

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

ITEM

17

DECISION

TOPIC

Amendment to Existing Agreement with Ducks Unlimited for Wetland
Restoration and Enhancement

The Commission is requested to approve an amendment to an agreement between the Department (DNR) and Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU). The primary purpose of this agreement is to improve water quality in large marshes and shallow lakes where monitoring data show poor water quality and a corresponding reduction in wildlife habitat, native fish populations, and associated recreational use. Projects conducted under this agreement focus on renovation of degraded wetland habitats by removing and excluding carp and other rough fish species, establishing functional water control structures, and re-establishing healthy emergent and submerged aquatic plant communities. Previous projects funded under this agreement include Diamond Lake and Jemmerson Slough in Dickinson County, Dan Green Slough in Clay County, Four Mile Lake in Emmet County, and Eagle Flats in Hancock County.

The current 5 year agreement is effective from July 2006 through July 2011, in which the DNR and DU have each committed \$500,000 for a total of \$1 million. This partnership has been very effective and each agency has reached the \$500,000 commitment. The purpose of this amendment is to increase the minimum financial commitments of both organizations from \$500,000 to \$1 million with the ability to authorize a maximum investment up to \$3 million. DNR and DU use these future funding commitments to gain additional partners and as matching funds in federal grant proposals which also provide funding toward the \$3 million for these projects.

Annual funds committed by DNR are primarily from State Migratory Bird Fee revenues which generate more than \$240,000 per year, but also include annual funding support from the Fisheries bureau and lake restoration programs. DU is supported by more than 26,000 members within the state of Iowa, and has been a leader in devising wetland restoration and renovation techniques in Iowa and across the upper Midwest. DU and DNR have been increasing and improving wetland habitat across Iowa under similar agreements since April 10, 1985.

Dale Garner, Wildlife Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
October 8, 2009