitat is my greatest motivation to assist in Ducks Unlimited. DU does this better than any other conservation group in the world.

To cap off the weekend, the Saturday evening banquet will feature a 23-gun raffle for 2023 with raffle packages that are sure to please all pocketbooks. We will have a ladies raffle, table raffle, on-line silent auction, and a live auction featuring the great Brian Curless on the call. This year's auction will feature select new DU items, fishing trips, gator hunts, duck, goose and feral hog hunts, and custom made DU sports memorabilia that you will not find at any other auction or venue. More to come (with visuals) in the next newsletter.

Following the formal festivities, the hospitality suite hosted by Steve Duke, Bill Hartter, Todd McKenzie, John Shank and Mick Wanless will be open again to allow folks to talk about and compare their winnings to close out a great weekend!

Make plans to be with us on January 27-28, 2023. I'll be looking for you!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dennis French".

Region V Update

Tab Casper

Region V - Vice President

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My name is Tab Casper and I'm the new RVP for Region 5 taking over from Tammi Kircher. I live in Osceola IN (northern part) I've been married for 39 years we have 2 kids and 7 grandkids. I managed a Glass shops for the first 20 years of my professional career and for the last 20 years I've been the General Manager of a rigging company.

Duck hunting became my passion after my first hunt back in high school. I became a DU Member shortly after that and a volunteer for 20 plus years. I've been the AC for the St Joseph Valley chapter for 12 years running and we hold 5 events each year. I was the INDU state chair for the last 4 years and was asked to move up to RVP and have a seat on the DU board of directors! I never had any intentions of climbing the ladder this high but never say never.

I look forward to meeting all of you at your state convention.

Thank you for all you DU!

Tab

Regional Director Update

Rodney Schaefer

Regional Director— Northern Illinois

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Welcoming Back Rodney Schaefer

He is Back...Rodney Schlafer is returning to Northern Illinois after 10 years. Some of you may remember Rodney he served as the RD in NE IL from 2008 until 2012. After leaving DU for a short time he worked for the National Wild Turkey Federation and returned to DU in 2017 where he was the RD in NE Minnesota and NW Wisconsin. Rodney has a passion for the ducks and grew up in Northern WI and hunted with his family on the Bay of Green Bay, the Fox River and Horicon Marsh.

He is excited to be back in Northern IL reconnecting with past volunteers and meeting all the new people. His official start date is October 1 and he will be relocating to Northern IL by the end of the year. Rodney brings with him over 20 years of fundraising experience and IL DU is excited for his return.

Rodney

Feather Society

Sarah McCallum
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734-623-2031



Leave a Legacy for the Ducks

The Feather Society program is achievable for all DU members and is an excellent way to “endow” your DU giving beyond your lifetime and leave a legacy. One of our Feather Society members said it best: *“Ducks Unlimited is as important to me as my family, and therefore I have elevated DU to family status in my estate planning by making provisions to provide DU with money when I’m gone.”*

Simple Planned Gifts are the Best Gifts

Gift planning offers several easy ways for you to make an impact on DU’s mission. Many options are “no hassle” gifts that don’t affect your lifestyle and require little or no professional or legal advice. The following gift types make up over 80% of all planned gifts that DU receives. They are inexpensive and easy to complete.



Simple Bequest: We know we should have one, yet more than 70% of us will pass away without having a will in place. Once we die, neither we nor our family has control of our assets; the courts take over. It makes no difference if you have supported DU for 5, 10, 20 or 30 years, the only way to give to DU after death is to make provisions in your will or trust. We have bequest language we can provide your attorney if needed.

Retirement Plans: Most of us can change the beneficiary designation on our IRA, 401k and pension plans without a trip to a lawyer. These are great assets to gift to DU. If you leave these to your family members, the tax bite can be up to 70% of the value! With online access, you can change your beneficiary in a matter of moments. You may also contact your plan’s administrator to request a beneficiary form.

Life Insurance: One of the easiest ways to benefit the ducks is to add DU as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy. You can give DU any percentage of the asset up to the whole asset. Or, if you transfer ownership of a current policy (excluding term) to DU, you can receive a current tax deduction on any premiums paid. Another way to enjoy a current charitable tax deduction is to take out a new policy and name DU as the owner and beneficiary. You can use premium payments as a charitable deduction.

Appreciated Assets: The gift of an asset, common stock or mutual funds, is a valuable way to make a gift to DU and receive tax benefits based on the value of the asset(s). Some of these assets, when given to charity, have a greater tax value than the cash value they provide.

These are just a few of the ways you can leave a legacy for the Ducks. For assistance, please contact Sarah McCallum, Senior Director of Gift Planning smccallum@ducks.org or (734) 623-2031. Or visit DU’s website at www.ducksgift.org.

Please contact me if you would like additional information.

Sarah

IL DU Development—Major Donor Update

Nathan Hogg
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Ducks Unlimited's Major Donor program is crucial to the success of conserving, restoring, and managing wetlands across North America. Our vision is to have wetlands that are sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow, and forever. With your help, we can achieve this goal

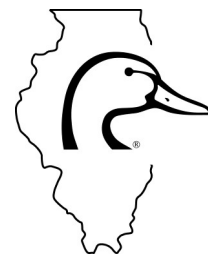
With your Major Donor dollars, Ducks Unlimited can put money towards 6 key conservation tactics. From replanting forests, restoring and rebuilding watersheds, to working with government agencies, Ducks Unlimited will leave a lasting mark on waterfowl and their success. On top of our work with waterfowl, we are also working to provide clean and abundant water for people and their communities. Through wetland restoration, we are able to change the landscape for waterfowl and people alike.

Illinois Major Donors play a critical role in the success of ducks unlimited. As a major donor, you are contributing to the continuation of the tradition of waterfowling with family and friends, as well as increasing healthy populations of ducks, geese, and other wildlife. Filling the skies with waterfowl above begins with saving the wetlands below, and that is where the Major Donor program comes into play. If you are interested in becoming a major donor, please reach out to Nathan Hogg or James Roberts for more information.

Sincerely,

Nathan

Questions?..... Ask DU!



Ask IL DU” is being offered to all our readers as a way to increase knowledge about DU. That will work as follows— Use the link newsletter@ildu.org to send in your questions. Those will be routed to the State Chairman, the 3 Regional Directors and myself for determining who will answer the question and it will be published in the next Newsletter under the banner “Ask IL DU”.

Here are the first two questions and their related answers:

Q: I live in southwest Illinois. Prime ag land around me sells for upwards of \$10,000 per acre. How does a \$250 sponsorship conserve an acre of habitat?

A: In short, the answer to your question lies with how Ducks Unlimited leverages those sponsorships, but let’s dive in and take a quick look at it. First, I looked at [Ducks Unlimited’s 2021 Annual Report](#). On page 35, Ducks Unlimited reported that “FY21 provided record revenues of \$340 million with 565,485 acres of habitat protected or restored ...”. The quick math here is that on average, across the country, the cost of conserving an acre of habitat in FY21 was \$601.25. It’s important to note here that not all acres are created equal. While purchasing the permanent, fee-title interest in highly productive farmland in the Midwest is a costly endeavor, other tools that Ducks Unlimited utilizes to conserve waterfowl habitat like donated conservation easements (for example see the 27,000-acre DeLuca easement in Florida on pages 19-20) or implementation of Farm Bill programs to plant cover crops and improve rangelands through rotational grazing (for example see the James River Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program in South Dakota on pages 15-16) are far less costly.

So with that average cost of doing our business more clearly established, the question remains, how are we making \$600 worth of conservation happen with a \$250 sponsorship? Enter the lever, a simple machine used to gain advantage. Using the figures above, we need to leverage a \$250 sponsorship at a rate of 2.4 times to hit this target. Effectively, if you hand me your \$250 sponsor payment, I am not going to go conserve an acre of habitat. We’ve already established that. What I am going to do is take our \$250 and say to our conservation partner “I got \$250. If you throw in \$50, and then I can write a proposal for this grant that I know about that has a 1:1 match requirement, and we can get this \$600 project done”. That’s a little oversimplified and the figures vary widely, but it’s exactly what we do day in and day out. It is the foundation of how conservation staff work with fundraising staff to turn dollars raised into acres conserved. All of a sudden, the “One Sponsor, One Acre” claim doesn’t seem so farfetched.

Q: Which category are the DU plates under? I have searched them all and the closest is the Sporting series, but DU is not listed.

A: DU plates are available at the following link

https://www.ilsos.gov/departments/vehicles/license_plate_guide/ducksunlimited.html



Are you ready to get involved?



As I have been meeting with the Area and District Chairmen this summer, they all have heard me talk about the need for more volunteers. Volunteers have been the key to IL's success over the years, but we have a lack of volunteers for a state the size of IL.

The committee level which makes our chapters work the best can always use more volunteers, and one doesn't have to be busy all the time! **There is room for you to step up and do something**, regardless of how much time you can afford to donate. Tom

Areas in Central Illinois needing additional Volunteers

Macon County
Champaign County
Quincy
Pike County
Jacksonville
Manito
Northern Tazewell
Clinton
Tri-County
Pekin
Kewanee

Southern Illinois Chapter Startups Needed:

Robinson
O'Fallon
Vandalia

CONTACT: Benny Magalski
bmagalski@ducks.org

Central Illinois Chapter Startups Needed:

Vermillion County—Danville
Shelbyville
Bloomington/Normal
Galesburg
Monmouth

CONTACT: JKing@ducks.org

Northern Illinois Chapter Startups Needed:

Grundy County
Galena
Elgin

CONTACT: Rodney Schlafer
rschlafer@ducks.org

Areas in Northern Illinois needing additional Volunteers

Naperville
Aurora
Bolingbrook
Kankakee

“IL DU needs chapters in these areas. If you know of anyone in these areas please contact the State Chairman or the local Regional Director”



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Illinois Ducks Unlimited License Plates

Every Volunteer Should Own a DU License Plate!

We **MUST** sell at least 1,000 Illinois DU Specialty License plates per year. If we fall below 1,000 plates for 2 consecutive years, the SOS's office may pull all existing IL DU specialty plates off the road and replace them with the universal specialty plate with a DU sticker. According to the SOS's office, we currently have 831 IL DU specialty plates, up from 808 in June! We are 169 plates away from reaching our goal and need your support to push us to 1,000!

To get your DU license plate, go to <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/> and click on "Pick-A-Plate" to order your DU license plate today.

Help Us Reach Our Goal of 1,000
DU Specialty License Plates



News From the Field

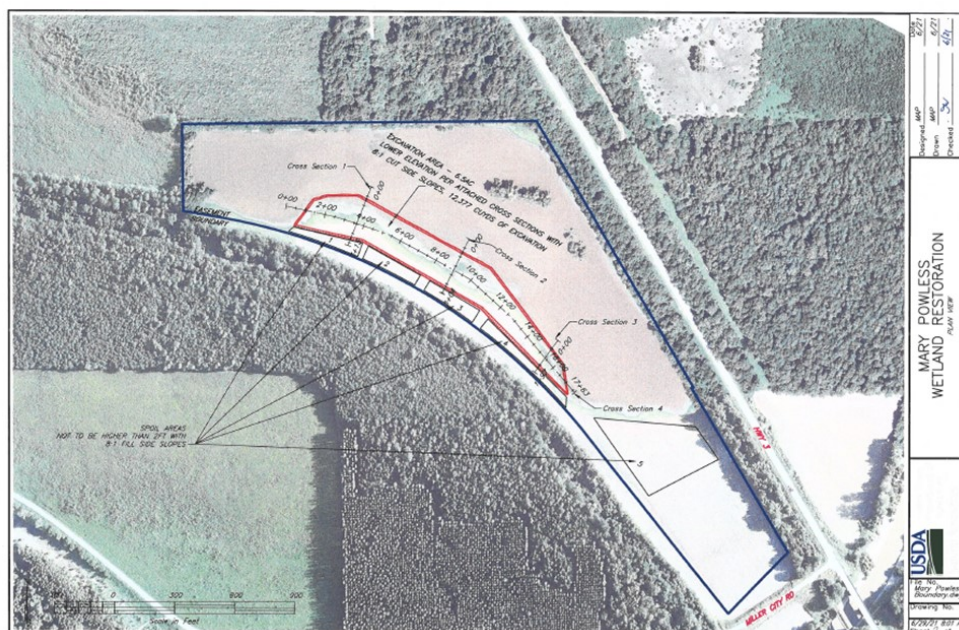
UPDATE: Critical Inholding between State and Federal Lands

Dane Cramer
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This spring we updated everyone on a 63-acre acquisition completed in March 2022 that connects two important public land areas in southern Illinois. The site is wedged between the 10,000-acre Horseshoe Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area and 17,000-acre Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge. With major funding support from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation and Friends of the Cache River Watershed, Ducks Unlimited was able to acquire the parcel before going on the open market, establishing a continuous expanse of permanently protected bottomlands where the Cache River empties into the Mighty Mississippi. Funding to restore the land to native bottomland forest will be provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and post-restoration the property transferred to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to be incorporated into Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge.

On-the-ground restoration activities began in September 2022. Following the Natural Resources Conservation Service' design plans, Ducks Unlimited hired a local contractor to excavate over 12,000 cubic yards of material to recreate a historic slough



on the property that had been leveled and filled through time due to its agricultural history and river flooding and sedimentation. The next and final step will be planting the site back to native bottomland hardwood species. This aspect of the project is scheduled for winter 2022/2023.

Once the restoration is complete, Ducks Unlimited and Wetlands America Trust will transfer the property to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to be managed as part of Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge. The transfer is expected to take place in spring/summer 2023.

An aerial drone tour of this project, and others throughout Ducks Unlimited's Great Lakes/Atlantic Region, is available at: <https://www.ducks.org/conservation/glar/du-projects-interactive-aerial-tour>. See project #37.

Dane