



News from the Nest

June 6, 2008

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Latest From Our W.R.O

Landowners Now Taking Land Out of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) at Alarming Pace

The attached [article](#) from the Progressive Farmer magazine illustrates the growing plight facing waterfowl habitat enthusiasts as high commodity prices turn farmers from setting aside lands for conservation through CRP to planting production crops. We face significant CRP losses, for example in the Prairie Pothole Region where CRP has been protecting millions of acres and producing over 2 million ducks per year.

Canadians Support Boreal Forest Protection

According to a poll just released, nine in ten Canadians who consider themselves voters and who represent all party lines support greater protection of the Canadian Boreal Forest. The new national poll was conducted by McAllister Opinion Research for the Canadian Boreal Initiative. See details of the poll in the [attached](#) announcement.

Canadian Boreal Forest Tar Sand Mining

Last time I sent an update I included information about a response of leaders of First Nations to tar sand mining who issued an address to the United Nations. I indicated Ducks Unlimited and Ducks Unlimited Canada work with First Nations on boreal forest wetlands, water and waterfowl conservation issues. The address by the First Nation leaders also covered human rights and public health issues. I did not mean to imply that DU or DUC engages in partnership with First Nations on human rights or public health issues. DU's involvement and any partnerships on boreal forest matters focus on waterfowl and waterfowl habitat.

California Drought?

I just received an interesting report on water conditions in California from the California Department of Water Resources. According to that report the statewide Water Year runoff estimate through September, 2008 now stands at 59% of average. That's calculated using conditions through May 20. The estimate stood at 67% near May 1, but the forecast continues to drop. Total forecasted runoff has a number of ingredients, including snowmelt, previous year runoff, rainfall (both early season and late), runoff to date, and projected runoff. Each of these factors have been below normal this year, and most were last year, as well. Last year ended "Dry" and "Critical" for the Sacramento and San Joaquin systems, respectively. Then October through December precipitation was below average. It was a cold winter, with only two good months of snow; January and February. Some was lost to dry ground, and possibly to sublimation (essentially evaporation from snow to vapor) during a windy, dry spring. We've had the driest spring on record for the Northern Sierra in the last 88 years. Statewide rainfall still stands only at 74% of average for the year. Runoff to May 1 was only 57% of normal. The report's author stated, "It's like a perfect storm, or more accurately, a perfect non-storm."

New DU Projects

Odegard Wetland Restoration – San Juan County, Washington

This project will enhance approximately 30 acres of drained palustrine emergent wetlands on privately owned land on San Juan Island. Project activities include installation of a water control structure in a drainage ditch in order to return natural hydrology to wetlands and provide for adaptive management practices. Water levels within the restored wetland will be maintained through summer months, providing brood

habitat for locally breeding mallards. The enhanced wetland conditions will also provide ideal migration and wintering habitat for pintails and scaup. DU will complete topographic survey, design and implementation of project. The San Juan Islands are an important area for migrating and wintering waterfowl and shorebirds. The freshwater wetland habitat on the islands provide migration, wintering and breeding habitat to wading birds, shorebirds and waterfowl as well as other wetland dependent species.

Anderson WRO Project – Klamath County, Oregon

Ducks Unlimited will work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and a private landowner to build this Wetlands Reserve Program project in the Langell Valley, east of Klamath Falls. The project is in the Lost River valley, an area where irrigation and water management projects have greatly altered natural hydrology. DU will design and build a series of low levees and water delivery ditches to flood and restore former floodplain wetlands. This project will restore over 600 acres of seasonal wetlands heavily utilized by migrating waterfowl. Large numbers of mallards, pintails, wigeon, Canada geese and white-fronted geese use this area during spring and fall migration. The 700-acre Randall WRP, adjacent to the project site, regularly supports over 10,000 ducks during migration. The Anderson WRP project will greatly expand the existing wetland complex.

Philpot Ranch Restoration – Bandon, Oregon

The loss of tidal wetlands, primarily through dike construction and subsequent draining, has been identified as a major factor contributing to the decline of fishery resources and overall estuarine productivity. The proposed project will restore approximately 430 acres of former tidal and brackish marsh on the Ni-les'tun Unit (also known as the Philpot Ranch) of the Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). This unit borders the Coquille River and historically comprised much of the lower Coquille River estuary. The Unit consists of former marine tidal fringe wetlands which were diked, drained and converted to pasture for agricultural use beginning in the late 1800's. Approximately 15 miles of drainage ditches and over 1.5 miles of dike have been constructed on the Unit, and three tidegates currently degrade the wetlands capacity to support waterfowl and impede connectivity of three salmon-bearing streams with the lower Coquille River. Fish observed using the Unit include multiple age classes of coastal cutthroat trout and juvenile coho salmon, steelhead, and Chinook salmon. Coastal cutthroat trout and coho salmon may spawn in two of the streams. The short-term conservation need is to restore natural hydrologic exchange and unrestricted fish access between the Coquille River and the Ni-les'tun Unit. The long-term need is to improve the quantity and quality of estuarine habitats in the lower Coquille River, which provide improved habitat for waterfowl and foraging and rearing habitats for native trout and other salmonids. The proposed restoration will nearly triple the tidal fringe habitat available to fish and wildlife in the lower Coquille River estuary

Salmon Creek Wetland Enhancement – Humboldt Bay, California

The goal of this project is to enhance approximately 450 acres of brackish coastal wetland habitat in the Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. The Salmon Creek Unit of the Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge has deteriorated in quality due to lack of control over water depths thus causing decreased wetland habitat and limiting hunter access. This project will remove twelve corrugated metal pipe water control structures in the Salmon Creek Unit that have deteriorated beyond repair and replace them with new culverts and concrete flashboard risers. This unit is used as a seasonal wetland to provide summer water management and is located in the public hunt area on the Shorebird Loop Trail. Overall, this project will enable wetland managers to better control vegetation and maintain productive wetlands, plus provide better hunter access.

Thank You,
Rudy Rosen
Director
Western Regional Office

[Stephen Walker...your new VSR!!!](#)

Hello DU Leaders,

My name is Stephen Walker, and I am your new Volunteer Services Representative (VSR) at National Headquarters. Let me give you a brief history about myself. I am a graduate from the University of Alabama where I helped start an outdoor television program for students by students. I am also an avid outdoorsman and share the same passion that you do about waterfowl hunting and the preservation of wetlands. In addition, I volunteered for the University of Alabama Ducks Unlimited chapter, so I know some of the challenges that face all of us as DU volunteers.

Here is some information about the services I provide. The VSR is here for you, the volunteer. If you ever have any questions or concerns you can contact me directly to help answer your questions. The VSR program does work, and I encourage you to utilize my services when planning your next DU gathering. Together, we can make your next Ducks Unlimited event your best Ducks Unlimited event!

Thanks, and I hope to hear from you soon,
Stephen Walker



[Volunteer Resources Link](#)

Are you looking for a blank Financial Report?

Do you need an overview of the Event Invitation Process?

Do you need a merchandise image for you program?

Our recently developed website allows DU volunteers to access information needed for successful event management.

The web link can be accessed by going to www.ducks.org/volunteer

The user name is: **duvolunteer**

The password is: **grassroots07**

Check out all of the fantastic volunteer resources this site has to offer!

In addition, in order to help prepare for upcoming Fall events, a copy of DU's event checklist is [HERE](#).

Ducks Unlimited Annual Convention Videos

Did you miss watching the Annual Convention live? If so, you can still check it out on the Web. Watch the replay of the Fireside Chat, where DU's top dogs answered member-submitted questions. Or watch DU's top biologists' eye-opening presentations on DU conservation initiatives throughout North America.

[Watch the videos](#)

For over six decades, Ducks Unlimited has maintained a singleness of purpose that has guided the organization to become the leading waterfowl and wetlands conservation entity in North America. Today, more than ever, Ducks Unlimited needs your help. The United States is losing more than 80,000 acres of [wetland habitat](#) annually. That's more than **seven football fields every hour!**

Thank You for all that you do for Ducks Unlimited!