

Georgia

North American Waterfowl Management Plan



photo: USFWS



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photo: Forest Service

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About the "Plan"

- International Agreement, signed in 1986.
- Goal: return waterfowl populations to levels of mid-1970's. Integrate other migratory bird plans.
- Achieve population goals through the restoration, enhancement and management of habitat on public and private lands.
- Includes 17 habitat joint ventures and three species joint ventures in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico.

Georgia Projects

- Wetland and bottomland hardwood forest protection and restorations within:

Ocmulgee River Bottomlands (Piedmont).

Altamaha River drainage (Coastal Plain).

Savannah River System.

Chattahoochee River Valley.

Coastal Wetlands of Atlantic Coast.

Carolina Bay Region.

- Wood duck banding.
- Shorebird management.

Partner Involvement

- Private Landowners.
- Non-profit organizations.
- Corporations.
- Government agencies (local/state/Federal).

Financial Assistance

- Matching dollars from non-federal partners.
- North American Wetlands Conservation Act grants.
- North American Waterfowl Management Plan dollars.

- Ducks Unlimited "MARSH" funds.

- Coastal Grants Program.

- Partners for Wildlife.

Habitat Accomplishments

- Restoration of drained wetlands.
- Protected floodplain and stream habitat.
- Protected coastal wetlands.
- Protected bottomland hardwood forests.
- Maintaining and enhancing coastal waterfowl impoundments.

Public Benefits

- Increased recreational opportunities.
- Enhanced wildlife diversity.
- Improved community relations.
- Enhanced floodwater storage.
- Improved water quality.
- Broad coalition of partnerships supporting voluntary wetland preservation.

Questions and Answers

What is the North American Waterfowl Management Plan?
In 1985, waterfowl populations had plummeted to record lows. Historical data indicated that since the first settlers arrived more than 50 percent of the United States' original 220 million acres of wetland habitat that waterfowl depend on for survival had been destroyed. Across Canada, where a large percentage of the United States' wintering waterfowl nest, wetland losses in various areas were estimated at 29 to 71 percent since settlement.

Waterfowl are a prominent and economically important group of migratory birds of the North American continent. By 1985, approximately 3.2 million people were spending nearly \$1 billion annually to hunt waterfowl. By 1985, interest in

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waterfowl had grown in other arenas as well. About 18.6 million people observed, photographed, and otherwise appreciated waterfowl and other waterbirds and spent \$2 billion for the pleasure of doing it.

Recognizing the importance of waterfowl and wetlands to North Americans and the need for international cooperation to help in the recovery of a shared resource, the Canadian and United States governments developed a strategy to restore waterfowl populations to levels seen in the 1970's through habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement. The strategy was documented in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan signed in 1986 by the Canadian Minister of the Environment and the United States' Secretary of the Interior, the foundation partnership upon which hundreds of others would be built.