

Ducks Unlimited Canada–Manitoba

Landowner PROGRAMS & INCENTIVES



Ducks Unlimited
Canada

ag.ducks.ca



Conserved land south of
Elkhorn MB

Ducks Unlimited Canada can make your farm more profitable and sustainable, with programs backed by scientific research and on-farm testing.



Funded by the North American Wetlands Conservation Council (NAWCA), we restore and protect habitat that benefits waterfowl and wildlife. Those same wetlands and grasslands are critical for sustainable farming.

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

OPTIONS for every FARM

Grain 

Livestock 

 	Science and Soil.....Pg 03 Research to make your farm or ranch more profitable and sustainable.
 	Conservation Agreements.....Pg 04 Preserve wetlands and uplands and receive cash based on land values.
 	Restore Wetlands.....Pg 06 Receive incentives to restore drained ponds.
 	Buy and Sell Land.....Pg 07 DUC pays for duck-friendly land and sells restored land to farmers.
	Hay/Grazing Tenders.....Pg 08 Annual opportunities to add hay and grazing capacity to your operation.
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Winter wheat harvest on a farm near Sandy Lake MB

LOVE the LAND



You should be trying to align yourself with nature rather than working against it. Conventional agriculture, in a lot of ways, works against nature and you usually don't win against nature.

Colin and Cheryl Bialkoski
Rossburn MB



I remember as a little kid my dad just talking about how so much of the land was still the same as when his grandfather had come over. My son is very pleased that we still have that property and he can come and visit it.

Carol Chapman
Killarney MB

Science and Soil

Pest Management

Pollinators and insects found in wetlands can destroy common pests in croplands - flea beetles in canola, for example. A diverse farmscape can suppress destructive pests, reduce the need for pesticides and increase returns.

Flood Mitigation

Wetlands ease flooding by holding water. When wetlands are drained, more precipitation and water from melting snowpacks run off into local creeks and rivers. This makes water levels even higher in flood years, with increased erosion and property damage.

Empty Dugouts, Parched Crops

Draining wetlands lowers the water table, which can cause reduced levels in dugouts and less sub-surface soil moisture reaching crops. If you leave the water table intact, soil water moves upward during the winter, increasing availability for annual crop production.

Drained Basins Don't Pay

Researchers found in 2020 that wetland basins drained for crop production return an average of \$55/acre, compared to \$203/acre average profit for non-wetland areas. In many cases, drained basins produce a loss that is overlooked when reviewing profits at the field or farm level.

Nutrient Loading

A 2008 DUC study in Manitoba determined that restoring drained wetlands can reduce nitrogen and phosphorus running off farm fields into creeks, rivers and lakes. The Broughton's Creek watershed experienced a 30 percent increase in nutrient loading over 40 years due to wetland loss. Nutrient runoff means farmers pay more to reapply.

Improve Marginal Areas

A five-year study shows perennial forages can effectively manage kochia and foxtail barley, while also mitigating saline issues in marginal areas.

Beat the Heat

Wetlands can cool the air temperature by up to three degrees Celsius in summer. This helps crops prone to heat stress, including canola, which becomes increasingly important as the growing season in western Canada is impacted by global climate change.

Pollinator Benefits

More wetlands on your property will increase the number of pollinators, which means better crop pollination and higher yields. Research shows that wetlands are home to nearly 100 species of insects which benefit pollination.

Wetlands are disappearing, and you don't really know how long you're going to have your water for. And once it's gone, you're going to be searching somewhere else for water. The water cycle might be broken and we can't get it back.

Jason Despiegelaere
Bruxelles MB





Conservation area on farmland near Erickson MB

Conservation Agreements

A Conservation Agreement allows landowners to protect natural areas on their property, ensuring a natural landscape legacy for future generations.

- ✓ You maintain ownership of the land, and we allow work on the property for land improvements such as fencing, dugouts, and harvesting firewood.
- ✓ You choose what to include and the habitat is protected in perpetuity.
- ✓ Receive a one-time payment based on appraised land value. The average landowner payment last year was \$137,000.
- ✓ Can be combined with wetland and upland restoration programs.

I like the environment of sloughs and grass and trees. And when I'm gone, my sloughs, they will be here for infinity. More people should do that.

Annabelle Pirie
Strathclair MB

Call 204-285-9779 to talk with a DUC representative in your area about incentives, program details and eligibility.

Choose the habitat you want to include in your agreement:

✓ Protect wetlands from being filled or drained.

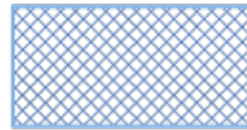
✓ Grasslands can be hayed or grazed with no restrictions, but not broken or cultivated.

✓ Shallow wetlands found in croplands can be cultivated when conditions allow.

✓ Tame grasslands can be rejuvenated at 10-year intervals to maintain productivity.



Upland



Wetland





10-year restoration near
Rapid City MB

Wetland Restorations

Restore drained or altered wetlands on your land using a small earthen plug.

- ✓ You retain ownership.
- ✓ DUC covers all project-related costs including surveying and construction.
- ✓ Haying and grazing are permitted.
- ✓ Restored basins in croplands can be cropped when dry.
- ✓ Get paid:
 - up to \$2,000/acre for a 10-year agreement.
 - up to \$4,000/acre for a perpetual conservation agreement.

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



Wetland restorations are made possible with funding from Manitoba Habitat Conservancy through the Conservation Trust.

Call 204-285-9779 to talk with a DUC representative in your area about incentives, program details and eligibility.

Buying and Selling Land

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 purchases land at fair market value; restores the wetlands and grasslands; places a conservation agreement on the title; and sells.

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.

Funds from these sales are used to buy other land to restore. DUC may retain select properties for the long-term protection of endangered species and habitat.

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

Contact Scott
(204) 761-5106 | s_henowitch@ducks.ca

New fencing installed on RLCP property near Cardale prior to sale in 2024





DUC haying property near Elphinstone MB

Hay and Grazing Tenders

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.

Watch for information cards at your local post office or notices in community newspapers. Haying can begin after July 15.

Contact Cam
(204) 868-8145 | c_ross@ducks.ca

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.

To be honest, I'd be lost without it. Even if I did have enough hay acres, it's nice to have that extra cushion where you can build up for the next year.

Trevor McLeod
Brookdale MB

Forage Program

DUC pays producers to seed grass and provides customized advice. Increase livestock feed options, build soil organic matter, improve water infiltration, add biodiversity and establish critical on-farm habitat for pollinators and wildlife with the DUC Forage Program. The average payment is \$12,500.

- ✓ 10-year term and the agreement is pro-rated, allowing for early exit.
- ✓ Contracts are not tied to land title.
- ✓ 30-acre minimum to qualify. No maximum.
- ✓ Rotation option after five years.
- ✓ Eligible on rented lands with landowner permission.
- ✓ Alfalfa-only and/or alfalfa-timothy seedings are ineligible.
- ✓ DUC agrologists can provide seeding advice and create custom forage blends specific to field conditions.
- ✓ DUC recommends producers take advantage of Forage Establishment Insurance through Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC). DUC will cover premiums for signed agreements.
- ✓ Producers are eligible for top-ups for attending a forage agronomy seminar.
- ✓ Prizes for the season's top establishments.

Contact Alex
(204) 848-0514 | a_griffiths@ducks.ca

Forage establishment
near Shoal Lake MB





COMING SOON!

Rotational grazing near
Rapid City MB

Lease Program

- ✓ 10-year term.
- ✓ Annual payment.
- ✓ Program pays local market rates.
- ✓ During the term of the agreement, DUC is responsible for land management.
- ✓ DUC will seed any cultivated land to forage.
- ✓ If interested, please contact DUC with your expected payment per acre.

Habitat Retention Program

- ✓ 10-year term
- ✓ Annual payment for existing grasslands and wetlands,
- ✓ \$10/acre/year during the agreement.
- ✓ Landowners can continue to use the protected lands during the term of the agreement (e.g. hay, grazing or livestock watering).

Call 204-285-9779 to talk with a DUC representative in your area about incentives, program details and eligibility.

Marginal Areas Program

DUC pays producers to seed underperforming crop areas to grass, with the Marginal Areas Program. Reduce input costs, improve returns in saline areas, create a buffer zone to meet herbicide guidelines and outcompete kochia and foxtail barley. Last year, the average payment to a landowner was \$5,500.

- ✓ Target marginal areas within annually cropped fields.
- ✓ No acre minimum to qualify.
- ✓ 10-year term agreement with a prorated buyout option.
- ✓ Contracts are not tied to land title.
- ✓ Spring and dormant seeding are eligible. Touch-up seeding is permitted at any time during the 10-year term.
- ✓ Grazing, haying and mowing are permitted.
- ✓ Seed can be sourced through DUC or a retailer of the producer's choice. If DUC-sourced, costs are deducted from the per-acre payment.

We got 205 silage bales off 45 acres. Mind-blowing! Not only that but the kochia areas and the saline areas are shrinking, which is exactly what we want.

Cam Tibbett
Neepawa MB

Contact Daphne
(204) 861-2587 | d_appleyard@ducks.ca

Marginal area near Cardale MB





AAC Goldrush winter wheat harvest near Oakburn MB

Winter Wheat

Diversify your rotation with high-yielding, disease-resistant winter wheat. Reduce spring workload. Harvest early. Increase profitability. Reduce soil erosion. Manage herbicide resistance. Increase effectiveness of crop protection products.

- ✓ DUC pays you \$20/acre to a maximum of \$5,000.
- ✓ Receive PRS Crop Casting for one field from Western Ag - a \$500 value!
- ✓ Benefit from expert agronomic support from DUC's winter wheat specialists.
- ✓ 50-acre minimum to qualify.
- ✓ Keep incentives even if the field winterkills - as long as you try the crop again in the future.

We like to seed winter wheat into barley stubble. With the help of DUC, Western Ag and proper soil sampling, we were able to produce an average of 97 bushels per acre with some zones pushing close to 120.

Stephane Lapointe
Neepawa MB

Contact Alex
(204) 848-0514 | a_griffiths@ducks.ca

Sod Seeding

Rejuvenate pastures with DUC's sod seeding pilot program and receive \$35/acre. Prevent tillage of grasslands while improving plant diversity, optimizing pollinator habitat and increasing livestock feed quality in poorly producing pasturelands. The average payment to landowners last year was \$2,400.

- ✓ 10-year term.
- ✓ Agreement is pro-rated, allowing for early exit.
- ✓ Nothing is tied to land title and no carbon credits are claimed under the agreement.
- ✓ 30-acre minimum to qualify.
- ✓ Eligible on pasture acres, including rented land (with landowner permission).
- ✓ Not eligible for broadcast seeding establishments.
- ✓ DUC has successfully established 1,200 acres of sod seeding in Manitoba.
- ✓ DUC agrologists will assist with seed mix formulation, seeding rates and equipment specifics to ensure successful establishments.
- ✓ A grazing management plan is included, with advice on enhancing pasture productivity.

Contact Cam
(204) 868-8145 | c_ross@ducks.ca

DUC sod seeding a forage stand near Binscarth MB





Grazing club tour showcasing
swath grazing

Grazing Clubs

For over 25 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.

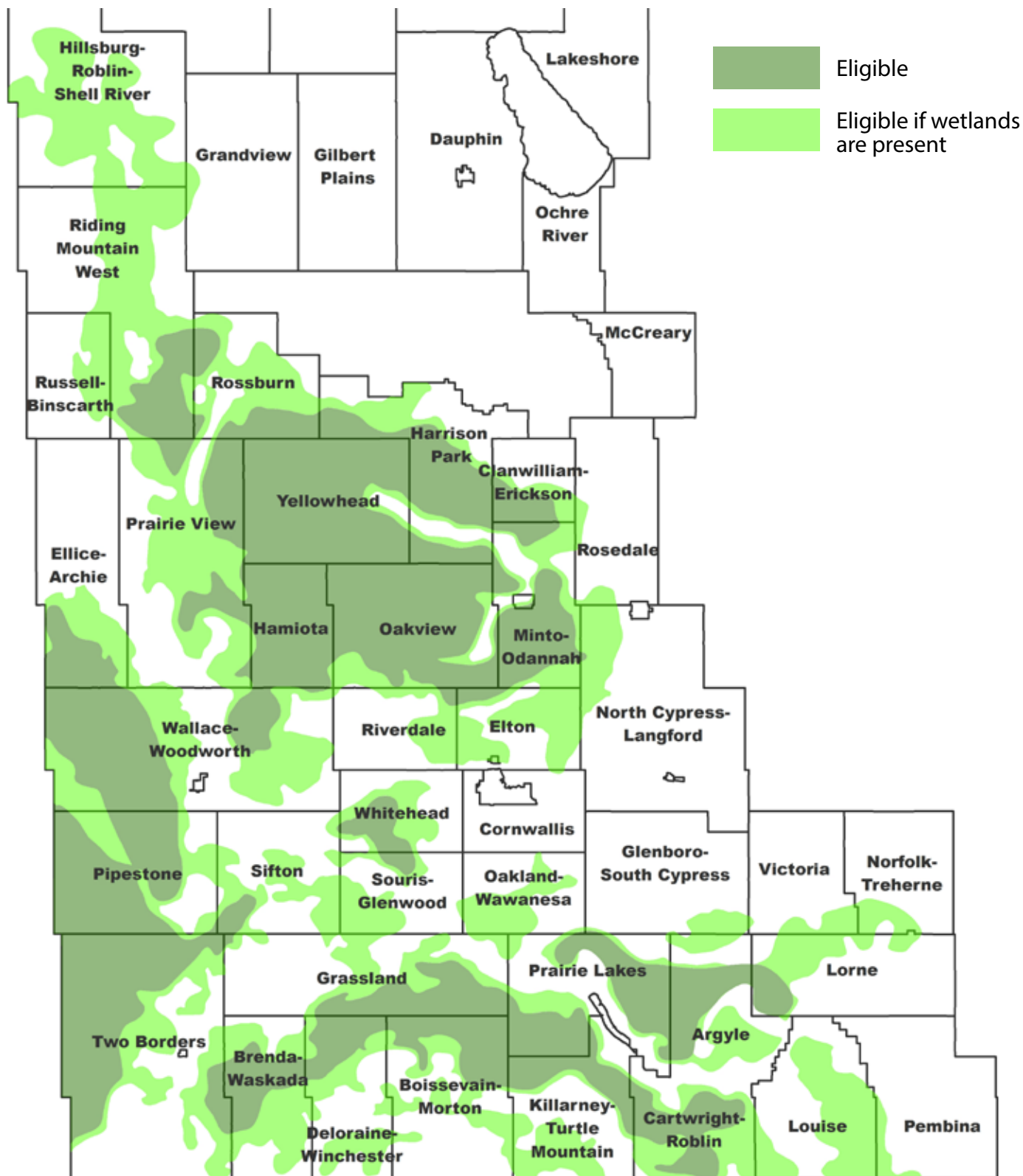
No membership fee. New members are welcome.

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

Contact Mike
(204) 365-6334 | mthiele567@gmail.com

Program Coverage Areas

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



Contacts

Buying and selling land
Scott Henowitch

(204) 761-5106
s_henowitch@ducks.ca

Conservation Agreements
(ask for your area representative)

(204) 285-9779
Toll-free 1-866-251-3825

Forage
Alex Griffiths

(204) 848-0514
a_griffiths@ducks.ca

Grazing Clubs
Mike Thiele

(204) 365-6334
mthiele567@gmail.com

Grazing and hay tenders
Cam Ross

(204) 868-8145
c_ross@ducks.ca

Lease/Habitat Retention
(ask for your area representative)

(204) 285-9779
Toll-free 1-866-251-3825

Marginal Areas Program
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Sod Seeding
Cam Ross

(204) 868-8145
c_ross@ducks.ca

Winter Wheat
Alex Griffiths

(204) 848-0514
a_griffiths@ducks.ca

Wetlands Restoration
(ask for your area representative)

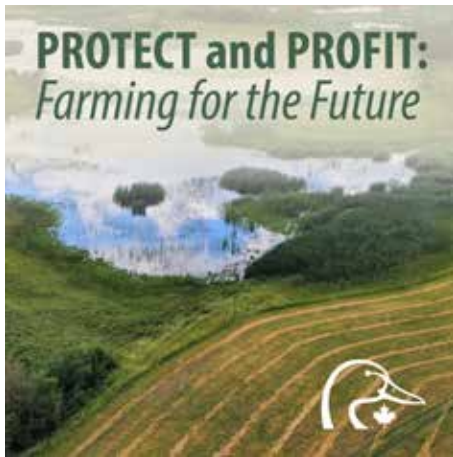
(204) 285-9779
Toll-free 1-866-251-3825

Learn more

Podcast

Each month, we feature landowners, scientists and conservation specialists on our podcast.

Hear episodes at ag.ducks.ca or wherever you find your podcasts.



Website

Go to ag.ducks.ca and find details on all the programs and incentives offered by DUC in Manitoba.

Use this handy QR code to access the website from your mobile device or log on ag.ducks.ca/programs/manitoba/.



