Message from the Chairman

We are now kicking off our fiscal year 2010 dinner event season with our annual summer workshops. As I write this the workshops held so far have all been well attended, new committee members have participated and the overall enthusiasm is very high. The early reports coming from the Duck Factory in Canada all indicate a banner year for duck populations. Thanks to all of you DU supporters that have contributed to the conservation of wetlands. If it were not for you the large predictions of duck populations would not be the same. Our work must continue, our goals must be met. Ducks Unlimited will be successful and conserve more wetlands in the coming years.

Here in Florida we have many areas that await the arrival of the ducks from the great nesting areas. We need more wetlands to support the growing numbers of ducks that look to us to provide their wintering sites.

As we look to the upcoming dinner events, just a couple of reminders that were hit on during the summer workshops.

- Control your committee expenses. Advance negotiations with your food vendors’ on prices and numbers of dinners to be served, will help keep your expenses controllable and will help stop the wasting of meals.
- Sell as many tickets in advance as possible.
- Recruit new committee members, they sell tickets to new DU members.
- Fill the Halls and you will help Fill the Sky’s.

For FY 2010 we have changed the State Gun Incentive. For this fiscal year any committee who adds five new sponsors will win a gun. Add ten new sponsors and win two guns, fifteen new sponsors and win three guns, with the option of upgrading the three guns to one better gun. You will hear more as the fiscal year progresses on Bronze Sponsors. The number of Bronze Sponsors in the US has dropped significantly. Our DU leadership has asked each region in the US to focus on Bronze Sponsor development. It is no secret that Bronze Sponsors become committee members, and committee members become Life Sponsors and Major Donors. Here in Florida Steve Hendrix from Bartow has agreed to be your Florida State Sponsor Chairman. Steve is working with several other state chairmen to develop a new Region 7 plan for Bronze Sponsors. You will be hearing more on this shortly.

In early June a re-alignment of North and South Florida regions was completed. Brett Bainter will have responsibility of several more chapters extending into the old North Florida region. This new alignment will help provide closer coverage to some committees near central Florida. Our new Regional Director for North Florida is Clint Murphy. Clint will have the North Florida region as well as some Georgia committees to service. Please join me in welcoming Clint to Florida. As soon as you meet Clint you will realize he is hard working, energetic and has the DU as his focus.

Please remember that Jimmy Sparks is our SBA chairman. If your committee does not have at least one SBA you are missing out on several thousand dollars per year that will help the ducks. SBA is the easiest way to add $5000 to your committee’s annual results. Running a new SBA will also win your committee a gun.

Winning incentive guns for Bronze Sponsors and SBA start ups and using the guns for event raffles, is the best way to send dollars back to DU. It is a win / win for the ducks.

My special thanks for all of those folks who have helped make the summer workshops fun, provided food and drinks, and a place to hold the workshop.

To all the Florida DU volunteers and members a large “Thank You” for all your help and continued support of DU

Have a safe and happy summer.

Ralph

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**FLORIDA STATE OFFICERS**

**State Chairman** – Ralph Putnam

- **State Recruitment Chairman (State Chairman Elect)** – Don Bork
- **State Treasurer** – Felicity Hendrix
- **State Webmaster** - Kevin Bork
- **Major Donor Chairman South** – Chuck Bohac

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- **State Sponsor Chairman** – Steve Hendrix
- **State SBA Chairman** – Jimmy Sparks
- **State Duck Calling Chairman** - Marc Stepbach
- **Major Donor Chairman North** – Bob Freeland
The U.S. House of Representatives recently passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act that addresses climate change. Ducks Unlimited did not lobby for passage of that climate bill. Nor does Ducks Unlimited endorse the "cap and trade" component of the legislation. Also, we have not asked our members to call their representatives in Washington, D.C., to support it.

Over the last decade and more, DU has produced scientific documents that support similar programs that can be beneficial for waterfowl and their habitat. Like all broad reaching legislation, such programs exist in many different forms. The cap and trade provisions in the current American Clean Energy and Security Act, that is now headed for the Senate, is not in a form that we support or oppose. We are neutral on the legislation. Although some people have accused us of supporting cap and trade in the current proposed legislation, we have not.

As directed by the board of directors, DU has provided guidance to Congress on aspects of the bill that pertain to fish and wildlife habitat and carbon off-set programs. Our guidance pertains to waterfowl habitat, for example the wetlands for the Prairie Pothole region. This legislation does contain components that have direct benefits for North America’s waterfowl. Our participation in this is aimed at expanding wetlands restoration and protection programs (our mission). Talking points are attached for your reference as you engage in conversation about DU’s involvement in this legislation.

DU’s participation in the public policy arena (along with emphasis on science-based decisions and focus on priority areas) is one of the critical elements in achieving our mission. As we evaluate public policies, we should assess positions and outcomes against the backdrop of our mission:

Ducks Unlimited conserves, restores and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America’s waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people.

Our goal in participating in this complex and politically charged dialogue is to be an advocate for waterfowl habitat and waterfowl hunters. We have engaged in the legislative process for years and we continue to be committed to engaging in public policy issues based on an objective of guiding development of these policies through the best available science.

I trust this discussion adds to our understanding of the issues and puts us all in a position to be an advocate for DU and for waterfowl habitat as we navigate this process.

–Randy Graves, Executive Vice President, Ducks Unlimited

DU Executive Vice President Don Young resigns

MEMPHIS, Tenn. – July 10, 2009 – After 10 years as Ducks Unlimited’s top-ranking official, Don Young said today he is resigning as executive vice president. The resignation is effective Aug. 1, 2009.

Young led the organization in launching the largest conservation campaign in history, Wetlands For Tomorrow, which has a fundraising goal of $1.7 billion by December 2010. The campaign has currently raised more than $1.5 billion. DU has conserved nearly 13 million acres, 4.4 million of those under Young’s leadership.

Prior to joining Ducks Unlimited, Inc., Young served four years as the executive vice president for Ducks Unlimited Canada. Before joining DU Canada, he was a principal and board member with Golder Associates, Ltd., one of the world’s leading engineering and environmental consulting firms. In this role, he directed Golder’s environmental impact assessment practice for industrial and governmental clients.

W. Bruce Lewis, chairman of the DU board of directors, said a national search for a new executive vice president will begin immediately. He said Randy Graves, DU’s chief financial officer and executive secretary, has been named interim executive vice president. Young will continue to work with his successor to ensure a smooth transition, said Lewis.
Golden Retreat Redlin Canvas
- Fourth and final edition in the Terry Redlin Retreat canvas series
- Redlin’s use of earthy colors, blazing sunrises and sunsets and nostalgic themes are often cited for his immense popularity
- Ducks Unlimited has already raised over $4 million from the revival of these images on canvas
- 24” x 36”

Mossberg 4x4, Bolt Action Rifle B0995
- .300 Win. Mag.
- Marinecote finish
- Weaver style bases
- 3x9x40 variable scope mounted and bore sighted
- Gun lock, drop box magazine
- 24” brushed stainless steel barrel & receiver
- Monte Carlo laminate stock
- DU medallion on pistol grip
- Ducks Unlimited gun case included

Redhead “Shooting Rig” Drake
- The fifth decoy in the Shooting Rig series
- Created by World Champion carver Dick Rhode
- Ducks Unlimited bronze medallion is inlaid in the keel along with the carver’s embossed signature
- Special online offer to purchase the Redhead Hen
- 14” x 8 ¾” x 7”

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR FLORIDA

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Becoming a DU Sponsor in now easier with Monthly Giving

The Ducks Unlimited recurring sponsor program is a convenient way to make a monthly gift and make a difference towards conserving North America's most threatened wetlands.

Every 10 minutes, one acre of wetlands is lost in the United States. Each year, the United States alone loses more than 80,000 acres of wetlands.

Fortunately, Ducks Unlimited is committed to stopping this loss. By becoming a Sponsor, you will save one acre of vital wetland habitat. Our vision is skies full of waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever. It's an awe inspiring goal, but we can't do it without your support!

How it Works:

- You choose a yearly sponsorship level below. Click the name to view benefits for each level.
  - Bronze: $250 ($20.84 per month)
  - Silver: $500 ($41.67 per month)
  - Gold: $1,000 ($83.34 per month)

- Choose whether you would like to use a credit card or have your pledge automatically drafted from a bank account.

- DU will charge the pledge to your credit card or bank account each month (all charges are made on the 16th of each month).

- Each year, we will send you an annual giving statement which can be used for tax purposes.

- You may choose to automatically renew your sponsorship each year, ensuring that you will never miss an issue of Ducks Unlimited Magazine.

Sign up today using our safe and secure online form to become a recurring sponsor of Ducks Unlimited!

Sponsor Levels & Benefits

- DU membership card
- The exclusive DU Sponsor Wind Jacket
- 2 unique DU decals (one duck head and one DU shield)
- 6 bimonthly issues of Ducks Unlimited Magazine, a publication for the waterfowl lover, the sportsman and the conservationist
- Tax receipt for your donation
- Opportunities to receive updates and to participate in special product offers from DU and its partners
- Immediate access to the Members Only section of the Ducks Unlimited Web site

Bronze Monthly Sponsor - $20.84 per month:
As a Bronze Sponsor, you will receive:
- Bronze Sponsor decal and lapel pin

Silver Monthly Sponsor - $41.67 per month:
As a Silver Sponsor, you will receive:
- Silver Sponsor decal and lapel pin

Gold Monthly Sponsor - $83.34 per month:
As a Gold Sponsor, you will receive:
- Gold Sponsor decal and lapel pin

"SAVE AN ACRE – BECOME A SPONSOR!"
Greatly Improved Habitat Conditions Increase Ducks for 2009

MEMPHIS, Tenn. - July 2, 2009 - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) released its preliminary report today on mid-continent breeding ducks and habitats, based on surveys conducted in May and early June. Total duck populations were estimated at 42 million breeding ducks on the surveyed area. This estimate represents a 13 percent increase over last year's estimate of 37.3 million birds and is 25 percent above the 1955-2008 long-term average.

"The increase in duck numbers in relation to the increase in habitat conditions is consistent with what we would expect to see in U.S. and Canadian breeding grounds this spring," said Ducks Unlimited's Executive Vice President Don Young. "History has repeatedly shown that when water returns to the breeding grounds ducks respond with a strong breeding effort."

In addition to extensive grassland cover, one of the most important elements in duck breeding success is the amount of water present in portions of prairie and parkland Canada and north-central United States. Total pond counts for the United States and Canada combined showed 6.4 million ponds, a 45 percent increase from last year's estimate, and 31 percent above the long-term average. Habitat conditions in 2009 were mostly a good news scenario. Conditions across the southern portions of the Canadian and U.S prairies improved considerably from 2008.

However, drought remained in some parts of the traditional survey area, including western portions of the Prairie Pothole Region. Southern Alberta saw a decrease in ponds of 19 percent. This area contrasted sharply with record amounts of snow and rainfall in the Dakotas. The north-central U.S., which includes the Dakotas, saw a 108 percent increase in total ponds. Above average snowfall this winter and considerable precipitation in late spring recharged wetlands across the Dakotas and eastern Montana.

The Canadian parklands received below-normal precipitation, but waterfowl habitat in this area continued to benefit from above-normal precipitation received in 2007. In the Boreal Forest, spring break-up was delayed as much as three weeks and most large lakes across the region remained frozen in early June. Overall habitat conditions in this important region were considered good.

The FWS spring surveys provide the scientific basis for many management programs across the continent including the setting of hunting regulations. The four Flyway Councils will meet in late July to recommend and adopt the season structure and bag limits for 2009-10. Individual states will make their specific selections within a federal framework of season length, bag limit, and outside dates. Hunters should check their state's rules for final dates.

The 2009 report is filled with positive news for all duck species. As might be expected, most breeding populations increased as habitat conditions significantly improved from 2008 to 2009. Of the commonly surveyed species four of the 10 showed a significant increase, and six of 10 were significantly above their long-term averages.

"The increase in breeding mallard populations to numbers above their long-term average could very well be good news for hunters," said DU's Chief Biologist Dale Humburg. "Although we also know that migration timing and local conditions will also be important in this fall’s hunting prospects."

Other notable increases from 2008 include canvasbacks (+35 percent), northern shovelers (+25 percent) and northern pintails (+23 percent). Pintail numbers increased for the first time since 2006, but remain 20 percent below the long-term average.

"The return of water to the north-central U.S. and much of Prairie Canada improved much of the core pintail breeding area," said Humburg. "The strong wetland conditions likely will lead to increased pintail production and much needed recruitment into the fall flight."

Scaup numbers were above four million for the first time since 2000. Breeding scaup numbers, however, remain 18 percent below their long-term average and continue to be a species of concern.

Continued on next page...
Other species above the long-term averages were *gadwall*, *green-winged teal*, *blue-winged teal*, northern shoveler and *redheads*. Estimated American wigeon abundance was similar to 2008 and the long-term (-1 percent and -5 percent, respectively). Although canvases increased significantly from 2008 they were not significantly different in number from the long-term.

Since 1990, surveys have been conducted in eastern North America. Good habitat was found across the eastern survey area. Population estimates for the 10 most abundant species surveyed were similar to last year and to the 1990-2008 averages.

Wet and dry cycles, where water levels fluctuate over time, are vital components of maintaining wetland productivity. This is true for all wetlands, but is especially important for the prairie potholes of the northern plains. While hunters and ducks rejoice with the return of water, droughts are important in rejuvenating wetlands. As evident by this year, dedication to conservation, even through dry cycles, can pay off when water returns to the prairies and wetlands again teem with breeding waterfowl and other wildlife.

"Habitat is the core factor driving the health of duck populations and the size of the fall flight," said Humburg. "Habitat also is a key for waterfowl in migration and for hunters. This year, spring and early summer flooding in the Midwest and South, drought in some portions of the Prairies, and extremely dry conditions in parts of the west, could affect migration and hunting habitat."

Improvement in water conditions is only part of the story. Water without nesting cover does little to improve the duck outlook. As good as the news is this week, waterfowl and prairie habitats continue to face greater long-term threats. Grassland habitat is under siege on many fronts and is being lost at alarming rates. The U.S. Prairie Pothole Region lost more than 1.2 million Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres since 2007 (another 3.1 million acres will expire by 2012), and more than 3.3 million acres of native prairie are projected to be lost during the next five years.

"There has never been a time more important than today to maintain our focus on restoring and protecting these habitats, so when wet conditions return, ducks can continue to successfully produce future generations," said Young.


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**Important conservation program expires soon**

**Congressional sportsmen renew call for conservation**

WASHINGTON – July 16, 2009 – A bipartisan group of lawmakers are calling for an extension of a popular habitat conservation program that saves taxpayer’s money. Members of the Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus held a briefing to promote conservation easements on private land.

"The majority of undeveloped lands for wildlife habitat—including more than 75 percent of the remaining wetlands in the United States—are privately held," said Barton James, Director of Public Policy for Ducks Unlimited. "Conservation easements are a win-win solution for landowners that want to protect their land—their land is conserved and they receive a break on their taxes."

Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus co-chairman Rep. Dan Boren (Okla.) spoke about how he personally used an easement to protect 150 acres of his family’s ranch in Oklahoma. "My family decided to place a conservation easement on our family farm to ensure that future generations would still be able to use the land for hunting and recreation," said Boren. "It is a decision that I hope other Americans will make so that we protect an important part of our way of life."

The legislation that allows landowners to protect their land by donating easements to conservation groups like Ducks Unlimited expires at the end of the year, prompting the briefing and subsequent letter to the entire Caucus, urging them to support extending the life of the provision.

"Conservation easements are a critical tool for helping private landowners protect their land for future generations, and I’m happy to lead an effort to extend these options for landowners across the country," said Rep. Paul Ryan (Wisc.), the other co-chairman for the House of Representatives for the caucus.

More than 160 members of Congress have co-sponsored legislation that would make conservation easement donation incentives permanent.

Ducks Unlimited members and supporters are encourage to contact their members of Congress and ask them to support conservation easements. Please visit [www.ducks.org/taxes](http://www.ducks.org/taxes) for the latest news on conservation easements.