



Fall Flights Campaign Work Plan



Purpose

Keep states on pace to meet Fall Flights shared goal of all states contributing \$10 million annually by 2031 in Canadian conservation projects.

GOAL 1: all states (except Hawai'i) are halfway to their goals by 2026.

GOAL 2: half of all states (except Hawai'i) have reached their goals by 2026.

Campaign Rationale

AFWA state directors endorsed the Fall Flights Presidential Taskforce recommendation, “all states, reaching 50% of their goal by 2026 and 100% by 2031.” We have made remarkable progress. Forty-eight out of 49 states are investing in Fall Flights, with 15 states already meeting their goals. Nine other states have surpassed the 50% benchmark. However, a shared program will only be successful if everyone shares in the costs as well as the benefits of these investments. A promotional campaign to encourage greater investments by state fish and wildlife agencies will help achieve the 2026 objectives. This campaign will set the stage for celebrating Fall Flights during the Canada Night event at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in March 2026. (This also corresponds with the 40th Anniversary of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan – NAWMP.)

Positioning Statement

Fall Flights is the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA's) powerful partnership program for state fish and wildlife agencies to invest in critical waterfowl habitat in Canada. It advances their shared waterfowl conservation goals expressed in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. Opportunities for hunters, birdwatchers, and others to enjoy waterfowl migrations depend on abundant duck populations and this all begins in Canada where more than two-thirds of ducks are produced. Safeguarding waterfowl habitat in Canada, including wetlands, grasslands, and boreal habitats, also provides critical habitat for tens of millions of other migratory birds, sustains biodiversity, reduces greenhouse effects, improves water systems, and provides alternatives to private landowners. These alternatives may include but are not limited to: offering incentives to enroll private land in conservation easements; revolving lands programs focused on keeping private grassland in grass or converting cropland to grass. In turn, waterfowl migrations help drive state economies by supporting outdoor recreation, tourism, and hunting opportunities.

State agency investments are the critical first step to creating the multiplier effect that leads to significant conservation of wetlands and associated upland habitats in Canada. The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) requires non-federal match at a ratio of at least 1:1, and a minimum of fifty percent of the matching funds used for projects in Canada must originate from sources in the United States.



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Fall Flights leverages funding up to four times. State funding through Fall Flights is matched by Ducks Unlimited or Delta Waterfowl/Manitoba Habitat Conservancy and leveraged with Canadian contributions and federal funding through NAWCA.

Mission

Ensuring the continued abundance of waterfowl in North America by investing in priority habitats in Canada.

Vision

Future generations enjoying the wonder of bird migrations.

Our Personality/Tone

- Encouraging, authentic, inspirational, trustworthy, international.
- Positive/optimistic; non-pressure campaign.
- Shared ownership of Fall Flights Program.

Themes

- Reaching milestones
- Celebrating anniversaries
- Strengthening connections
- Other

Messaging

- **RALLYING CRY:** *Giving wings to cross-border waterfowl conservation*
- **WHY invest in Fall Flights?** U.S. waterfowl hunters and wildlife watchers benefit greatly from migrating waterfowl, but to preserve this natural marvel for future generations, U.S. states must address the bottleneck in waterfowl population growth that occurs during the breeding season in Canada, where the majority of North American ducks' nest. [We need a sentence that highlights benefits for other migratory birds]
- If we all do a little individually, we can accomplish a lot together.
- Making the **MOST** of state fish & wildlife agency dollars.



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SLOGAN = **Uniting States for Fall Flights**

TAGLINES * Campaign specific secondary tag lines linking slogan and goal.

- Teir 1
 - States Taking Flight, Be Part of the \$10 Million Goal
 - Rise Up for Waterfowl, Help Us Reach \$6 Million by 2026
- Teir 2
 - Join the Flock, Help Us Reach \$6 Million by 2026
 - Take Off Together, Be a Part of Our \$6 Million Goal

Other Taglines * can be used for specific messaging of the day in conjunction with the SLOGAN

- Soaring to \$6 Million, One State at a Time
- One nation. One goal: Funds for Flyways.
- \$6M x 2026 - America's commitment to conservation.
- Funding the flyways, America's commitment to conservation.
- United in conservation. Committed to \$6M by 2026.
- Reach for the skies - Setting sights on \$6 million by 2026.
- Commitment in action - State funding takes flight for flyways.
- Taking Flight Towards \$6 Million in 26'
- Funding the Future of Waterfowl, State by State
- Funding the Future: 6 million Strong
- A United Effort for Unbroken Migrations
- Soaring to \$6 Million, One State at a Time
- A United Commitment to \$6 Million
- Protecting the Flyways, Together
- Investing in the Future, \$6 million by 2026

Call to ACTION

- Help Us Reach \$6 Million by 2026
- Be Part of the \$6 Million Goal by 2026
- Help Us Reach \$6 Million by 2026
- Be a Part of Our \$6 Million Goal



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Campaign Activities- Timeline

February

- The Fall Flights Communication Team meets weekly to create the slogan and visual branding materials.
- Fall Flights Team prioritizes states and writes state stewardship plans.
- Video interview preparation.
- Identify Newline Topics to support the campaign.
- Finalize video production work plan.

March

- Seek endorsements from states and NGOs.
- Finalize campaign planning and submit an Action Item to state fish & wildlife agencies directors to support the campaign in the form of a motion campaign at the 90th North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference - Business meeting.
- Conduct interviews for promotional videos at the 90th North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference.
- Conduct virtual state meetings.

April

- Announce Campaign (Newline, Directors Line, AFWA Social Media)
- Develop script for 2-4 short promotional videos.

May – June

- Conduct interviews with delivery partners in Canada.
- Draft a Fall Flights resolution to be adopted during the 2025 AFWA annual Meeting.
- Develop and approval criteria for (internal) Fall Flights Award- to be awarded during AFWA Annual Meeting.
- Select swag to give to states that meet their funding goal.

September

- Presentations about the campaign during appropriate meetings at the 90th North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference.
- Make motion to adopt Fall Flights resolution during the 2025 AFWA Annual Meeting.
- Promote Fall Flights successes and milestones in the AFWA Directors' Line and social media platforms.
- Email Alerts when a state reaches 50% or 100% of the goal.



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Outcomes

- Forty-nine State Fish and Wildlife Agencies to invest up to \$10 million annually in wetland and associated grassland habitats in Canada by 2031.
 - All 49-state fish and wildlife agencies at halfway point of their funding goal by 2026.
 - Twenty-five state fish and wildlife agencies reach their final funding goal by 2026.
- Advancement of important local and international conservation goals by making a long-term investment in critical waterfowl habitat conservation work in Canada.
- There are abundant fall flights of waterfowl through advocacy, teamwork, and science.
- Provide more opportunities for hunters and wildlife viewers.

Target Audiences

- **Primary** = State Directors
- **Secondary** = State Fall Flights Champion Teams (e.g. Wildlife Chiefs, Waterfowl Managers, Non-game Managers, etc.)
 - Also includes- provincial/territorial directors, Flyway Councils, NGO's, waterfowl advisory committees, wildlife diversity managers.
- **Tertiary** = General public (provide public support to state fish & wildlife agencies)

Communication Platforms

Website

- Update as necessary (www.fishwildlife.org/afwa-inspires/fallflights)

Email Marketing

- Fall Flights Newsline - once a month
- Periodic email blasts around important issues

Social Media

- Periodic posts on AFWA's social media channels

Personal Communications/Event Marketing

- Present and/or share key messages with target audiences through relevant presentations, conversations, meeting announcements.

Digital/ Print (as needed)

- Brochures; Reports; FAQ's; Fact Sheets
- Other items as needed

Press Releases

- AFWA Press Release(s), if appropriate.