



Ducks Unlimited Canada Lands

Land Designation

Protected Private Lands

Land Description

Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) has operated since 1938 to conserve, restore and manage Canada's wetlands for waterfowl, wildlife and people. To this end, DUC has developed four goals of retaining wetlands, restoring wetlands, retaining native uplands and restoring native uplands which guide all of its programs in the prairies.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Government of Manitoba will add 3,443 hectares of DUC-secured land in the southwest prairie parkland to Manitoba's network of protected areas. This agreement provides a mechanism to ensure the DUC lands meet the provincial government's definition of a protected area in which logging, mining, hydroelectric, oil and gas development, as well as other activities that could significantly and adversely affect natural habitat, are prohibited.

These DUC-secured lands are categorized as an IUCN (World Conservation Union) protected area management category IV, that is, a protected area managed mainly for conservation of habitat and species through management intervention.

Outstanding Features

The southwest prairie parkland of Manitoba is home to one of the most productive pothole landscapes in North America for breeding waterfowl. The Minnedosa pothole region in particular is recognized internationally as one of the most important breeding areas for canvasback ducks on the continent, as well as the life cycle launch pad for many other duck species.



These vital habitats have diminished in quality over the last half-century, and continue to decline in the face of threats from human activity. In the prairie parkland zone, agricultural and transportation development has destroyed or degraded up to 70% of wetlands. Native grass cover has been reduced significantly and replaced with annual crops, or has been degraded by overgrazing.

To offset these ongoing threats, DUC has identified this as a priority landscape and employs habitat purchase to retain existing wetlands and existing native habitat from further loss. If not secured, risk to these habitats is considered very high. Many of the wetlands in this area are seasonal or temporary wetlands that are critical to breeding waterfowl but are often and easily drained for agriculture and other uses. The addition of DUC-secured lands contributes important habitat to an area of critical importance for waterfowl and will serve as the foundation on which to build additional blocks of habitat.

Under the MOA, these secured lands will be protected for the many waterfowl species known to nest in the area, including mallard, blue-winged teal, gadwall, northern shoveler, northern pintail, canvasback, lesser scaup and redhead. In addition to waterfowl the lands provides habitat for many other plant, animal and bird species. Noteworthy species include jackrabbit, sharp-tailed grouse, yellowlegs, sora, black tern, common snipe and great blue heron. In addition to enhancing the biodiversity, the natural uplands and wetlands will also provide numerous hydrological benefits to the area.