

2022

Ducks Unlimited Canada – Manitoba
Conservation Programs

It pays to work with us



Ducks Unlimited
Canada

*DUC conservation programs are
made possible with funding from:*



Farm less **earn more**



Winter wheat harvest on a farm partnering with DUC near Sandy Lake MB

For over 80 years, we've been partnering with land-owners like you, raising better cattle and growing better crops.

We provide programs to make your farm more profitable and more sustainable, backed by scientific research and on-farm testing.

Yes, our work restores and protects wetland and upland habitat to benefit waterfowl and wildlife. But those very same wetlands and uplands are critical for sustainable farming.

Ask a DUC programs specialist about the many ways you can improve productivity on your farm or ranch while also receiving financial incentives.

When we share a vision for the land, everyone wins.

Options for you

Conservation Programs:

- ⊕ **Conservation Agreements**
- ⊕ **Wetland Restoration**
- ⊕ **Land Sales - Revolving Land Conservation Program**

Land Management Programs:

- ⊕ **Forage**
- ⊕ **Hay and Grazing Tenders**
- ⊕ **Grazing Clubs**
- ⊕ **Winter Wheat**
- ⊕ **Marginal Areas Program (MAP)**

Why is DUC interested in conserving **my land**?

You and your land are important.

Southwest Manitoba is dotted with shallow wetlands, part of the Prairie Pothole Region.

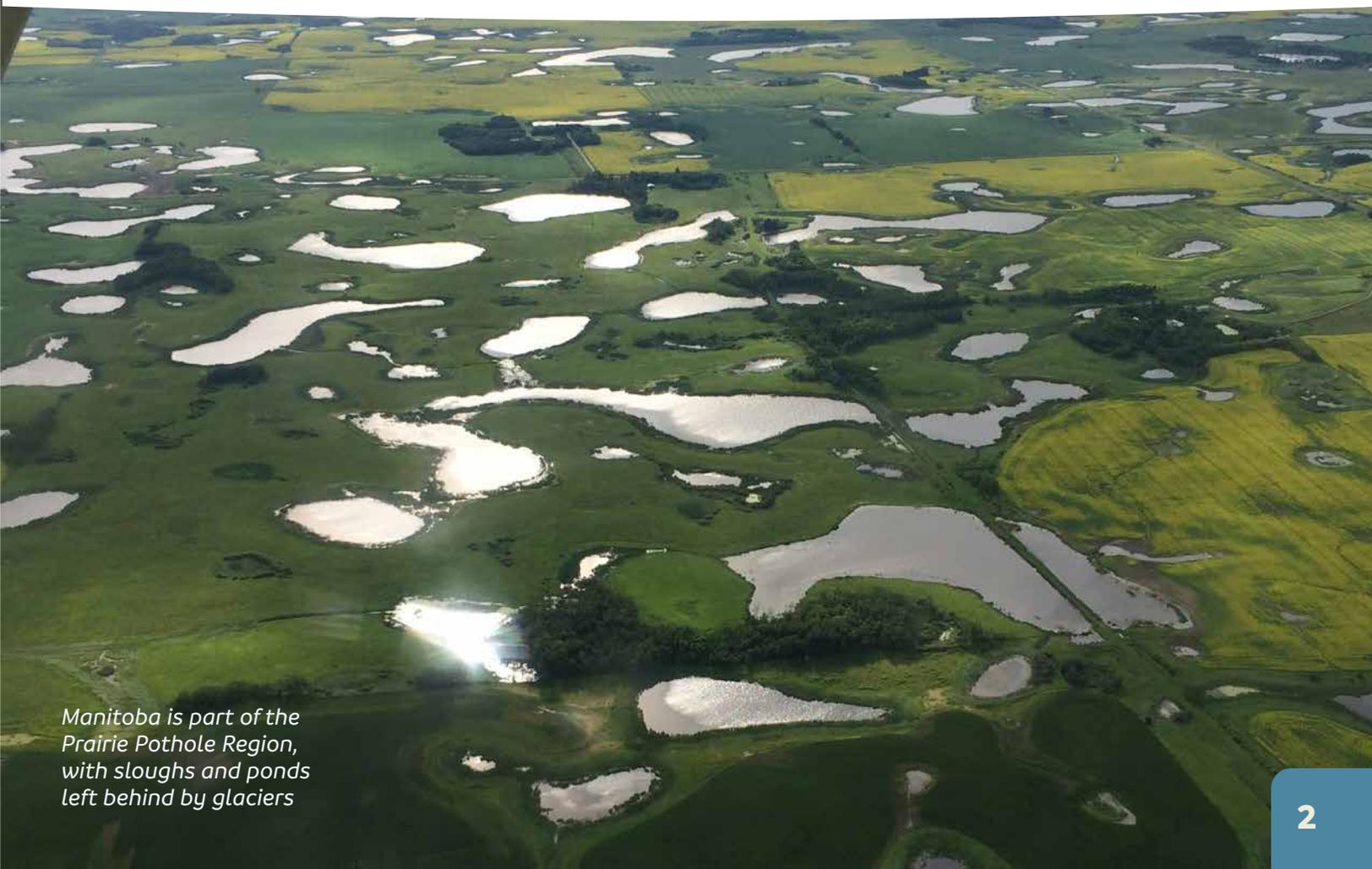
Draining those wetlands destroys wildlife habitat, contributes to a decline in water quality, can damage private and municipal infrastructure, and can worsen drought and flood conditions.

And, the Prairie Pothole Region is among the best waterfowl breeding area on the planet. It's home to more than 600 species of plants and animals, including more than 50 at-risk.

The good news is wetlands can be restored and protected - with your help.

Research shows that up to 70% of wetlands in Manitoba's farmlands have been lost or degraded, and pressure to drain them continues.

At last count, Manitoba was losing 3.6 hectares (nine acres) of wetlands per day. That's 4.5 CFL football fields every 24 hours.



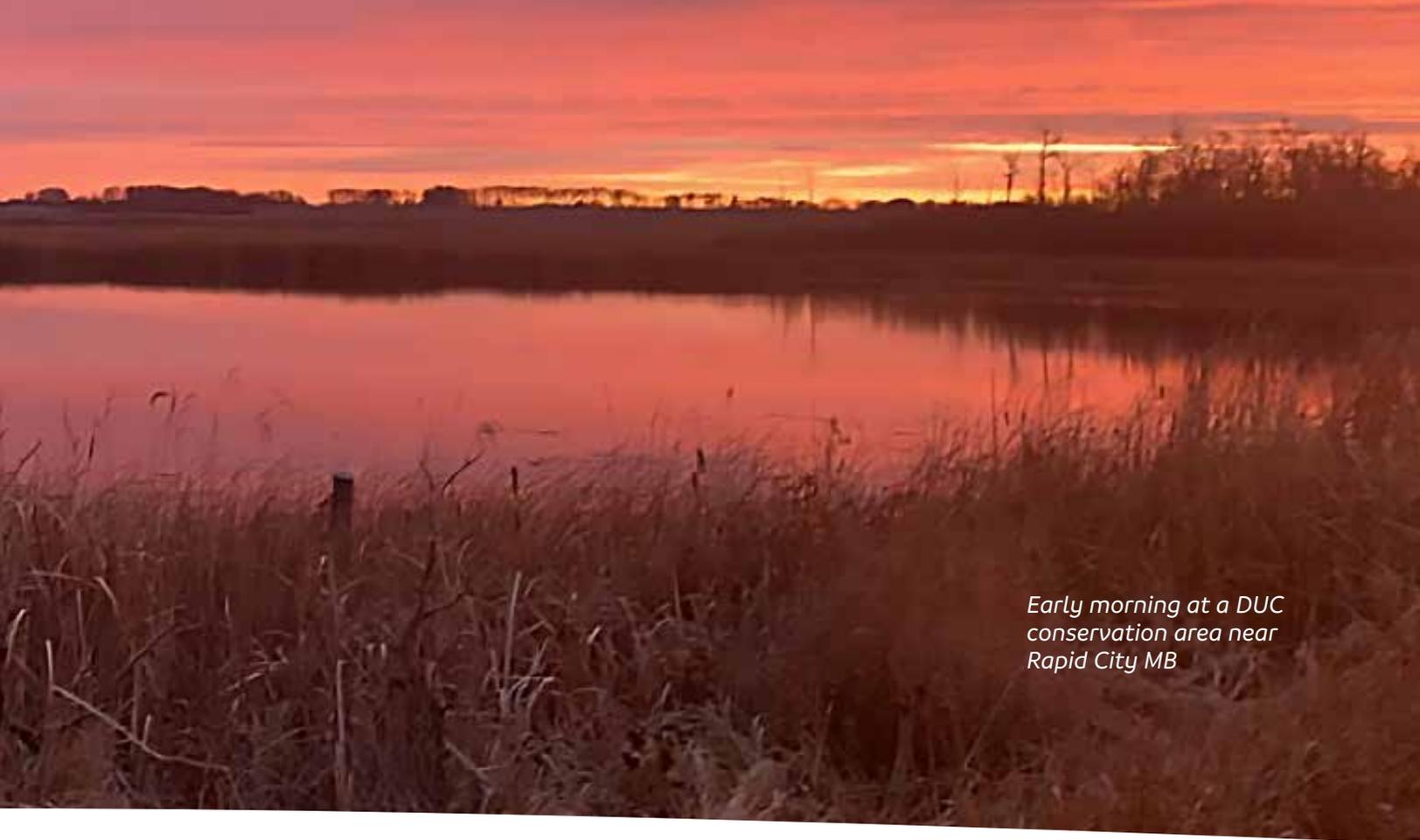
Manitoba is part of the Prairie Pothole Region, with sloughs and ponds left behind by glaciers

Conservation Options



We all benefit by preserving natural areas

- + Reduce downstream flooding, nutrient runoff and erosion by holding water on the landscape and releasing it gradually
- + Provide forage and water for livestock during drought
- + Improve water quality
- + Provide habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife
- + Enjoy opportunities to hunt, fish, canoe and other recreational activities
- + Help fight climate change



Early morning at a DUC conservation area near Rapid City MB

"If people ask me about DUC conservation agreements, and some do, I tell them it can fit very nicely with livestock operations. Some of our land has been in the family since 1917 and has evolved to become mostly a livestock operation that values the wetlands, sloughs, trees and native grasses on the lighter land. As a result, we have a generous wildlife population and feel very fortunate to be able to enjoy such a landscape. A DUC conservation agreement allows us to preserve the treasure we have for future generations while providing income to help with retirement, without selling the land. A DUC conservation agreement worked for us and our livestock operation and at the same time is friendly to wetlands, wildlife and the environment in general."

Brian Sterling
Tilston MB

"It's been 140 years since my great-grandfather homesteaded and I've spent almost my entire life on this farm. For the past 50 years my wife Vicki has also shared the opportunity to enjoy the deer, an occasional moose, coyotes, foxes, and the flocks of geese and ducks that frequent our natural habitat. For us, the ravine known as Brierwood Creek, the bluffs, the sloughs and low-lying areas are cherished as the views our family has shared over the last four generations. We have an emotional attachment to the land and the form in which it exists. A DUC agreement provides the opportunity to save the past for the future. The land that individuals purchase to farm is not just land with an economic value. The land should continue to reflect the generations of people who have preceded us."

Ken and Vicki Smith
Hamiota, MB



Spring crocuses overlook a wetland near Cartright MB

Conservation Agreements

Wetlands are places where memories are made. Perhaps you remember playing among the cattails with your friends, or learning to hunt with your parents, or skating on a frozen pond with your own children.

Protect those memories by protecting the land.

A Conservation Agreement is a legal tool that allows landowners to protect natural areas on a piece of property. You maintain ownership and receive a one-time payment from DUC based on market value. The average landowner payment last year was \$98,000.

While you can graze or hay without restriction, a Conservation Agreement prevents the breaking or draining of wetlands or uplands, in perpetuity. The exception is “occasionally cultivated wetlands”, which can be broken during dry periods. Tame uplands can be cultivated for rejuvenation once every 10 years.

DUC has Conservation Agreements with hundreds of Manitoba landowners, covering thousands of acres. Preserve natural areas. Conserve wildlife habitat. Protect your land and your memories, forever.

Options

Ponds and Sloughs

A Conservation Agreement prevents draining or filling of ponds and sloughs in perpetuity. You pick which ones on your land to protect.

Ask us about options to seed through ponds during dry years.

Grasslands

Native grasslands are protected in perpetuity from breaking or cultivation but can be grazed and hayed.

Tame grasslands can be cultivated at 10-year intervals to guard against weeds and maintain productivity, in addition to annual grazing and haying.

Benefits

- + **Landowners choose what natural areas to include**
- + **Landowners receive a one-time incentive payment**
- + **Last year, incentive payments to landowners averaged \$98,000**
- + **Incentive payments are based on fair market value for the land**
- + **Donating or partially donating land to be included in a Conservation Agreement can bring significant tax benefits**



Conserving natural ponds provides numerous benefits to landowners and neighbours



DUC begins a wetland restoration on farmland near Sandy Lake MB.

Wetland Restoration

We do the work and you get a cheque.

Sign a 10-year restoration agreement and receive up to \$2,000 per acre. Get up to \$4,000 per acre with a perpetual agreement. We also cover all legal fees and expenses for surveying and construction.

Simply, we restore naturally occurring water levels on drained or altered wetlands. Landowners can hay and graze the restored wetlands during the term of the agreement but cannot drain the land. When the agreement expires, government regulations on drainage will apply.

Wetland restoration can also be part of a conservation agreement or forage program. It all starts by discussing a shared vision of the land with a DUC representative.

GROW Shallow Wetlands Incentive Program (SWIP)

Protect smaller wetlands which only hold water at certain times of the year and you may qualify for annual payments based on the property value or rental rate.

SWIP is a 10-year term and can be combined with both DUC wetland restoration agreements (10 year or perpetual) and with DUC's forage program. And, you can still cultivate in dry years.

DUC funds SWIP, which is delivered by the Assiniboine West, Central Assiniboine, Souris River, and Pembina Valley watershed districts. Call us to talk about options.

Land Sales - Revolving Land Conservation Program

Each year in Manitoba, DUC buys about 1,000 acres to conserve the ponds and natural habitat before selling the land back to local producers.

The Revolving Land Conservation Program (RLCP) works like this. DUC will:

- + **Purchase land at fair market value**
- + **Restore the wetlands and grasslands**
- + **Place a conservation agreement on the land title**
- + **Sell the land to producers**
- + **Use funds from these sales to buy other property to restore and sell**

For farmers, the RLCP is a win-win.

Firstly, the land is rented to farmers while the wetlands are being restored. This keeps the land in-production and weed-free. Secondly, when the restoration is complete and DUC brings the land back to market, farmers have an opportunity to acquire affordable land.

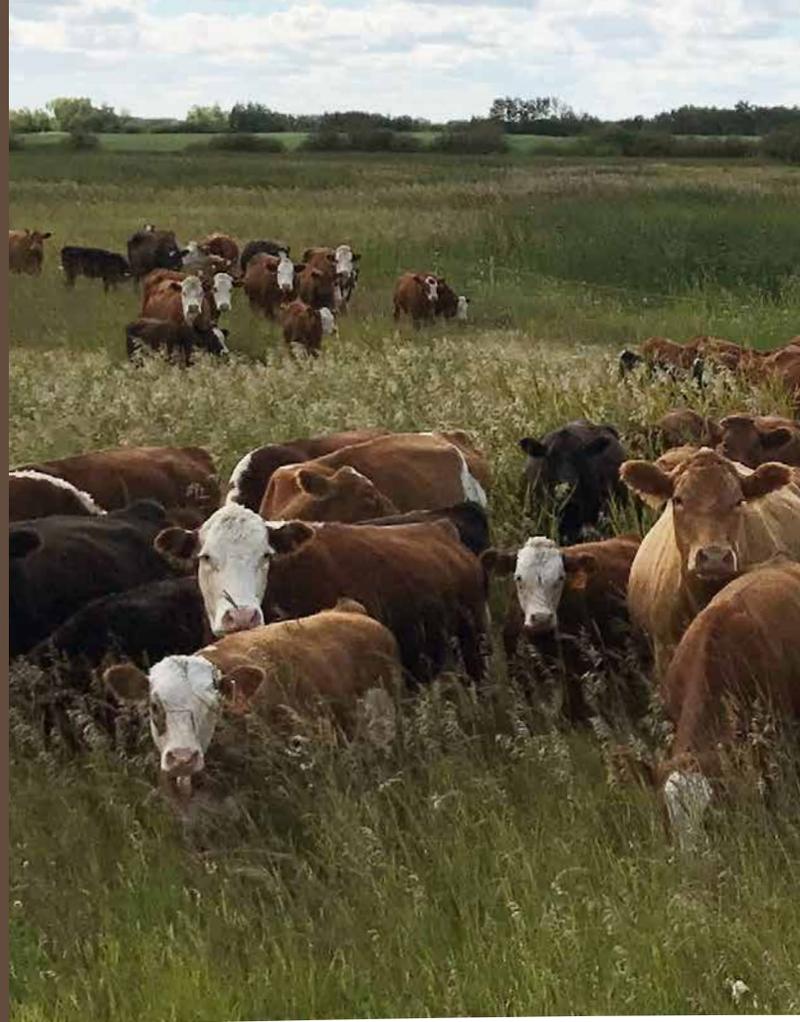
RLCP is an alternative to DUC buying and keeping land. Under this program, habitats are protected and land remains in agricultural use.

Arable acres on RLCP lands are available for rent. Tenders close on March 20 of each year. Contact us for information.



*A restored slough near
Whitewater Lake MB.*

Forage, Hay, Grazing and Winter Wheat



Cows and ducks... grass and water...

Another way that DUC and landowners can benefit by working together? Cows and ducks both need grass and water.

Here are the ways that quality forage can boost your profit and productivity:

- + **Provides a valuable feed source for livestock**
- + **Improves water infiltration**
- + **Increases soil organic matter**
- + **Breaks herbicide cycles in crop rotations**
- + **Mitigates salinity**
- + **Increases wildlife habitat, biodiversity and pollinators**
- + **Sequesters carbon**



"Economics is my driver, and our operation has a lot of alignment with what Ducks Unlimited is doing. We've worked with most DUC programs – grazing, haying, forage, restoration and land purchases – and we've always had a great experience all the way around."

Joey Bootsman
Rapid City MB

"It's perfect for us. From both a financial and a conservation angle, it works with what we're doing in our operation."

Sean Murphy
Souris MB

"We wouldn't have had enough hay for our cattle during the dry years without being able to hay DUC land."

Jesse Nykoliation
Kenton MB



Forage establishing on a farm near Erickson MB

Forage Program

Get paid to seed forages on your land!

DUC's Forage Incentive Program offers producers another reason to seed perennial forages. Last year's program participants received an average payment of \$6,500 towards their establishment costs.

DUC agrologists can assist you with selecting the right seed blend and provide advice on establishing a successful forage stand.

Grazing

Interested in high stock density grazing?

We work with cattle producers on intensive rotational grazing and have been growing our rentable acres. Contact us about opportunities on DUC land in your area.

Hay Tenders

Every year, DUC offers approximately 4,000 acres in Manitoba for haying and grazing by tender.

In drought years, we do our best to make even more acres available.

Property lists and bid forms are available in May, online at ducks.ca and ag.ducks.ca. Also, watch for information cards at your local post office or notices in community newspapers. Haying can begin after July 15.

Marginal Areas Program (MAP)

DUC pays grain farmers \$150 per acre to convert marginal areas within annually cropped fields to perennial forage.

The Marginal Areas Program (MAP) increases your profits while farming fewer acres. Manage salinity, improve water infiltration, provide competition against foxtail barley and kochia, and improve crop insurance averages by removing poorly performing acres from annual crop production.

In addition to the financial incentive, MAP also provides these benefits:

- + Improves profitability
- + Increases pollinator habitat and biodiversity
- + Reduces herbicide-resistant weeds
- + Creates a buffer zone to meet product label guidelines
- + Manages clubroot issues

Before

After

Near Shoal Lake MB



*Winter wheat field
near Brookdale MB*

Winter Wheat

Winter wheat is a must-grow in Manitoba. With excellent yield potential and return on investment, farmers have found winter wheat to be one of their most profitable crops.

Winter wheat uses moisture in the fall and early spring, so it doesn't compete with other crops. And if wet fields make spring seeding a problem, you can rest easier knowing winter wheat is already in the ground.

New high-yield varieties including Wildfire are available and variants with improved disease tolerance and protein content are introduced every year.

Winter Wheat Incentive Program

DUC's Winter Wheat Program offers farmers these incentives:

- ⊕ **Payments averaging \$4,000 to participating producers**
- ⊕ **Crop nutrition planning from Western Ag's PRS CropCaster Tool**
- ⊕ **Grain marketing advice from FarmLink Marketing Solutions**
- ⊕ **DUC agrologist support from seeding to harvest**

Ready for a less stressful spring? Eager to harvest in early August? Grow winter wheat.

Grazing Clubs

For over 20 years, grazing clubs have brought Manitoba livestock producers together to find ways to make their farms more profitable.

Introduced by DUC in 1999, grazing clubs hold informal gatherings to learn from experts and researchers about soil health, cover crops, financial planning and grazing management. Internationally acclaimed speakers have included Gabe Brown, Ray Archuleta, Dr. Allen Williams, Steve Kenyon and Dr. Christine Jones.

Club members visit local farms to see first-hand how their neighbours have increased profits and sustainability with innovation. Previous tours have

included the farms of Ted Unruh, Ryan Boyd and Joey Bootsman. These farmers show how they've incorporated innovative practices such as intercropping and high stock density grazing.

New members are welcome!

For information or to receive notices about upcoming events, contact Michael Thiele at mthiele@mymts.net.

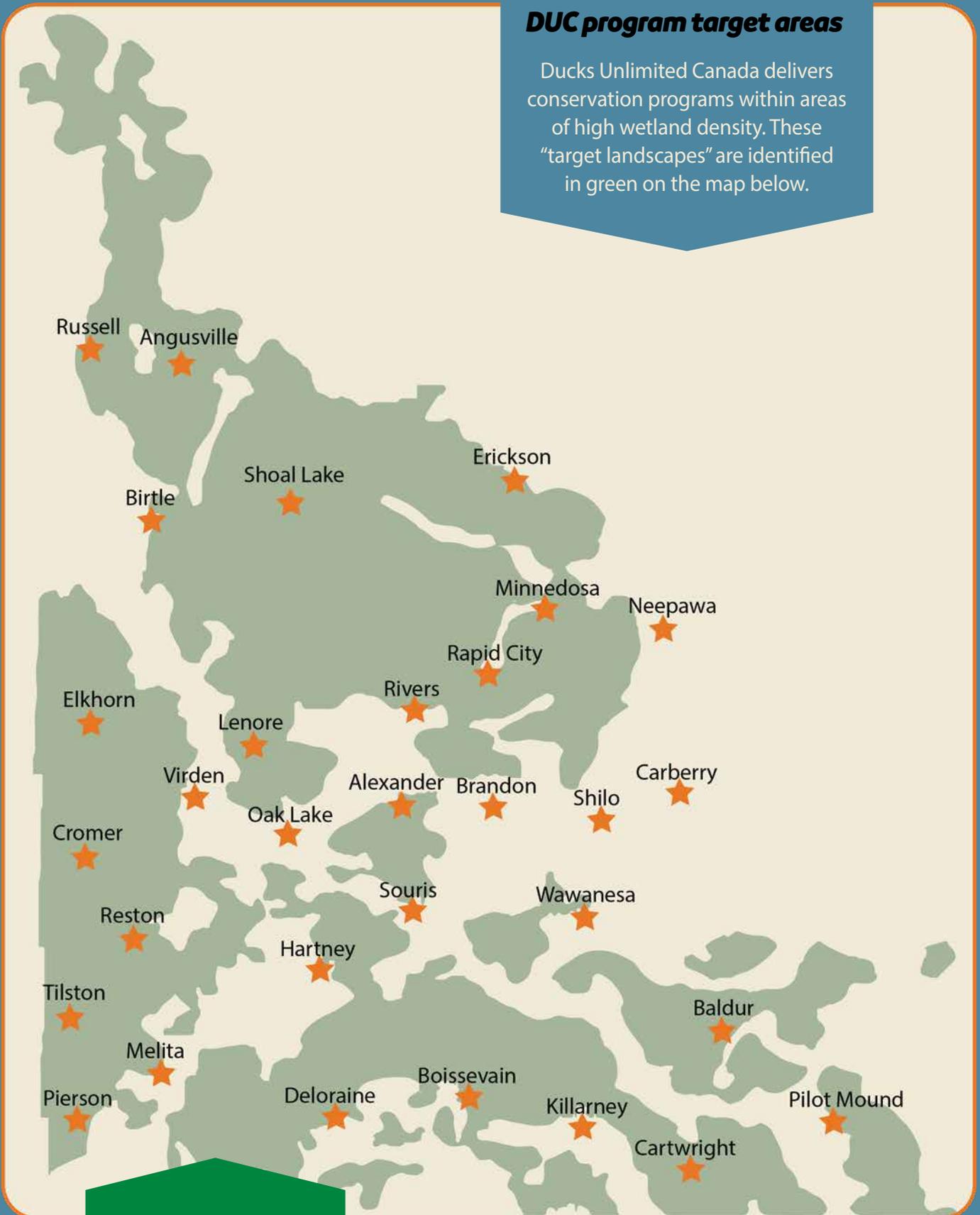
Grazing club presentations are now online! Search "Manitoba Grazing Clubs" on YouTube to find the latest.



Organic cattle on a 63 acre restoration near Souris MB

DUC program target areas

Ducks Unlimited Canada delivers conservation programs within areas of high wetland density. These "target landscapes" are identified in green on the map below.



Contact our Brandon Field Office

204-285-9779

du_brandon@ducks.ca