



## Ducks Unlimited Canada



# Private Land Habitat Conservation Project

## Final Report - 2002

### 1. Project Goals and Objectives

The goal of the project was to support an ongoing program of private land wildlife habitat conservation by supplying materials and technical support. Specific objectives were to build an inventory of wildlife flushing bars, "Clemson Pond Levelers " and fencing materials and to distribute these to interested landowners, who had a sincere interest in conserving wetland, riparian or upland habitats.

### 2. Outline of work completed

**A. Wildlife Flushing Bar Program** - In 2002, 10 flushing bar units were built and 4 were installed on tractors to reduce wildlife mortality on 705 acres of hayfields. 6 will remain on inventory for future use.

**B. Clemson Pond Levelers** - This clever design for a "beaver proof " water control device was used at 7 sites in the Province in 2002. 4 of these sites were active beaver dams that were causing property damage, 2 were used as water control structures for wetland restoration projects and 1 was used to replace an aging water control structure. Altogether 62 acres of wetlands are being conserved. We have 2 leveler units on inventory to be used for conservation in 2003.



**C. Livestock Fencing Program** - The Habitat Conservation Fund supported an ongoing program being delivered through the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture. As of the date of this report, we have issued cheques to 6 farms for work done in 2002, that resulted in conserving 49 acres of riparian habitat.

### 3. Results

In total 16 agreements were signed with private landowners, resulting in 816 acres of habitat being conserved. Funding from the Habitat Conservation Fund helped to clear up a backlog of requests for livestock fencing. We were able to provide 4 wildlife flushing bars to landowners / producers who were concerned about destroying wildlife while mowing hay. Just as important, we now have 6 units on inventory, so we can provide an immediate response to producers in the Province who have a need for a wildlife flushing bar in the future. Of 9 Clemson Pond Leveler devices built, 7 were used directly on habitat projects in 2002 and 2 were kept on inventory for next year.

Specific names of participating landowners, locations, projects etc. are as follows:

#### **Wildlife Flushing bars:**

- Danny Neiforth - Gays River area - 300 acres
- Dr. David MacKay - Colchester Co. 125 acres
- Darrin O'Connell - South Branch Stewiacke - 180 acres
- Gerald Romsa - Pictou County - 100 acres
- 6 units on inventory

#### **Beaver Pond / water control project:**

- Bloise Road - Hants Co. 12 acres
- Amherst Shore Park - 3 acres

- Bob Hawkleys' beaver pond, Wentworth - 10 acres
- Carters', Springhill area - 9 acres
- Gerald MacKenzie - Malagash 6 acres - used to help build 2 large ponds on the property
- Amherst Point - 22 acres, used to replace an old, non-functioning water control
- 2 water control units on inventory

**Livestock Fencing:** (cheques issued to)

- Barry Baker - Carrols Corner 5 acres including a man made wetland
- Larry Ward - Musquodoboit - Larry will be completing his project next year that will involve installing a ram hydraulic pump in a Ducks Unlimited dam, thereby eliminating the need for his cattle to water directly from the marsh.
- Francis Verstraten - Cumberland Co., Francis fenced 4 acres around a wetland built by Ducks Unlimited to treat wastewater from the dairy farming operation.
- John Bueglas - Pictou Co. This project fenced out a 4-acre wetland restored by Ducks Unlimited Canada in 1997.
- Ross Collins - Linden, Cumberland Co. - 1 acre of wetland
- M. Rose MacDonald - Pictou Co. - 35 acres of wetland was conserved with this project.

#### 4. Assessing the achievements

Generally speaking, we accomplished what we set out to do, but at a lower than estimated cost. Here is what can be said about each component of the project:

**Wildlife Flushing Bar program:** We anticipated building 10 to 12 units, costing \$7500 cash and using \$4580 in staff time. We actually built 10 units for \$5941 and used only \$1456 in staff time. We installed 4 units conserving 705 acres and have the remainder in inventory. The HCF contributed \$2500 towards the project. We did not know what the demand for flushing bars would be and the variance in staff time can be explained by the fact that we only installed 4 units this year. Had we installed more, we would have used more in-kind funds. This staff time will be used in the future to install the remaining 6 flushing bar units. The difference in direct costs is attributed to building 10 not 12 units and getting a good price from a local welding shop. We did not set acre goals, but anticipated that on average, each flushing bar unit would conserve 150 acres, when in reality this year the four that were installed averaged 176 acres.

**Beaver pond / water control program:** The Clemson Pond Leveler is a proven design for a beaver proof water control device that has a variety of applications. We proposed to build 20 units costing \$10,000 and use \$9160 in staff time to deliver the program, with the Habitat Conservation Fund contributing \$5000. We hoped to conserve between 50 and 100 acres of wetlands. Because of the opportunities that presented themselves, we in fact built only 9 units. However, because the types of applications, we spent \$9549.95 in direct costs to install the water controls. This was due to the fact that 3 of the 7 units were used as a part of wetland restoration projects, which involved the use of excavators that increased the installation costs. Clemson Pond Levelers were used to solve major problems at 4 sites where beaver dams were flooding roads or private property. 62 acres of habitat were conserved in 2002, with this program. 2 "levelers" are on inventory for use next year.

**Livestock Fencing and watering:** As previously stated, the \$6000 contribution to this program by the Habitat Conservation Fund was intended to support an ongoing program being delivered by the Eastern Habitat Joint venture. The total proposed amount of direct dollars to be spent was \$25,000. This was actually downsized to \$21,000 as a result of the reallocation of funds by the EHJV technical committee in response to a decreased overall habitat enhancement budget in 2002. Nevertheless, some great projects were completed and the projection is that all \$21,000 will be spent by March 31, 2002. As of the date of this report, Ducks Unlimited Canada has issued cheques totaling \$8963.51 to 6 producers who had completed fencing projects and submitted claims. 49 acres of wetland riparian habitat was conserved with these 6 projects. Ducks Unlimited Canada did not budget for in-kind costs for this program, since we were not the delivering agency.



## 5. Recommendations and Follow up to the project

Ducks Unlimited Canada staff will do follow up inspections on the beaver pond projects to help determine how successful this program is over time. The flushing bar and livestock fencing projects are really in the hands of the landowners, who agreed to maintain them over time. Of course, should technical support be needed, DUC staff will help.

Because of the support of the Habitat Conservation Fund, DUC has some material inventory with which to react quickly to requests. We anticipate that the beaver levelers will be used up in 2003 and the flushing bars will last a year or two. Future funding requests to the HCF may be necessary to replenish material supplies in the near future.

## 6.0 Financial Statement

Project	Proposed Direct Costs	Actual Direct Costs	HCF Contribution	Proposed In-Kind Costs	Actual In-Kind Costs
Wildlife Flushing	\$7,500	\$5,941	\$2,500	\$4,580	\$1,356

Bar Project					
Beaver Pond/Water Control Project	\$10,000	\$9,549.95	\$5,000	\$9,160	\$6,448
Livestock Fencing & Watering	\$25,000	\$8,983	\$6,000	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$42,500.00</b>	<b>\$24,473.95</b>	<b>\$13,500.00</b>	<b>\$13,740.00</b>	<b>\$7,904.00</b>

Variations are explained in section 5. The largest discrepancy is that we have only spent \$8983 out of the \$25,000 budgeted for in the fencing program. To our knowledge the work has been done and the invoices will come in between now and March 31, 2003. Once all the fencing cheques are issued, we are projecting that the total direct expenditures for this 2002 - 2003 HCF project will be \$36,490. To date, we have received \$6750 from the habitat conservation fund, representing 50% of their total commitment. Detailed ledger reports showing Ducks Unlimited Canada's expenditures are attached to this report. Ducks Unlimited Canada is considering this to be the final report for the project, even though the fencing invoices have not all been processed.

## 6. Communications

Credit was given to the Habitat Conservation Fund in the fall edition of Ducks Unlimited Canada's "Conservator" magazine. Below are images showing the work that was done this year.

### **Beaver Pond / Water Control Project**

In August a beaver leveler was installed at Amherst Shore. By late fall the water had returned to the beaver pond, but it is now controlled and will keep private property from being damaged.



In this case a septic system was being flooded near the bottom end of the lawn.



### **Beaver Pond Photos**

Water levels are now controlled at Bloise road, so that the beaver pond habitat can remain intact without impacting the road.



### **Livestock Fencing**

The livestock fencing program added another level of conservation to wetlands that were built or restored by Ducks Unlimited Canada. Welsford pond in Pictou County, shown here was restored by DUC in 1997 and fenced this year.



A constructed wetland to treat agricultural wastewater that is being fenced on Francis Verstraten's farm in Cumberland County.



**Wildlife Flushing Bar Project**



10 Wildlife Flushing bars were built to reduce wildlife mortality in hay fields.



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