



Large wetlands and shallow lakes represent the cornerstones of Minnesota and Iowa's waterfowl, serving as a vital link between southern wintering and northern breeding grounds. With your support, DU's Living Lakes Initiative will focus on rejuvenating these habitats.



LIVING LAKES INITIATIVE



THE LIVING LAKES NEED YOU NOW

Your gift to Ducks Unlimited is invaluable, and it is truly the greatest contribution you can make to secure the future of wetlands and waterfowl.

Every dollar you give to Ducks Unlimited is leveraged multiple times to create a conservation impact far beyond your initial gift. In addition, we invest at least 80 cents of every dollar received in our conservation mission. Start making a difference right now for waterfowl, outdoorsmen, and future generations of wildlife and people by making your gift to DU's Living Lakes Initiative. Help conserve more than 20,000 acres of shallow lakes and associated waterfowl habitats with your gift today.

Don't wait.
Call DU at **(734) 623-2000** today to speak with fundraising staff in your area.



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CONSERVING MINNESOTA AND IOWA'S WETLANDS AND SHALLOW LAKES AS VITAL STEPPING STONES FOR WATERFOWL MIGRATING BETWEEN SOUTHERN WINTERING AND NORTHERN BREEDING GROUNDS EACH YEAR

Across much of Minnesota and north-central Iowa, shallow lakes dot the landscape. These lakes were historically rich with freshwater shrimp and aquatic vegetation that are critical to waterfowl during migration and breeding. These wetlands range in size from small, seasonal, and temporary basins in southern latitudes to deeper, more permanent palustrine wetlands and large shallow lakes in northern latitudes. They represent prairie pothole habitat and are part of the “Duck Factory” that supports waterfowl breeding and migrating across the continent in fall and spring.

The landscape of the Living Lakes Initiative area was daunting to early pioneers because of the density of the wetlands, but the landscape has changed. More than 90 percent of the region’s prairie potholes have been lost due to drainage and conversion,

and more than 99 percent of its prairies have been plowed under or paved over. These cumulative impacts have resulted in a significant decline in breeding and migrating waterfowl numbers in both states, while simultaneously accelerating the decline in waterfowl hunters.

Today, the large wetlands and shallow lakes that remain represent the cornerstones of Minnesota and Iowa’s waterfowl and other migratory bird habitat, serving as a vital link between southern wintering and northern breeding grounds. Waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, and other migratory bird species depend heavily on these critical stopover areas to rest and refuel during spring and fall migration. The Living Lakes Initiative needs your help.



CROSS-BORDER CONSERVATION



Migratory waterfowl are a shared continental resource and know no borders. Thus, DU must work across North America to ensure a bright future for waterfowl and the people who enjoy them. By contributing to DU’s Living Lakes Initiative, you will be supporting critical waterfowl habitat conservation in the Living Lakes Initiative area, as well as priority breeding grounds in the Prairie Pothole Region and Western Boreal Forest, where the vast majority of waterfowl are produced prior to making their way south each fall.



RESOURCES BEYOND WETLANDS

The Living Lakes Initiative area is home to more than just waterfowl and wetlands. The region holds vast human, political, and philanthropic capital, accounting for only 3 percent of the U.S. population but nearly 10 percent of Ducks Unlimited members nationwide. The waterfowling tradition is strong within the region, which is home to 8 percent of America’s waterfowl hunters and DU’s mission-critical Major Sponsors.

Residents of the Living Lakes Initiative area recognize the value of the region’s shallow lakes and wetlands not only to waterfowl and other wildlife, but also to their own lives and communities. With your support, Ducks Unlimited will work to ensure a strong future for this region by conserving, restoring, and protecting these important habitats not only for ducks, but also for the strong contingent of dedicated waterfowl hunters who depend upon the resources of the Living Lakes landscape to produce healthy flocks year after year.



LIVING LAKES INITIATIVE AT A GLANCE

FIVE-YEAR INITIATIVE GOALS (FY 2012-16)

- Habitat Delivery: 20,000 acres
- Public Revenue: \$28.8 million
- Philanthropic Revenue: \$4.6 million
- Total Revenue Goal: \$33.4 million

INITIATIVE STATES

Iowa and Minnesota

CONSERVATION FOCUS

The vision of the Living Lakes Initiative is to enhance, restore, and protect managed shallow lakes and wetlands from central Iowa through northern Minnesota to provide high-quality aquatic food and habitat resources for migrating and breeding waterfowl. Living Lakes helps preserve our rich waterfowling heritage and augments conservation of the Prairie Pothole Region.

DU’S FIVE-YEAR PLAN FOR THE LIVING LAKES

To strategically address these concerns and maximize habitat benefits for continental waterfowl populations, Ducks Unlimited and its partners have focused and accelerated wetlands conservation efforts in these states on restoring, enhancing, and protecting wetland complexes that include large marshes and shallow lakes. These wetland habitats provide critical staging and foraging areas

that waterfowl depend on during spring and fall migration and also serve as the core of the habitat left for waterfowl that breed here. DU’s wetlands conservation work under the Living Lakes Initiative will help rejuvenate productive wetland ecology and provide critical waterfowl food resources, including invertebrates, submerged aquatic vegetation, and wild rice.

MAXIMIZING THE POWER OF A DOLLAR

In many instances, your conservation investment allows DU to leverage your gift with other private, public, and contractual funds, sometimes matching it as many as seven or eight times.