



Ducks Unlimited Canada



Small Marsh Restoration in the Agricultural/Rural Landscape Final Report - 2003

1. Project Goals and Objectives

The goal of the project was to restore, enhance or create wetlands in the agricultural and urban regions of Nova Scotia. More specific objectives were to improve habitat conditions or wetland value for aquatic wildlife and to improve the ability of the restored wetlands to benefit people.

2. Outline of Work Completed

In 2003, DUC staff received 65 requests from landowners to assess their properties for possible wetland conservation. Of the 65, 40 were deemed acceptable or required further investigation. Of the 40 acceptable sites, 16 were completed in 2003, during the time frame of this funding grant. The remaining 24 are either scheduled for work in 2004 or will be looked at in more detail before a final decision is made.



A Pasture Pond with Fenced Riparian Buffer

3. Results

For the 16, wetland restoration projects completed in Nova Scotia in 2003, Ducks Unlimited Canada staff evaluated each site and created detailed plans. Where possible a riparian zone was identified and became a part of the individual project. The landowners were asked to sign conservation agreements, which protect the wetland well into the future. In cases where permits were required, these were applied for and obtained from the Department of Environment and Labour.

In total, 15.4 ha (38.1 acres) of wetlands were restored or improved as wildlife habitat and another 11.4 ha (28.4 acres) of riparian buffer were protected around the wetlands. While all of the projects are good quality habitat for fresh water aquatic wildlife, they will also provide benefits to society by filtering and purifying surface water that travels through them. Most will add aesthetic value to the properties and provide recreational nature watching opportunities for people. One is designed to supply additional irrigation water on a vegetable farm.

The distribution of the restored wetlands is shown on figure 1. All are in agricultural and or urban settings such as the Annapolis Valley and the Northumberland Strait region of Northern N.S., where high nutrient levels will create biologically productive wetlands.

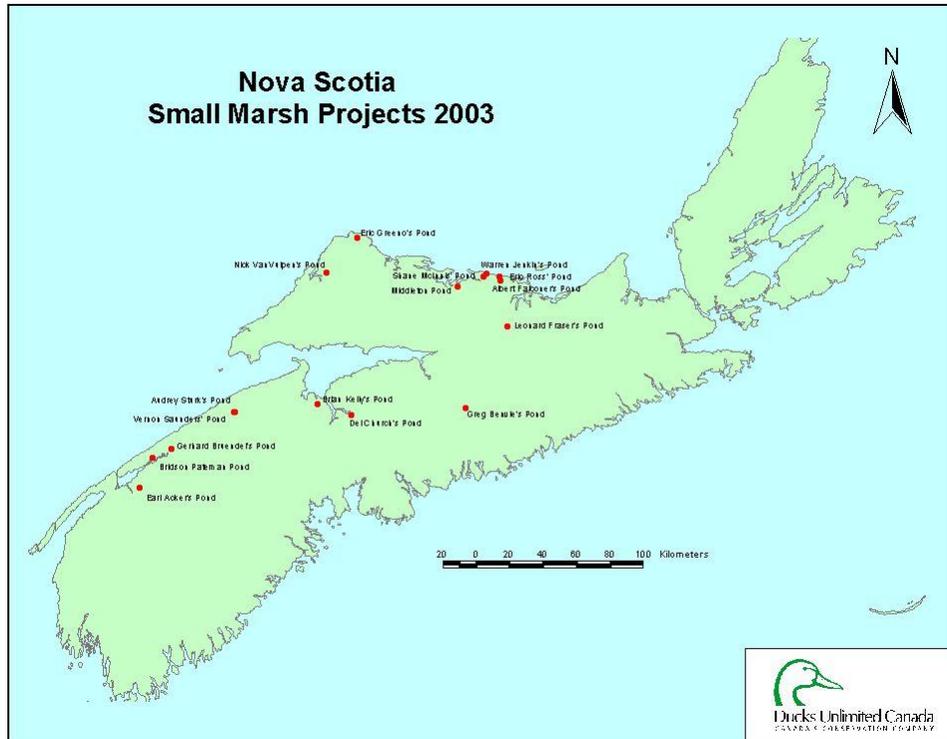


Figure 1 - 2003 Project Locations

4. Assessing the Achievements

Because of the fact that the sites selected and restored were larger than expected and funding was reduced from the proposal, fewer wetland restorations were completed than originally planned. However, the sites restored were the "best of the best" from a larger list and each is excellent quality. All 26.9 ha (66.5 acres) of this improved or restored habitat will be available for wildlife for many years, requiring little or no management. All landowners signed agreements ensuring the future of the habitat and seemed pleased with the results.

5.0 Financial Statement

In Ducks Unlimited Canada's original proposal to the HCF, we requested \$21,000 that would become a part of a larger program. The HCF's actual contribution was \$15,000. These funds, combined with DUC's contribution resulted in \$66,383 direct dollars available for the program in 2003. In addition, the cost for Ducks Unlimited Canada's staff to do the site evaluations, design, land negotiations, permits applications and construction supervision was \$47,839. The direct and indirect costs then total \$114,222.

6.0 Communications

Credit was / will be given to the Habitat Conservation Fund for their financial contribution at all public presentations made by DUC throughout the year or to the network of DUC volunteers throughout the province.



Typical farm wetland before restoration showing in-filled marsh - June 2003



Same area shown just after restoration of open water habitat - September 2003

*John Wile, Habitat Biologist
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Amherst, Nova Scotia*

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