



# FALL FLIGHTS

## Program Update

State Wildlife agencies have been supporting breeding grounds conservation in Canada since 1965. It started with Louisiana, Ohio and South Carolina. This past year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> year that the program was established under AFWA and garnered the awareness and support of most US state wildlife agencies.

*Illinois Department of Natural Resources*

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (AFWA) Fall Flights program has provided nearly \$90 million in state funding since 1991. Many states have been making progress toward their annual goal and Canadian partners continue to leverage this funding for maximum conservation benefit.

The vision and leadership of State Directors and of the Association has once again supported the creation of a Task Force for the Fall Flights program. The Task Force members have worked diligently this past year to review the program progress and challenges and bring forward new recommendations to guide this program into the future. Recommendations are focused on modernizing the goals and establishing a path forward for states to commit to a new 5-year 50% of goal recommendation. The full report provides details on all recommendations and the significant work behind the efforts of the Task Force.

This report provides Association members with a national update on their contributions toward the AFWA goal.

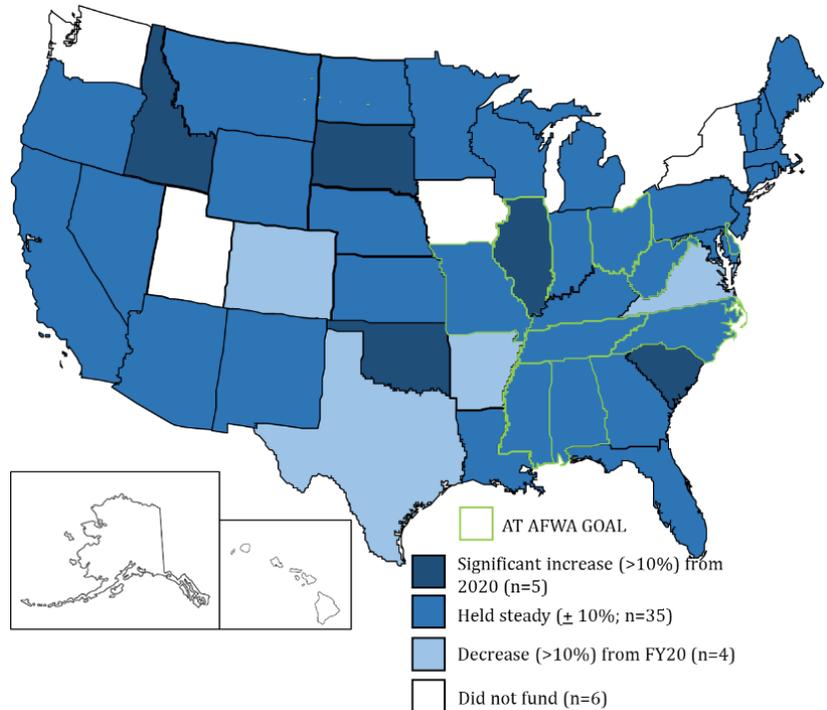
Illinois DNR established their duck stamp in 1975 and incorporated into the legislation funding in support of the NAWMP and breeding grounds conservation. This legislation and how it was worded has ensured the funds are protected and adjust with duck stamp increases over time. As a result, over a three-year time period where the state was unable to appropriate the funds, the money continued to build but remained protected. In 2021, IDNR was able to appropriate the back log of funding and



made available \$2 million of funding for breeding grounds conservation. This is the largest ever one-year commitment of funding to breeding grounds conservation from a state and is the reason why the Fall Flights program in 2021, for the first time, has exceeded the \$5 million mark.



ASSOCIATION of FISH & WILDLIFE AGENCIES



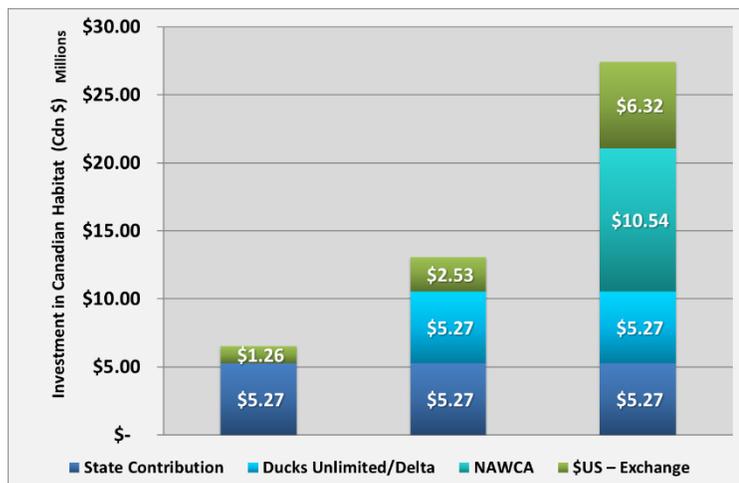
Report by the AFWA Waterfowl Working Group  
Chair - Jeff Ver Steeg (Colorado Parks and Wildlife)  
AFWA staff Liaison - Dean Smith  
September 3, 2021

## 2020-2021 Contributions Summary

Forty-three states contributed a total of \$5,270,612 (US) dollars to Canadian waterfowl habitat projects during 2020-21. This maintains a record number of states and sets the highest annual total commitment.

DU will match \$4.68 million of the states' investments and with the NAWCA funding, the investment will grow to \$18.7 million. Delta Waterfowl and Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (MHHC) will invest and match the remaining \$594,762 of state funding, which will grow to \$2.37 million. At the present-day currency exchange rate, the state, DU/Delta and NAWCA funds will generate an additional \$6.32 million (Cdn) that will be invested in Canadian habitat.

The US funds, along with Canadian funding sources will increase the investment such that the state commitment of \$5.27 million becomes a total NAWCA and match investment in Canada of approximately \$27.4 million.



## State Legislated Contributions

The first state to legislate funding to the breeding grounds was California which started back in the 1971. Currently there are ten states that have wording in their duck stamp legislation either requiring or allowing use of the funds to support breeding grounds conservation. The most recent to join this group and take the bold step is Colorado Parks and Wildlife. In 2019 CPW updated their waterfowl stamp legislation to increase the fee for the stamp and in addition added wording that would allow for the use of these funds for breeding grounds conservation in Canada.

### THE CONSERVATION NEED

Based on currently available information, new 5-year goals for the Canadian Habitat Joint Ventures is to conserve 4 million acres at a cost of \$1 billion (Canadian). The 20-year outlook will require the conservation of 14 million acres at an estimated cost of \$5 billion (Canadian). This seeks to conserve the national wetland base and migratory bird-valued natural areas through a thoughtful combination of *habitat securement, enhancement, and management*, promotion of sustainable land use, landowner incentives and progressive policy and regulation.

**The outlook for 2021-22 is solid with the completion of the Fall Flights Task Force and all states are committed to the partnership and breeding grounds conservation!**

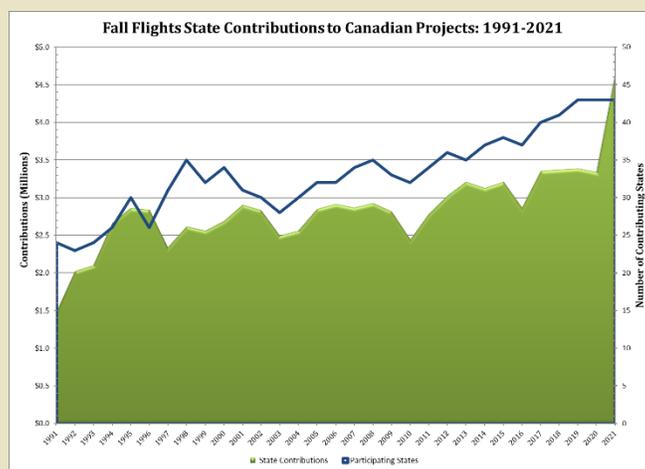
### STRONG YEAR

*State commitments remain strong this year totaling \$5,270,612 from 43 states. Nine states meeting their AFWA goal played a significant role in reaching this record year.*

*These states are:*

*Alabama, Delaware, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee and West Virginia*

**2020 Total: \$5,270,612**



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