

North American Waterfowl Management Plan



The Rivière du Sud marsh (photo: DUC)

The member partners of the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture (EHJV) in Quebec present this overview of the protection, development, research and evaluation activities carried out in Quebec in 2007-2008, as well as the amounts invested. The overview shows that pooling the expertise and resources of the EHJV in Quebec resulted in the successful implementation of a number of major wildlife projects that will benefit species dependent on wetlands, such as ducks, geese, fish, and the many other animal and plant species that make wetlands a rich environment.

The members of the EHJV would like to take this opportunity to thank all of their collaborators, as well as the private property owners who supported their efforts to protect and develop waterfowl habitats and biodiversity in general. 🦆

Protection component

For several years now, habitat protection in Quebec has involved: 1) the acquisition (or donation) of property titles, and 2) the signing of conservation agreements (or easements) of a minimum duration of 10 years with property owners. These two approaches are complementary and enable the EHJV partners to work with locals using the approach that best meets their needs.

The 2003-2008 financial partnership agreement signed by the Quebec Department of Natural Resources and Wildlife (MRNF) and Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) came to an end this year. The agreement provided \$3M a year for the acquisition of wetlands vital to the survival and sustainability of waterfowl, as well as ecologically significant natural environments. 🦆



Photo: DUC)



Clarendon marsh

For several years, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) has been working to protect unique sites in the most biodiverse areas along the Ottawa River. Work was undertaken in 2007 in the Clarendon area to protect more than 1,500 hectares of ecologically significant land. The work started with the acquisition of the Domtar property, a conservation project involving close to 590 hectares of animal and plant habitats. The protection of this habitat promotes the maintenance and recovery of some 20 species at risk.

The Domtar property contains highly diverse habitats and plant communities that provide shelter for an exceptional variety of species. The property includes approximately 100 hectares of habitat forming a complex of marshes, shrubby swamps, natural ponds and a lake draining into the Ottawa River.

These aquatic environments are home to such species as the Northern water snake and the map turtle, Blanding's turtle and the stinkpot turtle, three species at risk.

Ninety bird species have been observed in the Clarendon area, including common nighthawk, chimney swift and Canada warbler, all three of which are threatened species in Canada. The most frequently observed waterfowl species are wood duck, mallard, Canada goose and brant.

In addition to wetlands, the area also contains alvars, natural open areas on limestone outcrops composed of unique vegetation that includes large populations of plant species. These species including the largest populations of fragrant sumac, ram's head lady's-slipper, dry-spiked sedge, rock sandwort and Northern jointweed in Quebec.

DUC's protection efforts in the vast Clarendon area are being implemented quickly: 1,000 hectares of ecologically significant land have already been acquired. 🦋



Clarendon marsh draining into the Ottawa River (photo: NCC)

Rivière du Sud

Over the past few years, DUC has been actively working to protect private property along Rivière du Sud in Montérégie. This area is made up of submerged and emergent marshes, wet meadows, and a riparian wet forest supporting a rich and unique diversity of plant and animal species. In addition to this exceptional ecological diversity, its wetland complex, which covers close to 1,000 hectares, is one of the last unfragmented ecological jewels in southwestern Quebec.

The site has been the focus of conservation efforts for close to 30 years. A number of outdoor activities are conducted on Rivière du Sud and its wetlands, such as fishing, waterfowl and white-tailed deer hunting, muskrat trapping, and observation activities.

The integrated Rivière du Sud conservation program was launched in the early 2000s and comprises several components (protection, restoration, outreach and education) aimed at ensuring a certain level of sustainability for this highly significant ecosystem. DUC has already acquired close to 400 hectares. This area also includes the Marcel Raymond Ecological Reserve, created in 1980, and a nature reserve created in 2000. 🦋

2007-2008 wetland protection summary

Site	Area (ha)	Cost (\$)
Rivière du Sud	20.4	109,700
Beaupré flats	10.0	161,022
Chapman Bay	3.0	23,402
Bristol	179.0	70,195
Angell Forest ¹	22.0	5,109,800
Charette Creek	9.9	43,486
Kettle Island ²	184.6	1,202,500
Pointe aux Pins ³	48.0	670,000
Pointe Saint-Pierre	3.7	41,000
Clarendon	589.0	725,000
Large Tea Field ³	6.4	20,000
Total	1076.04 ha	8 176,105 \$

¹ Donation of \$5,058,000 ² Donation ³ Portion donated

Note: The figures in this table do not include indirect costs

Pointe aux Pins

This natural environment is a milestone project for NCC. Its acquisition of Pointe aux Pins (48 ha), which is located on the western tip of Île aux Grues, enabled it to protect a unique natural environment. Located about 60 km downstream of Quebec City, near Montmagny, Île aux Grues is the largest island in the archipelago of about 30 islands and islets, and is the only one inhabited year-round.

Pointe aux Pins mainly consists of an old maple stand designated as a unique forest ecosystem by MRNF. It also includes vast flats designated as a waterfowl concentration area and as an important bird area (IBA).

Permanent protection for Pointe aux Pins will help maintain irreplaceable indigenous species. Pointe aux Pins is a significant area for bird species owing to its tidal flats, which provide a resting area for greater snow geese, dabbling ducks and shorebirds. The brackish water contains large populations of American bulrush and provides unique habitat for a number of bird species.

The maple stand provides a stop-over area for many passerines on their spring and fall migrations over the St. Lawrence. The birds observed there include groups of sparrows, thrushes, warblers and flycatchers. The maple stand also contains nine threatened or vulnerable plant species, including Victorin's fringed gentian. 



The Pointe aux Pins site in the Île aux Grues archipelago (photo: Claude Duchaine)

Development component

A total of \$305,000 has been invested for the completion of wildlife development projects. One of these projects is the Peter Curry marsh, which is located on the campus of Bishop's University in Sherbrooke. Developed in 1990, the marsh was severely damaged in recent years, causing it to dry out. Restoration work was performed in 2007-2008 to replace the water level control structure, reflooding a permanent 2-hectare marsh and optimizing the biological productivity of the site.

The protective strip of herbaceous vegetation that surrounds the marsh was preserved to provide 6 hectares of high-quality nesting cover for waterfowl and other breeding birds.

The marsh provides excellent habitat for waterfowl and other aquatic birds, which use the area for refuge and as feeding, nesting and rearing sites. Invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles and aquatic and semi-aquatic mammals also use this wetland. The restoration of the marsh is part of Bishop University's property development plan. The site is popular with local birdwatchers and is used as a study area by the university's biology students. Interpretation panels on the roles and benefits of the wetlands will also be installed by the university's environment committee. 



Peter Curry marsh (photo: DUC)

2007-2008 wetland protection summary

Site	Amount (\$)	Area (ha)
Lavallière Bay	48,500*	
Peter Curry	32,600	8
Ruisseau de Feu	224,500*	
Total	305,600	8

* Area will be calculated in a future overview.

Partners' contributions

Activities	Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC)	Canadian Wildlife Service	Fondation de la faune du Québec	Quebec Department of Natural Resources and Wildlife (MRNF)	Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC)	Quebec Department of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks (MDDEP)	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	TOTAL
Protection	\$3,898,000	\$25,000		\$680,000	\$1,390,000	\$450,000	\$352,000	\$6,794,205
Development				\$572,000	\$6,500		\$315,000	\$893,207
Site management							\$162,500	\$162,452
Stewardship	\$415,000	\$200,000	\$145,000					\$760,605
Evaluation and monitoring	\$134,000	\$485,000						\$619,000
Communications	\$33,500	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$27,800			\$81,308
Coordination	\$265,000	\$100,000			\$25,000	\$100,000		\$489,549
Total	\$4,745,500	\$820,000	\$150,000	\$1,257,000	\$1,449,300	\$550,000	\$829,500	\$9,800,326

Evaluation and monitoring component

Each year, a detailed waterfowl survey is conducted during the breeding season to obtain information on breeding pair density in the St. Lawrence, Abitibi and Lac Saint-Jean lowlands.

Increased efforts have been made to review and evaluate the achievements of the EHJV and develop the new version of the implementation and evaluation plan of the EHJV in Quebec. The following measures have been taken to improve the scientific basis of future actions:

1. Establishment of waterfowl population objectives by:
 - a) identifying priority species
 - b) setting numerical objectives for the priority species
- c) justifying the objectives with biological, social and political considerations
- d) linking the EHJV objectives to those of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan

2. Evaluation of key limiting factors for the priority species
3. Establishment of habitat objectives in the priority regions in order to tailor habitat conservation actions to population objectives
4. Development of evaluation parameters (research, monitoring and evaluation) in the new implementation and evaluation plan of the EHJV (2007-2012) 

Multi-partner efforts

The many achievements of the partners and their collaborators in Quebec in 2007-2008 made it possible to continue the efforts that have been in place for 21 years. A number of sites protected or

developed under the EHJV now benefit from a development plan that will harmonize the various stakeholders' uses of the land. 

