Covering most of the southeastern US and encompassing many of the nation’s most recognized wetlands, the Southeast Wetlands Initiative focuses on the restoration, enhancement and protection of wetlands used by millions of waterfowl as they winter and return to the breeding grounds each year. The initiative also supports science, policy and outreach efforts important to waterfowl conservation.

The Southeast Wetlands Initiative is a crucial part of Ducks Unlimited’s Rescue Our Wetlands Campaign, a seven-year, $2-billion effort aimed at changing the face of conservation in North America. Rescue Our Wetlands is the largest wetlands and waterfowl conservation campaign in history.

CONSERVATION UPDATE

Since 1989, Ducks Unlimited has conserved more than 190,300 acres across the Palmetto State, investing more than $37.7 million in South Carolina wetlands and other key habitats! Conservation activities in the past year include private land protection through conservation easements and habitat restoration projects on Bonneau Ferry Wildlife Management Area and ACE Basin and Santee national wildlife refuges.

Ducks Unlimited’s goal is to secure the future of waterfowl in the state and throughout North America. DU is actively working to protect, restore and enhance wetland habitats in South Carolina and on the breeding grounds most important to South Carolina’s wintering waterfowl, including the Prairie Pothole Region and the southern Ontario region of Canada. By strategically focusing conservation efforts in the state and on the breeding grounds important to South Carolina’s waterfowl, DU hopes to improve waterfowling opportunities for the citizens of South Carolina.

VOLUNTEER REPORT

Volunteer fundraisers are the heartbeat of Ducks Unlimited, and South Carolina has some of the best. The Palmetto State boasts more than 17,500 members, including dedicated volunteers who hosted 92 events in 2015, raising $1.17 million to support DU’s conservation mission.

Regional Director James Meadows is proud of the Florence DU Chapter. He credits Area Chair Dave Hamingsen with providing the leadership to turn the chapter around. Though this was the first time Dave served as area chair, he’s been a volunteer for more than 30 years. Working for the ducks is a family tradition for the Hamingsens. Dave’s son, Derek, was the area chair for several years when the chapter was at another high, and his son, Daniel, is an active committee member and handles all their gun transactions. Dave started his term with a happy hour recruitment event sponsored by Red Bone Alley in Florence. With the help of existing volunteers, he recruited 30 new committee members.

Another chapter leader, Lee Daugherty, started a new sponsor campaign that generated 14 new Gold Sponsors and many new Bronze Sponsors. The chapter’s Fall Oyster Roast Event increased net by more than 40 percent and increased efficiency by more than 50 percent. The group followed it with a Greenwing Event, hosting more than 100 kids and 45 parents, many of whom were new to DU.

Dave Hamingsen & Lee Daugherty are two of SCDU’s dedicated volunteers.
PARTNER SPOTLIGHT - SCDNR

Last year Ducks Unlimited recognized the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) for 50 years of supporting waterfowl habitat on the Canadian breeding grounds through the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies’ (AFWA) State Contributions to Canada Program. The SCDNR has contributed $2.7 million through 2015.

In addition to working together to leverage their contributions to conservation on the breeding grounds, DU and SCDNR established a cooperative wetland agreement at home. This agreement establishes a formal working relationship between the organizations to facilitate the development of wetlands in order to provide habitat and maintain and increase waterfowl populations for the best interest of the people of SC. This agreement will improve efficiencies in project development by utilizing the expertise of DU biologist and engineers on state wildlife management area projects.

SOUTH CAROLINA 2015 QUICK FACTS

- >$1.17 MILLION raised
- >146,500 acres conserved
- 1,170 Sponsors
- 330 Major Sponsors
- >17,500 members

The time to Rescue Our Wetlands is right now!

Band together with us today.

To find out more ways you can help Rescue Our Wetlands through our regional initiatives, visit www.ducks.org/rescue or contact Ducks Unlimited at 601-956-1936

DU volunteers raise funds for important public land projects like this one at Bear Island WMA, which they toured during a SCDU State Convention.

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