

From: Murtaugh, Tim - OC, Washington, DC
To: [Green, Heidi - OSEC, Washington, DC](#); [Clovis, Sam - OSEC, Washington, DC](#); [Klippenstein, Brian - OSEC, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: Fwd: FOR REVIEW: Migratory Bird Conservation Commission release
Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2017 10:00:55 AM

This was flagged for me because Sec. Perdue is a member of this commission. It is likely to go out from Interior by the end of this week.

Any concerns?

Begin forwarded message:

From: Laura Rigas <laura_rigas@ios.doi.gov>
Date: April 26, 2017 at 9:52:54 AM EDT
To: <Tim.murtaugh@oc.usda.gov>
Subject: FOR REVIEW: Migratory Bird Conservation Commission release

Hi Tim -- Here's what we have so far. Clearly it will need to be edited if it's not sent out today or has changes.

Welcome your thoughts if you see issues.

Thanks!

My best,

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Laura Keehner Rigas
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**Secretary Zinke Announces Boost to Wetland,
Waterfowl Conservation, Access to Public Lands
Through Conservation Grants, Federal Duck Stamp
Funds**

\$38.8 million approved for wetland conservation projects; \$7.8 million to conserve 2,629 acres on national wildlife refuges and open thousands of additional acres to public hunting

WASHINGTON -- The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, chaired by U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke, today approved \$17.8 million in grants for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and its partners to conserve or restore more than 108,000 acres of wetland

and associated upland habitats for waterfowl, shorebirds and other birds in 14 states throughout the United States. Representing Secretary Zinke at the meeting was Acting Deputy Secretary of the Interior James Cason.

The grants, made through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA), will be matched by nearly \$40 million in partner funds. NAWCA grants ensure waterfowl and other birds are protected throughout their lifecycles.

"Hunting and fishing are the cornerstones of Americans' sportsmen heritage, and today, sportsmen and women are leading efforts in wildlife conservation," said Secretary Zinke. "The projects approved today by the commission will benefit hundreds of wetland and coastal bird species, other wildlife, and their habitats, ensuring we have the ability to pass our shared heritage down to our kids and grandkids."

Wetlands provide many ecological, economic and social benefits such as habitat for fish, wildlife and a variety of plants. NAWCA grants conserve bird populations and wetland habitat, while supporting local economies and American traditions such as hunting, fishing, birdwatching, family farming and cattle ranching. This year's projects include:

- North Dakota Great Plains Project IX: \$1 million to conserve 27,524 acres of wetlands and associated uplands for waterfowl breeding grounds and migration habitat. Wildlife that will benefit include northern pintail and long-billed curlew.
- Bay Densse Delta Management: \$999,989 to restore 3,060 acres of coastal habitats in two key basins in Louisiana. Seventy-five percent of project lands will provide opportunities for public hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation.
- Horicon Coastal Connection: \$1 million to protect, restore and enhance 6,154 acres of priority breeding and stopover habitat in southeastern Wisconsin. Species that will benefit include mallard, green-winged teal and northern pintail.

Since many of America's birds spend part of their time in other countries, NAWCA provides grants to Canada and Mexico as well, to ensure waterfowl and other birds are protected throughout their lifecycles. The commission approved more than \$21 million for 17 projects in those countries.

NAWCA is the only federal grant program dedicated to the conservation of wetland habitats for migratory birds. Since 1989, funding has advanced the conservation of wetland habitats and their wildlife in all 50 U.S. states, Canada and Mexico while engaging more than 5,700 partners in over 2,700 projects. More information

about the grant projects is available [here](#).

The commission also approved more than \$7.8 million from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund to conserve 2,629 acres for four national wildlife refuges. The approvals will improve refuge management capability and enable the Service to open thousands of additional acres to public waterfowl hunting for the first time. These funds were raised largely through the sale of Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps, commonly known as "Duck Stamps."

"I grew up with a fly rod in one hand and a rifle in the other, hunting and fishing on our public lands and waters. Programs like the Duck Stamp are important tools we use to guarantee the future of hunting and fishing conservation efforts," Secretary Zinke said. "That Duck Stamp puts hunting revenues back into public lands to improve access and enhance opportunities for millions of sportsmen and women, outdoor recreationists and nature enthusiasts."

For every dollar spent on Federal Duck Stamps, 98 cents goes toward the acquisition or lease of habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System. Duck Stamps – while required by waterfowl hunters as an annual license – are also voluntarily purchased by birders, outdoor enthusiasts and fans of national wildlife refuges who understand the value of preserving some of the most diverse and important wildlife habitats in our nation.

The following national wildlife refuges are approved for funding:

- Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, Maryland: \$415,900
- Dale Bumpers White River National Wildlife Refuge, Arkansas: \$186,000
- Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge, Arkansas: \$101,000
- Upper Klamath National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon: \$7,144,000

Since 1934, the Federal Duck Stamp Program and Migratory Bird Conservation Fund have provided more than \$800 million for habitat conservation in the Refuge System.

The FWS is responsible for managing more than 850 million acres of lands and waters in the [National Wildlife Refuge System](#), including five marine national monuments plus two national monuments, 566 national wildlife refuges and 38 wetland management districts. Refuges offer world-class public recreation, from fishing, hunting and wildlife observation to photography and environmental education. Every state and U.S. territory has at least one national wildlife refuge.

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The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission is chaired by the Secretary of the Interior. Its members include U.S. Senators Thad Cochran of Mississippi and Martin Heinrich of New Mexico; Representatives Robert J. Wittman of Virginia and Mike Thompson of California; Sonny Perdue, Secretary of Agriculture; and EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt. The commission has helped in conserving much of this Nation's most important waterfowl habitat and in establishing or enhancing many of our Nation's most popular destinations for waterfowl hunting.

Additional information about North American wetlands and waterfowl conservation can be found at <https://www.fws.gov/birds/>, which offers waterfowl enthusiasts, biologists and agency administrators with the most up-to-date waterfowl habitat and waterfowl population information.

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