

# North American Waterfowl Management Plan



Mégantic Marsh (photo: Denis Germain, Air Photo)

The member partners of the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture (EHJV) in Quebec present this review of securement, enhancement, research and evaluation activities carried out in Quebec in fiscal year 2009-2010, as well as the funds allocated to them. The review shows that pooling the expertise and resources of the EHJV in Quebec has resulted in the successful implementation of a number of high-wildlife-value projects that will benefit species dependent on wetlands for their survival, such as ducks, geese, fish, and the many other animal and plant species that make these habitats a rich environment.

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

## Securement

For several years now, habitat securement in Quebec has been achieved through: 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 local communities using the approach that best meets their needs. In 2009-2010, the partners of the EHJV in Quebec pursued their efforts in an ever-expanding effort to consolidate areas of high wildlife value. 🌿



Northern Pintail (photo: DUC)



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## Grand Marais of Bristol

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) has been working to secure the Grand Marais of Bristol in the Ottawa Valley since 2004. Its goal is to conserve 4,100 hectares of land of high ecological value. The streams, shorelines, wetlands, alvars (limestone outcrops), rural environments and forest mosaics in the Grand Marais are ecosystems that are vital to biodiversity conservation. The conservation activities carried out in 2009-2010 resulted in the acquisition of 230 hectares, bringing the total secured area to 711 hectares.

The area contains a high concentration of plant and animal species designated as threatened or vulnerable in Quebec, including Northern water snake, map turtle, Blanding's turtle and common musk turtle. The Grand Marais also contains a number of significant wildlife habitats, including a waterfowl concentration area and several heronries, as well as several nesting sites of the least bittern. The waterfowl species protected in this area are Canada goose, brant, wood duck, American black duck, mallard, Northern shoveler, common merganser, hooded merganser, common loon, ring-necked duck and pied-billed grebe.

Most of the land acquired by the NCC will be transferred, subject to a conservation easement in perpetuity, to the ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune (MRNF) and will be converted into a wildlife sanctuary to complement the future Sault-des-Chats regional park. In the future, recreational use and resource exploitation will be regulated in order to preserve the biodiversity of the Grand Marais of Bristol. 🌿



Grand Marais of Bristol (photo: NCC)

## Lake Mégantic marsh

The Lake Mégantic marsh is extremely important to the Estrie region because of its various classes of wetlands, plant diversity, large surface area, hydrological connectivity, and habitat potential for the waterfowl and wildlife commonly found in it. Its 755 hectares are 4% open water, 14% marsh, 21% fen, 28% swamp and 33% forest. The Lake Mégantic marsh supports a rich diversity of plant and animal life. The vast area is home to 127 bird species, of which 70 are confirmed breeders. It is a major staging area for migratory waterfowl and other bird species, including brants and long-tailed ducks. It is also an excellent breeding site for American black ducks, wood ducks and ring-necked ducks. A network of nesting boxes for wood ducks has been established. The area is provincially recognized as a waterfowl concentration area and also contains a number of plant and animal species designated as threatened or vulnerable in Quebec, such as the bald eagle and showy lady's slipper. Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) has taken the lead on a major ecological donation involving three properties owned by Domtar: the Lake Mégantic marsh, the Dudswell Islands, and a wetland complex near the municipality of Dudswell. The Lake Mégantic marsh has now been transferred to MRNF, subject to a conservation easement in perpetuity. 🌿

### 2009-2010 Wetland securement summary

Site	Area (ha)	Cost (\$)
Rivière du Sud	*	44,700
Marécage des Scots	840	681,000
Marais du lac Mégantic	**	**
Rivière à l'Orme	15	2,200,000
Battures aux Loups marins	815	470,000
Mont Royal	0.1	1,200 000
Rivière au Pin	62	182,000
Battures de Beaupré	5	25,000
Marais de Bristol	230	266,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,967.1 ha</b>	<b>5,068,700 \$</b>

\* Area will be calculated in a future overview

\*\* Area and costs have already been calculated in a previous overview

# The Forest-Wildlife Program of the Fondation de la faune du Québec (FFQ)

In 2009-2010, the Fondation de la faune du Québec (FFQ) continued its efforts to raise awareness among forested wetland property owners. For many years, this component of the Forest-Wildlife Program has helped protect forested wetlands by encouraging property owners to sign voluntary conservation agreements in which they make a moral commitment to protect critical habitat on their property.

This year, 62 property owners have made commitments to protect 39 wetlands covering a total area of approximately 400 hectares. Each of the owners received a property owner's manual prepared by the FFQ, describing the main characteristics of the wetlands present on his or her property. The document included information on wetland biology and suggested measures for protecting, conserving and improving the quality of the wetlands.

Each year, the FFQ invests approximately \$100,000 in this component of the Forest-Wildlife Program. 🌿



FFQ Conservation  
(photo: Agence régionale de mise en valeur des forêts privées du Bas-Saint-Laurent)

## Enhancement

### Major steps taken to preserve biodiversity at Lake Saint-Pierre

The Baie-du-Febvre/Nicolet-Sud area is located on the Lake Saint-Pierre floodplain. It is an area with high wildlife potential and is one of the province's most significant spring staging areas for waterfowl.

The enhancement of this huge agricultural and wildlife complex began in the early 1980s. Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) has enhanced a permanent marsh, staging areas for waterfowl, and natural habitats for fish. The organization SARCEL owns the site and oversees such activities as agriculture, hunting and education.

The project was completed in 2009-2010 with the enhancement of segment 8, an area consisting mainly of abandoned grassland. The enhancement is designed to provide optimal habitat for fish (for early spawning), amphibians and reptiles. It will also provide waterfowl with high-quality habitat for migration, duck breeding pair distribution, and duckling rearing.

The enhancement work consisted of installing a dike, control structure and pumping station to control water levels. It also involved digging a network of fish ponds and pools. The enhancement resulted in the creation of a 43-hectare permanent marsh. 🌿



SARCEL (photo: DUC)

### 2009-2010 wetland enhancement summary

Site	Area (ha)	Amount (\$)
Sarcel	*	447,000 \$
Ruisseau de feu	*	208,000 \$
Baie du Febvre	43	255,000 \$
<b>Total</b>	<b>43 ha</b>	<b>910 000 \$</b>

\* Area will be calculated in a future overview

# Partners' contributions

This table shows program accomplishments by agency responsible for program delivery. Consequently, and for a variety of reasons, it is possible that the contribution from one partner is attributed to another.

Activites	Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC)	Canadian Wildlife Service	Fondation de la faune du Québec	Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune (MRNF)	Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC)	Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs (MDDEP)	U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service	TOTAL (\$)
Securement	295,000	193,000		1,351,000	1,285,170	2,215,000	4,733,190	<b>10,072,360</b>
Enhancement	136,000	39,000		1,085,000	1,997	4,000	300,000	<b>1,565,997</b>
Site management	181,000	146,000	9,500	26,000	28,448			<b>390,948</b>
Stewardship	871,000	39,000	117,200		9,343			<b>1,036,543</b>
Evaluation and monitoring	9,000	385,000		62,500		60,000		<b>516,500</b>
Communications	31,000		5,500					<b>36,500</b>
Coordination	244,000	125,000	37,250	75,000	108,434	15,000		<b>604,684</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,767,000</b>	<b>927,000</b>	<b>169,450</b>	<b>2,599,500</b>	<b>1,433,392</b>	<b>2,294,000</b>	<b>5,033,190</b>	<b>14,223,532</b>

## Evaluation and monitoring

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 Lake Saint-Jean lowlands.

A waterfowl conservation plan has also been developed to establish habitat objectives for the priority waterfowl conservation regions (for each bird conservation region) and to set out habitat conservation actions tailored to the waterfowl population objectives.

## Multi-partner efforts

The many achievements of the EHJV partners and their collaborators in Quebec in 2009-2010 made it possible to continue securement and enhancement efforts. Stewardship by private property owners is also a key factor in ensuring the success of habitat conservation efforts for waterfowl and other species associated with wetlands.

