



to: Colleen Callahan, Director

from: Mike Wefer, Chairman, State Duck Stamp Committee

date: February 26, 2021

subject: Duck Stamp Committee Action–State Projects Only

The State Duck Stamp Committee met on February 26, 2021 to review the IDNR proposals for funding from the Migratory Waterfowl Stamp Fund for fiscal year 2021. There was an estimated \$300,000 available for state projects, and there were a total of \$658,673 in requests.

The Committee recommended \$298,000 in funds be encumbered for the following new state projects:

Projects Recommended for Funding - ILLINOIS WATERFOWL AREA IMPROVEMENTS (State Projects)

Big Bend SFWA (Whiteside Co.) – South Marsh Wetland Restoration – Phase 1

Request: \$50,000 (\$100,000)

Matching Funds: \$400,000 (pending success of TR&PNI NAWCA)

Total: \$500,000

This project is part of The Rivers and Prairies of Northwest Illinois NAWCA grant, which was submitted in December 2020. If approved, the project would expand managed wetland acres at Big Bend, increasing managed wetland area by about 150 acres while reducing management complexity by reducing the overall number of water control structures and using one large structure to manage these wetland acres. Additionally, pending Ad Rule approval, public waterfowl hunting will begin at Big Bend in fall 2021, completion of this project will increase future hunting opportunity. DNR has committed to \$100,000 in match towards this project. This first \$50,000 would go toward initiation of the overall project and reduces the burden on the Duck Stamp fund in a single year.

Cost per acre: \$250 (\$500)

Duck Stamp Review Criteria Score: 120/140

Rice Lake SFWA (Fulton Co.) – Water Control Structure Enhancements

Request: \$60,000

Matching Funds: \$189,092 (CIRL NAWCA, Ducks Unlimited)

Total: \$60,000

The DNR and DU are combining new and old match with Conserving the Illinois River Legacy NAWCA funds to install an additional control structure, a spillway that facilitates equalizing water levels and pressure between the East Units and the Illinois River during flooding events, and armoring of the structures and spillway to stop future degradation of the management infrastructure during times of high water-velocity. The addition of this infrastructure will then allow the DNR to maintain a level of management capabilities during both summer moist soil growing season and unexpected flooding events, and lead to increased habitat quality. This project will also address several actions identified in the IWAP Wetlands Campaign: (1) Enhancing habitat quality of existing wetlands, (2) Managing existing wetlands to maximize wildlife benefits, and (3) Restoring historic hydrology to wetlands associated with large rivers. These funds will enhance the overall project and meet DNR's match obligation toward the NAWCA grant.

Cost per acre: \$22.87

Duck Stamp Review Criteria Score: 120/140

Anderson Lake SFWA (Fulton Co.) – Carlson Lake WCS Enhancement

Request: \$10,000

Matching Funds: None (but associated with CIRL NAWCA)

Total: \$18,488

This project is part of the Conserving the Illinois River Legacy NAWCA grant. DNR agreed to construct this project as part of our match toward the overall grant. The existing \$8,488 in Duck Stamp Maintenance funds meets the match requirement, but additional funds are necessary to bring the project to completion. The project creates an armored spillway for the main water ingress/egress between the site and the Illinois River, preventing annual flood damage and maintenance needs.

Cost per acre: \$41.67

Duck Stamp Review Criteria Score: 115/140

Horseshoe Lake SP (Madison Co.) – Raskey Slough Wetland Enhancement

Request: \$51,000

Matching Funds: \$182,993

Total: \$233,993

This project enhances and expands the managed waterfowl refuge area at Horseshoe Lake SP. Illinois Habitat Stamp funds and Ducks Unlimited provide the match for this project. Wetland acres will be expanded from 22 to 58 and managed for natural wetland vegetation. The project will replace a failing berm and failed water control structure with a new berm, water control structure and infrastructure for placing and operating a portable pump. Funds will be used to reach full project cost and construction will begin immediately.

Cost per acre: \$879.31

Duck Stamp Review Criteria Score: 115/140

Woodford SFWA (Woodford Co.) – Jenkins Marsh Restoration – Phase 1

Request: \$50,000

Matching Funds:

Total: \$50,000

In 2018, IDNR acquired the 237-acre Jenkins Marsh Property from Ducks Unlimited (DU) with hopes of restoring remnant wetlands into high quality habitat for waterfowl. This property is part of Woodford SFWA which is a Tier 3 site within the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan Wetland Campaign and directly borders Woodford SFWA, south of the hunter check station. The property contains two wetland impoundments totaling 124 restorable acres and 113 acres of surrounding upland habitats. Currently, the property serves as wildlife refuge and is closed to most public recreation. Once restored, the property would offer opportunities for desirable public “walk-in” waterfowl hunting, fishing, birdwatching, and hiking. DU engineering staff have provided designs and cost estimates for the 124-acre restoration. We are hoping to reduce overall costs by salvaging existing levees and splitting restoration up into phases. Work has already begun with a DU funded project to clear undesirable trees from wetland basins and levees. We are asking for \$50,000 dollars for the initial phase of restoration to be spent on services, commodities, or as match for acquiring additional restoration funding. This is phase one and additional asks for funding are likely in future Duck Stamp cycles.

Cost per acre: \$403.23

Duck Stamp Review Criteria Score: 110/140

Woodford SFWA (Woodford Co.) – Portable Pump

Request: \$51,000

Matching Funds: \$2,000

Total: \$53,000

Marshall State Fish and Wildlife Area (SFWA) and Woodford SFWA occupy nearly 9,000 acres and are listed as Tier 3 sites within the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan Wetland Campaign. We are seeking funding for a 6” portable trash pump to maintain pumping capabilities for hunting programs and wetland management at the Duck Ranch Unit of Marshall SFWA. Existing stationary pumping infrastructure at the Duck Ranch is extremely costly to maintain and currently needs more than \$300,000 in repairs to remain functional into the future. The portable pump would help us flood 40 acres of wetlands for public waterfowl hunting and public waterfowl refuge at the Duck Ranch. The

pump is portable, self-contained, and can be towed with a standard pickup truck. The price includes 100' of outlet and intake hose so it can be used in areas where a water source may not be close. These pumps are also more versatile and can be used to dewater and irrigate impoundments during the growing season. Additionally, this pump could be used as a backup for the Forested Wetland Unit (180 acres; Woodford SFWA) and to flood new wetland acreage for public waterfowl refuge in Jenkins Marsh Unit (120 wetland acres; Woodford SFWA). This system will give us a reliable water source for more than 340 acres of managed wetlands more easily and with much lower maintenance costs than previous systems.

Cost per acre: \$150

Duck Stamp Review Criteria Score: 100/105

Snakeden Hollow SFWA (Stark Co.) – Invasive Phragmites Treatment

Request: \$15,000

Matching Funds: \$

Total: \$15,000

This project will work to enhance 150 acres of shallow wetland habitat at Snakeden Hollow SFWA. Currently the site's wetlands are severely degraded and consist primarily of monocultures of the invasive species *Phragmites australis*. The project will use aerial herbicide application to begin to reclaim wetland areas making them more attractive for waterfowl, other wetland wildlife and potentially hunters. DNR staff have had success controlling *Phragmites* in recent years using these methods.

Cost per acre: \$100

Duck Stamp Review Criteria Score: 100/140

Horseshoe Lake SFWA (Alexander Co.) – Levee Plow

Request: \$11,000

Matching Funds: \$1,000

Total: \$12,000

Horseshoe Lake SFWA (11,692 acres) and Cape Bend SFWA (1,380 acres) are ILWAP Wetland Campaign Tier 3 sites that are located in the Lower Mississippi River Bottomlands and Coastal Plain Focus Areas. Horseshoe Lake SFWA is also a Pittman-Robertson Federal Aid site. A levee plow is needed to create additional shallow water wetlands and to reduce the depth of water on portions of the site. Some units have to be flooded to a depth of > 3' in order to impound water on the entire wetland. A levee plow would allow the site to stairstep the wetland, allowing for the entire wetland to hold shallow water. The shallow water levels will make more food available for migrating waterfowl and will greatly reduce the cost of running wells to flood the units. The plow will also be used in the large crop fields on the refuge to create temporary pothole wetlands in the low-lying areas and draws. This equipment will be capable of creating and maintaining >400 wetland acres each year.

Cost per acre: \$27.50

Duck Stamp Review Criteria Score: 90/105

The Committee recommended funding these state projects with Duck Stamp Maintenance Funds .

The Committee recommended \$47,000 in duck stamp maintenance funding be encumbered for these projects:

Donnelley SFWA (Putnam Co.) – Wetland Improvement Recommended for Maintenance Funding

Request: \$15,000

Matching Funds:

Total: \$15,000

Perform site maintenance. Ditch cleaning/clearing, repair pump and pump engine pad, restructure levees back to original design elevation. This project will increase habitat management capacity and increase overall wetland habitat value.

Cost per acre: \$31.58

Duck Stamp Review Criteria Score: 125/140

Rice Lake SFWA (Fulton Co.) – Voorhees Management Unit Infrastructure Enhancements Recommended for Maintenance Funding

Request: \$17,000

Matching Funds: \$

Total: \$17,000

The Voorhees Management Unit inner/outer levees have two damaged drop log structures in need of replacement. These supply water to waterfowl hunting and waterfowl refuge units. Proper management of these units is impossible without functioning water control structures.

Cost per acre: \$300

Duck Stamp Review Criteria Score: 100/140

Spring Lake SFWA (Tazewell Co.) – Spring Lake Bottoms Water Control Enhancement Recommended for Maintenance Funding

Request: \$15,000

Matching Funds:

Total: \$15,000

The drainage ditches at the Spring Lake Bottoms unit of Spring Lake SFWA are filling in with silt, being encroached on by trees, and are suffering damage by beavers and muskrats. Funding is being requested to remove silt to enhance the water manipulation abilities in the unit. Currently water manipulation abilities are degrading because the ditches have filled up with silt over time. Removing the silt would allow water levels to be manipulated in a timelier manner to promote moist-soil vegetation. Funding would also be used to place riprap around the water control structures to help prevent the burrowing damage caused by beavers and muskrats. Enhanced water control ability will allow habitat management to be improved through better timing of drawdowns and flooding.

Cost per acre: \$37.50

Duck Stamp Review Criteria Score: 125/140

Please let me know if you desire any additional information on any of these projects. Upon your decision, the OGMA grant staff will inform the members of the State Duck Stamp Committee and get the capital funds released.

DIVISION RECOMMENDATION

Mike Wefer, Chief
Division of Wildlife Resources

3/31/21

Date

APPROVE
 DISAPPROVE

DIVISION RECOMMENDATION

Chris Young, Director
Office of Resource Conservation

Date

APPROVE
 DISAPPROVE

AGENCY DIRECTOR SIGN-OFF

Colleen Callahan, Director

Date

APPROVE
 DISAPPROVE