

Habitat GIT Fall 2023 Meeting: Black Duck Action Team Update

VA

- Doe Creek WMA Wetland Enhancement with Ducks Unlimited – Chesapeake WILD
 - DWR is working with DU to restore and enhance 147 acres of existing wetland impoundments at Doe Creek WMA for American Black Ducks and other wetland species, leveraging federal Chesapeake WILD and Virginia Migratory Waterfowl Stamp funding. Construction for this project began in November 2023 and the project is expected to be completed by early 2024
- Mattaponi WMA Wetland Enhancement Project with Ducks Unlimited – NAWCA
 - DWR is working with DU to restore wetland hydrology and enhance management of approximately 85 acres of wetland habitat at Mattaponi WMA. This project is funded through a 2022 North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant and DU is currently finalizing construction plans.
- NRCS, Ducks Unlimited, and the [Working Lands for Wildlife Black Duck Initiative](#) - ATBC
 - Ducks Unlimited received 2022 America the Beautiful Challenge funding to provide engineering technical assistance and advance on-the-ground wetland habitat restoration in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) Working Lands for Wildlife Black Duck Initiative. DU staff is currently working with Eastern Shore NRCS who is actively pursuing private lands projects which were previously stalled or denied due to capacity and funding limitations. DU currently has a job opening in Chesapeake Virginia for a Working Lands Biologist to provide this capacity on the Western Shore of the Chesapeake Bay.

MD

- MD DNR/DU completed a 12 acre wetland restoration/moist soil impoundment in Charles County at Cedar Point WMA. Construction was completed in June of 2023.
- MD DNR/ DU purchased four water control structures at Fairmount WMA for a roughly 300 acre restoration project.
- MD DNR/DU sprayed 150 acres of phragmites via aerial application at Fairmount WMA in Somerset County. Herbicide application occurred mostly within 2 managed salt marsh impoundments totaling over 300 acres. We recently raised the elevation of 1.5 miles of dike on these impoundments and are working through the permitting process to replace aging/damaged large water control structures on these impoundments as well. Water levels at these impoundments are managed for SAV growth.
- MD DNR is close to completing a beneficial use of dredge material project at Deal Island WMA in partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers, Somerset County Commissioners, and several other groups. This project is using material dredged from Wicomico River's main navigation channel and pumping it 12 miles to the south-eastern shore of the Deal Island WMA where it is being used to raise the elevation of approximately 70 acres of marsh that has been degraded by sea level rise, erosion and storms. The application of dredge material to this area will restore several hundred acres of marsh and help protect the Deal Island tidal impoundment from storm events. This impoundment is managed for SAV growth for resident and winter migratory birds as well as providing nesting habitat for marsh nesting species by providing stable water levels. Summary blurb [HERE](#).

PA

- A lot of restoration/enhancement work is underway and being planned across the state of PA, on state game lands. Pending available funding, dozens of sites are being planned with some in the pipeline currently.
- DU is hiring a new biologist position in PA because their program has grown so much. The job is posted on the DU job board and closes 12/8. If anyone on this group knows of someone, please have them reach out to Ed or Jim Fegea (jfeaga@ducks.org) to learn more.