

# The North American Wetlands Conservation Act

## A Programmatic Evaluation of the First Decade

The North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Council) asked the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct an evaluation of the first 10 years of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) implementation, working with stakeholders to examine its success and to identify recommendations to improve implementation.

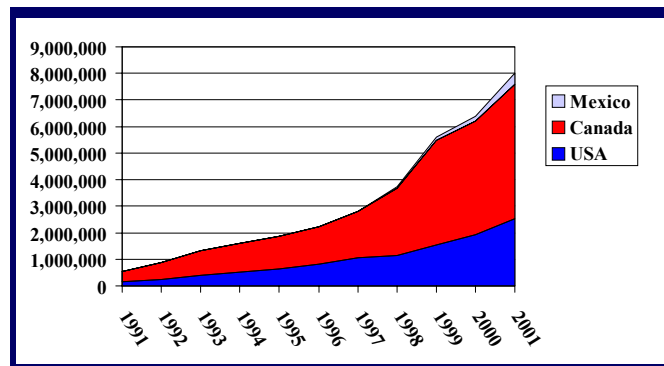
During 2001-2003, independent evaluators confirmed the success of the NAWCA in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Through a variety of methodologies, including interviews, focus groups, and case studies, partners indicated a high level of satisfaction regarding implementation of the Act in its first 10 years.

### NAWCA Results

Overall, NAWCA is viewed as an extremely successful conservation program in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico by those involved in the program. The evaluation indicates that NAWCA has delivered numerous, quantifiable conservation results in North America.

- NAWCA projects have involved more than 1,550 partners including federal, state, and provincial agencies (Canada), non-governmental organizations, tribes, first nations (Canada), and private and communal (Mexico) landowners.
- NAWCA has had a tremendous leveraging effect. More than \$1.14 billion partner funds have been invested with nearly \$411 million NAWCA funds to deliver over \$1.5 billion in on-the-ground conservation.
- Since 1991, more than 900 projects have been implemented. Canadian and U.S. partners focus on protecting, restoring, and enhancing important wetland habitats. Mexican partners may also develop conservation training and management programs and conduct resource assessments.
- Across the continent, NAWCA partners have protected, restored, or enhanced more than 8 million wetland acres and associated uplands.

### Acres Enhanced, Protected or Restored U.S., Canada, and Mexico, 1991-2001



*"NAWCA is the crown jewel of conservation programs out there. The story hasn't been told to folks on the outside effectively enough..." (NAWCA Partner)*



### North American Wetlands Conservation Council

The Council is appointed by the Secretary of the Interior. Council membership includes the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Executive Secretary of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, four state fish and wildlife agency directors representing the four flyways, three non-profit conservation organizations, an alternate, and several ex-officio members.

- Duane Shroufe** (Chair), Director, Arizona Game and Fish Department
- John Cooper** (Vice Chair), Secretary, South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks
- John Berry**, Executive Secretary, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- Michael Dennis**, Vice President and General Counsel, The Nature Conservancy
- Jean Hocker**, President Emeritus, The Land Trust Alliance
- Wayne MacCallum**, Director, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
- Steven Miller**, Administrator, Division of Land, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- David Nomsen** (Alternate), Vice President of Governmental Affairs, Pheasants Forever, Inc.
- Alan Wentz**, Group Manager for Conservation Programs, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
- Steve Williams**, Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

*Ex Officio:*

- Karen Brown**, Environment Canada
- Fernando Clemente**, Mexican Wildlife Division
- KiKu Hoagland Hanes**, Board of Directors, The Conservation Fund  
*Council Coordinator*
- David A. Smith**, Chief, Division of Bird Habitat Conservation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

### Migratory Bird Conservation Commission

- Honorable Gale A. Norton**, Secretary of the Interior, Chairperson
- Honorable John B. Breaux**, Senator from Louisiana
- Honorable Thad Cochran**, Senator from Mississippi
- Honorable John D. Dingell**, Representative from Michigan
- Honorable Curt Weldon**, Representative from Pennsylvania
- Honorable Christine Todd Whitman**, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency
- Honorable Ann M. Veneman**, Secretary of Agriculture.

*Evaluation work was conducted by independent evaluators: Responsive Management, Harrisonburg, VA and PG-7, Mexico City, Mexico. Final Reports will soon be available on this site.*

**For More Information Contact David A. Smith, Council Coordinator, at [dbhc@fws.gov](mailto:dbhc@fws.gov)**

NORTH AMERICAN

WETLANDS

CONSERVATION ACT

fact sheet

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## Wetland Conservation Through Strong Partnerships

*"The financial strength can't be overlooked. It is a good return on investment for taxpayers...." (NAWCA Partner)*

### Purpose and History of the Act

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) of 1989 provides matching grants to agencies and organizations who have developed partnerships to carry out conservation projects in wetlands and associated uplands in North America. The Act was passed, in part, to support the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, an international agreement that provides a continental strategy for the long-term conservation of waterfowl. NAWCA now benefits all wetland associated migratory birds as well as other wildlife.

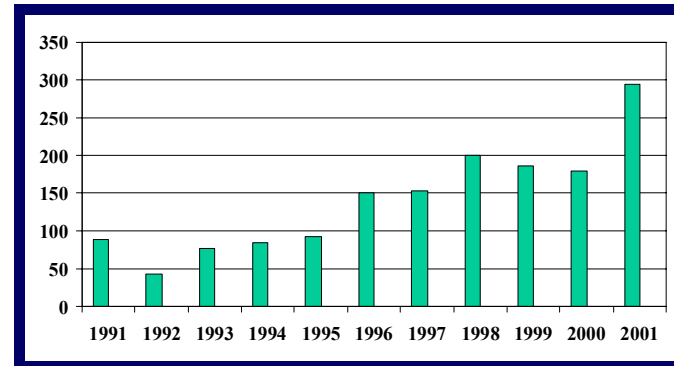
### A Public/Private Partnership Model - Formula for Success

Partners confirmed that the NAWCA model—federal program administration guided by the active presence of a citizen advisory council—is a formula for success. The Act established the Council to review, rank, and recommend proposals for funding to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, which has final approval authority. Through the evaluation, partners validated the critical importance of stakeholder involvement in building a successful program.

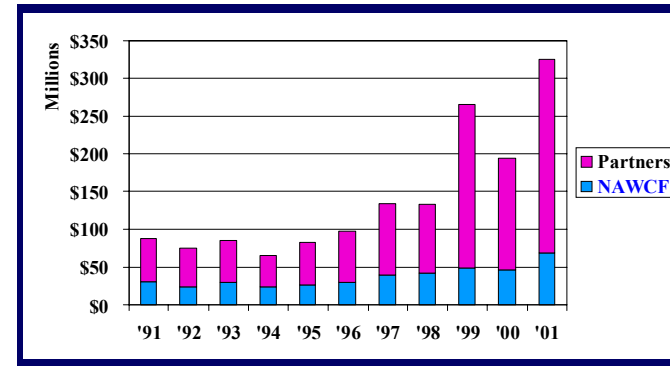
### Healthy Landscapes



### Number of New Partners North America, 1991-2001



### NAWCF Leveraging Effect in U.S., Canada and Mexico, 1991-2001



### NAWCA Project Locations (Not to Scale)



### Feedback from Partners

*"No other conservation program has done more for wetland conservation in Mexico than the NAWCA." (NAWCA Partner)*

NAWCA partners communicated a high level of satisfaction with the customer service provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in administration of the NAWCA's grant programs. The feedback confirms that administration has steadily and positively evolved over the course of 10 years. Improvements suggested by the evaluation include:

- Strengthen communications among the three countries supported by the Act.
- Increase the number of grant-writing workshops for potential grantees.
- Increase feedback to applicants regarding unsuccessful grant proposals.
- Maintain consistency year to year in the grant application process.
- Develop a cost-effective and systematic project monitoring and evaluation program.
- Develop a standard format for grantee final reports.
- Improve the database that houses NAWCA grant information.
- Consolidate information regarding NAWCA in one place to increase accessibility for stakeholders.
- Increase information dissemination to improve stakeholder and public awareness of NAWCA.

This feedback is vital to NAWCA's continued growth and development. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Council will be reviewing these recommendations and will address them in the near future.

### Habitat Protection



### Restoration

