Ducks Unlimited Canada Program Review

Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

75 YEARS OF CONSERVATION EXCELLENCE

Ducks Unlimited Canada received its charter of incorporation in 1937 and became active in 1938

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2013 DUC 75th Anniversary

Mission Statement

"Ducks Unlimited Canada's mission is to conserve wetlands and associated habitats for the benefit of North America's waterfowl, which in turn provide healthy environments for wildlife and people."

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TEAM ALBERTA

- 1395 Volunteers
- 5405 Landowner
- 25/69 Employees
- 29,186 Supporters

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Program Evolution

- Large wetland projects - dams or protection (’37 - ’85)
- Upland habitat restoration and protection (’85 …)
- Institute for Wetlands & Waterfowl Research (’91 …)
- Landscape approach to conservation focusing on restoring wetland habitat(’99 …)
- Public Policy Initiatives (’99 …)

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Operational Streams

- Policy –Wetland Policy, Land Use Framework
- Habitat Asset Management
- Conservation Programs
- Winter Cereals Extension

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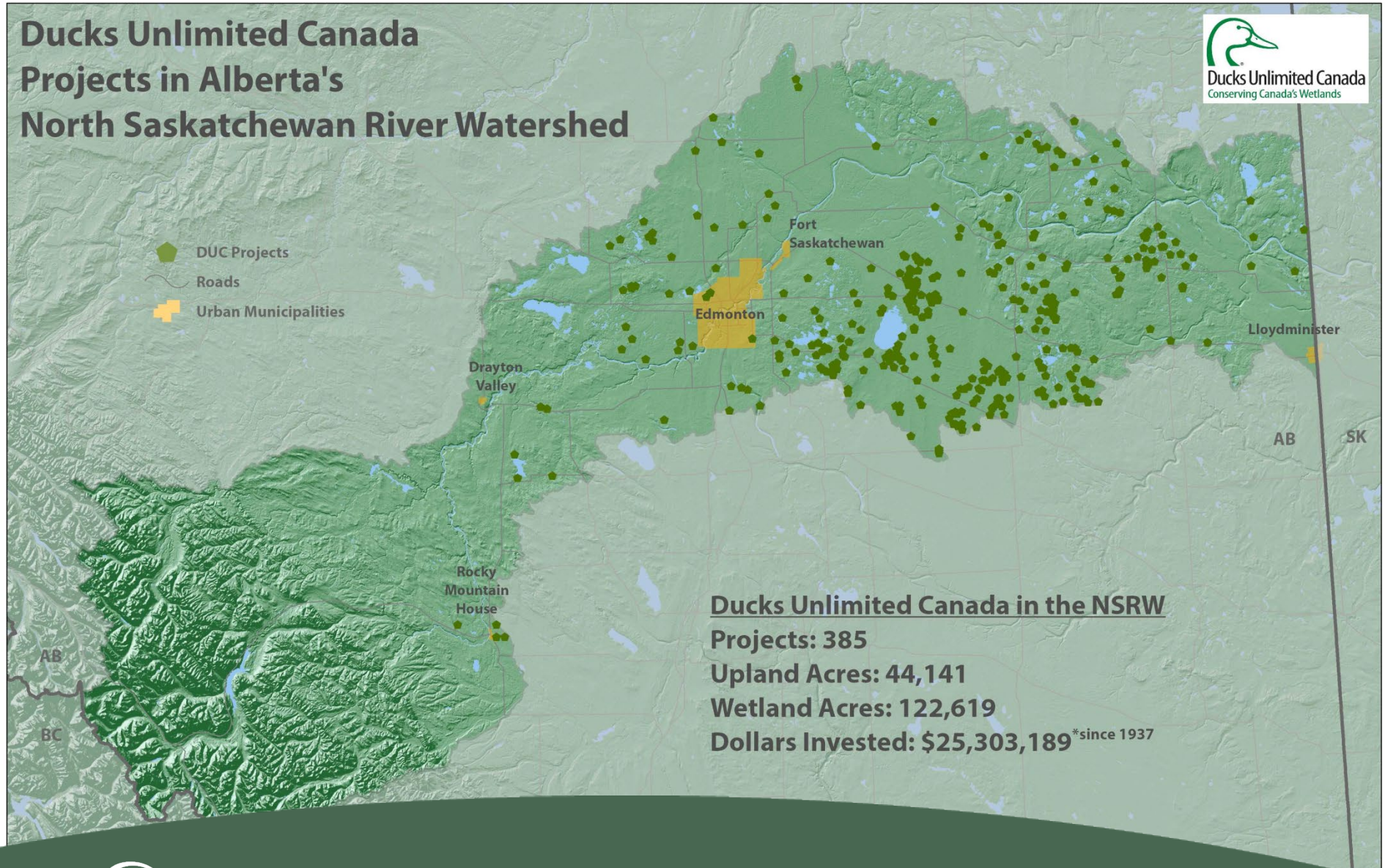
Ducks Unlimited Canada Projects in Alberta's North Saskatchewan River Watershed



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Ducks Unlimited Canada in the NSRW

Projects: 385

Upland Acres: 44,141

Wetland Acres: 122,619

Dollars Invested: $25,303,189 *since 1937

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Habitat Asset Management

Habitat Asset Management

- Minimum Ecological Management (apply natural processes, reduce operations and expense)
- Water control projects – transfer or decommission
- Purchase land management – 1 in 2 year
- Unauthorized use or non compliance
- Staff Capacity – contractors, municipalities, landowners or volunteers

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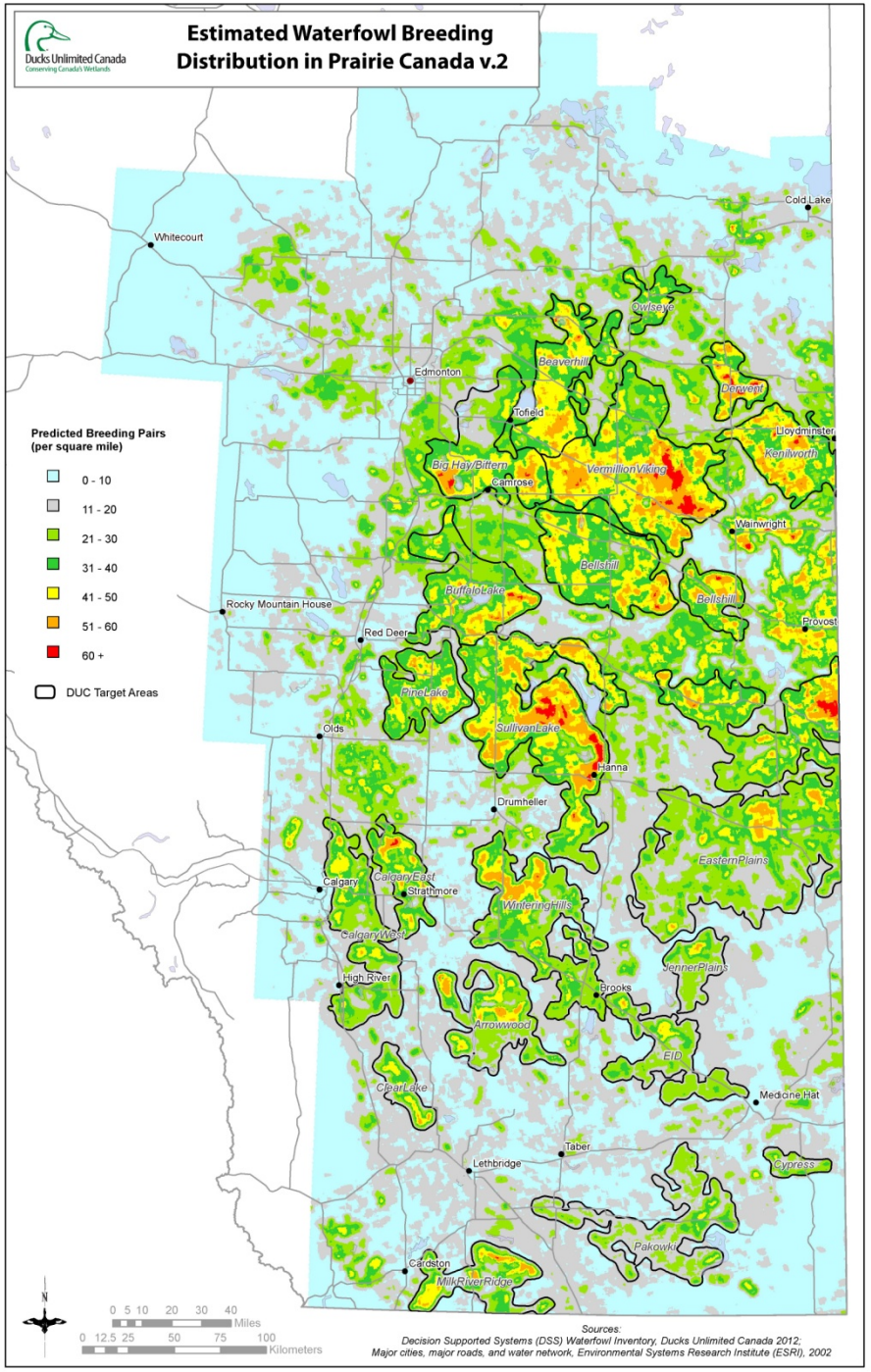
Targeting

- Decision Support System (DSS)
- Scientific Basis – ponds & pair survey
- Alberta Priority Targets
- All ducks and pintails



Targeting

- Northern pintail
- rationale /scale

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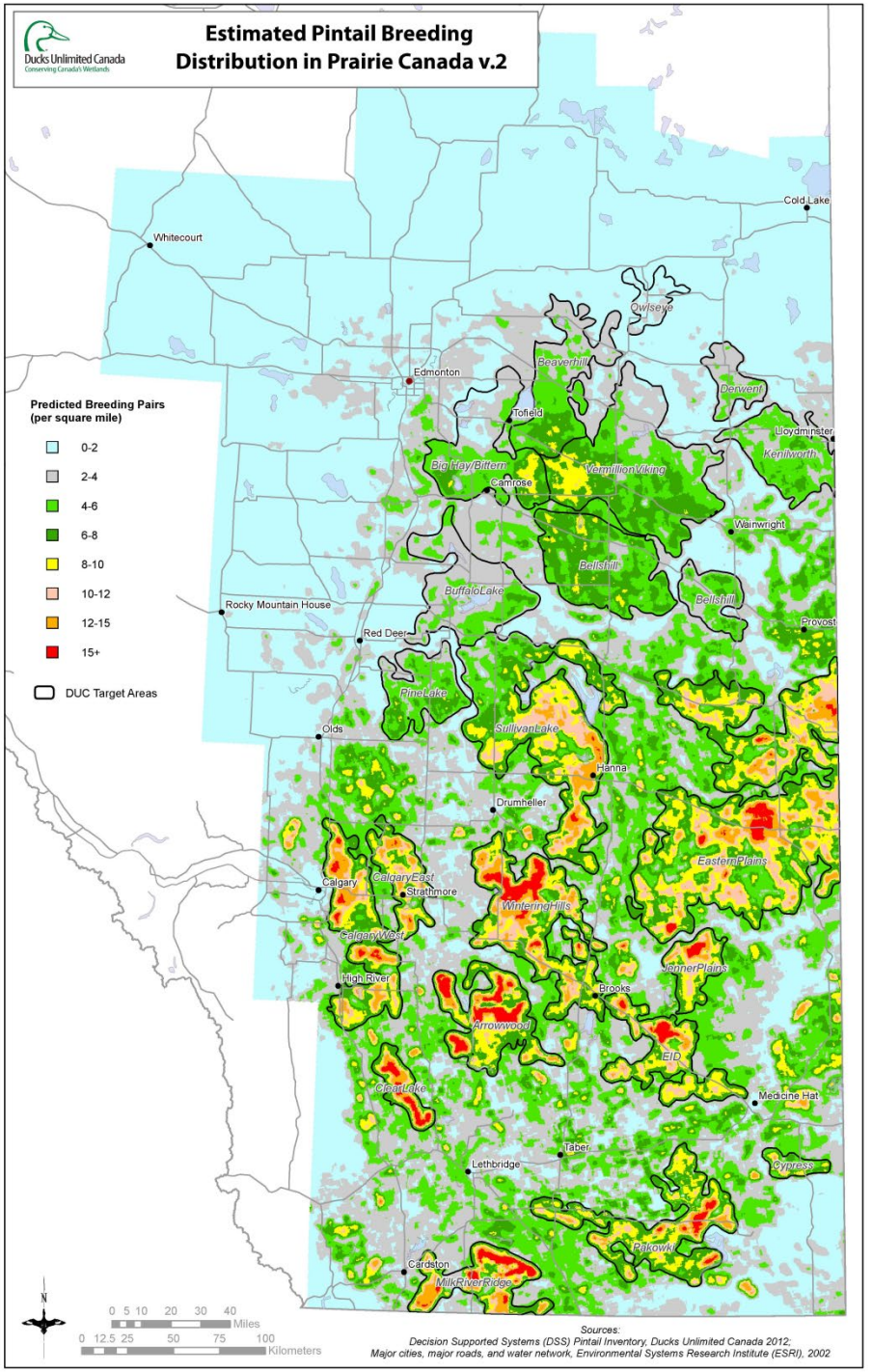

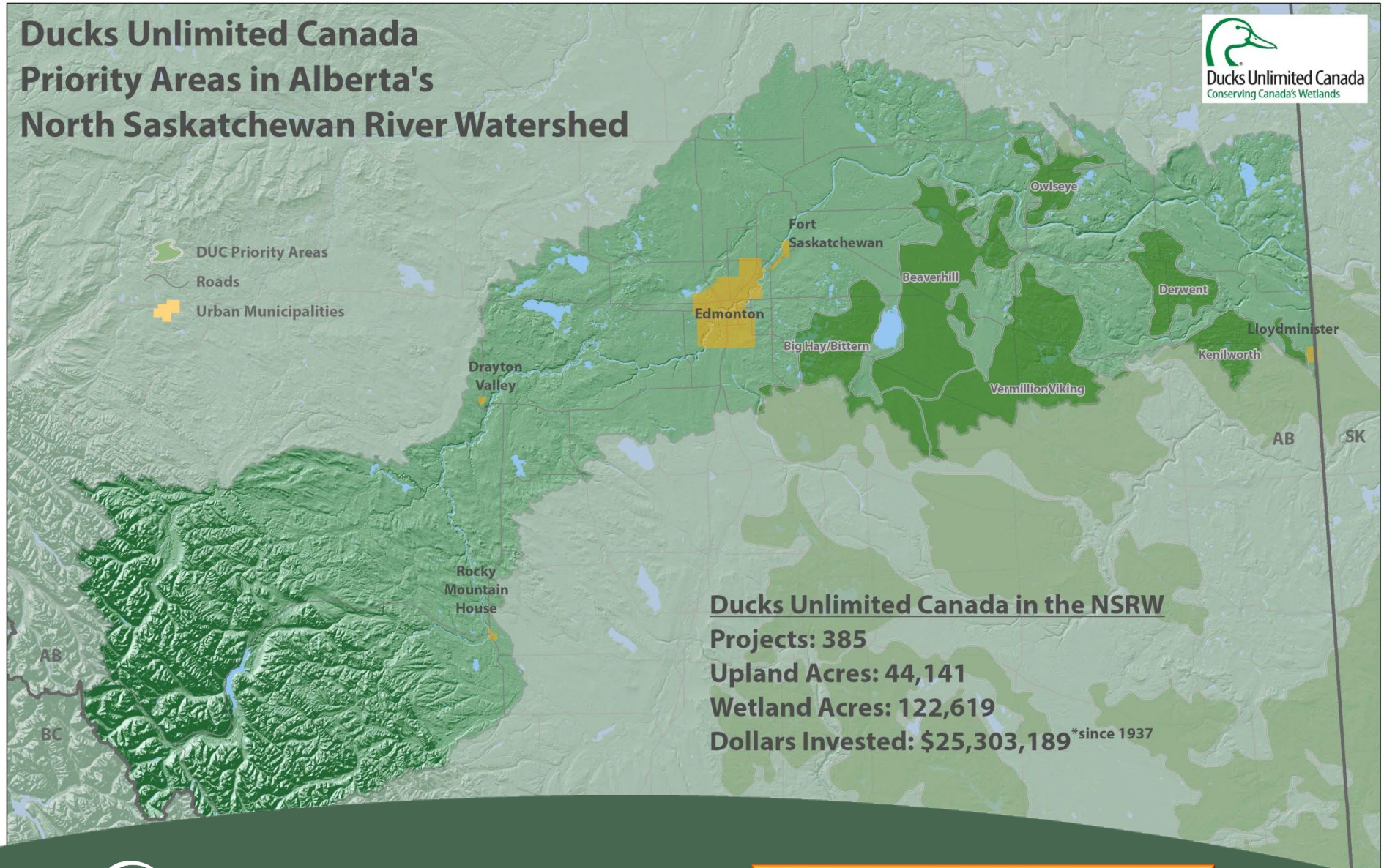

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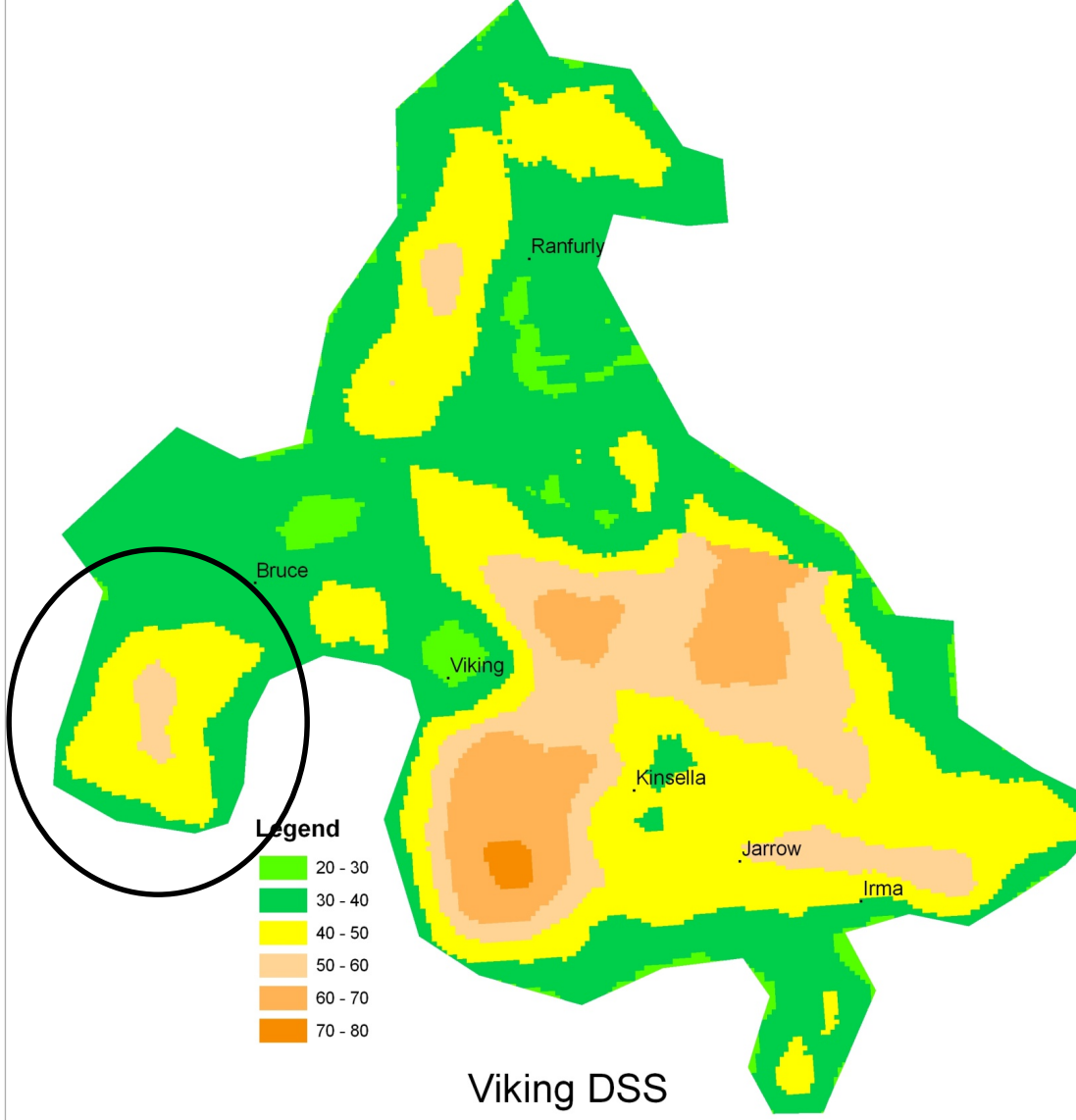
Targeting/Staff

Targeting

Viking Priority Area-
Proactive Delivery Planning

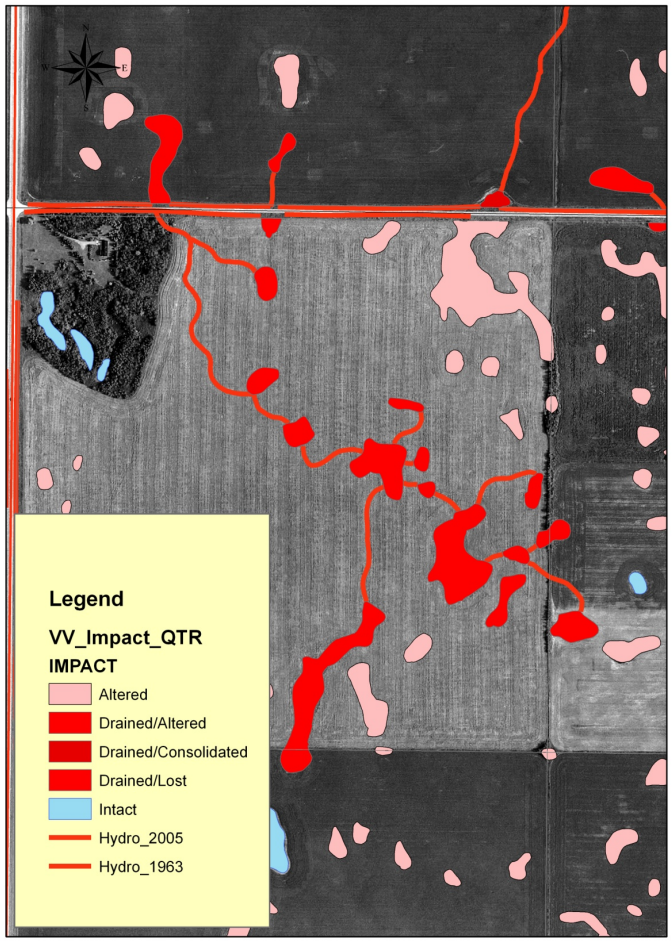


Targeting

Tools

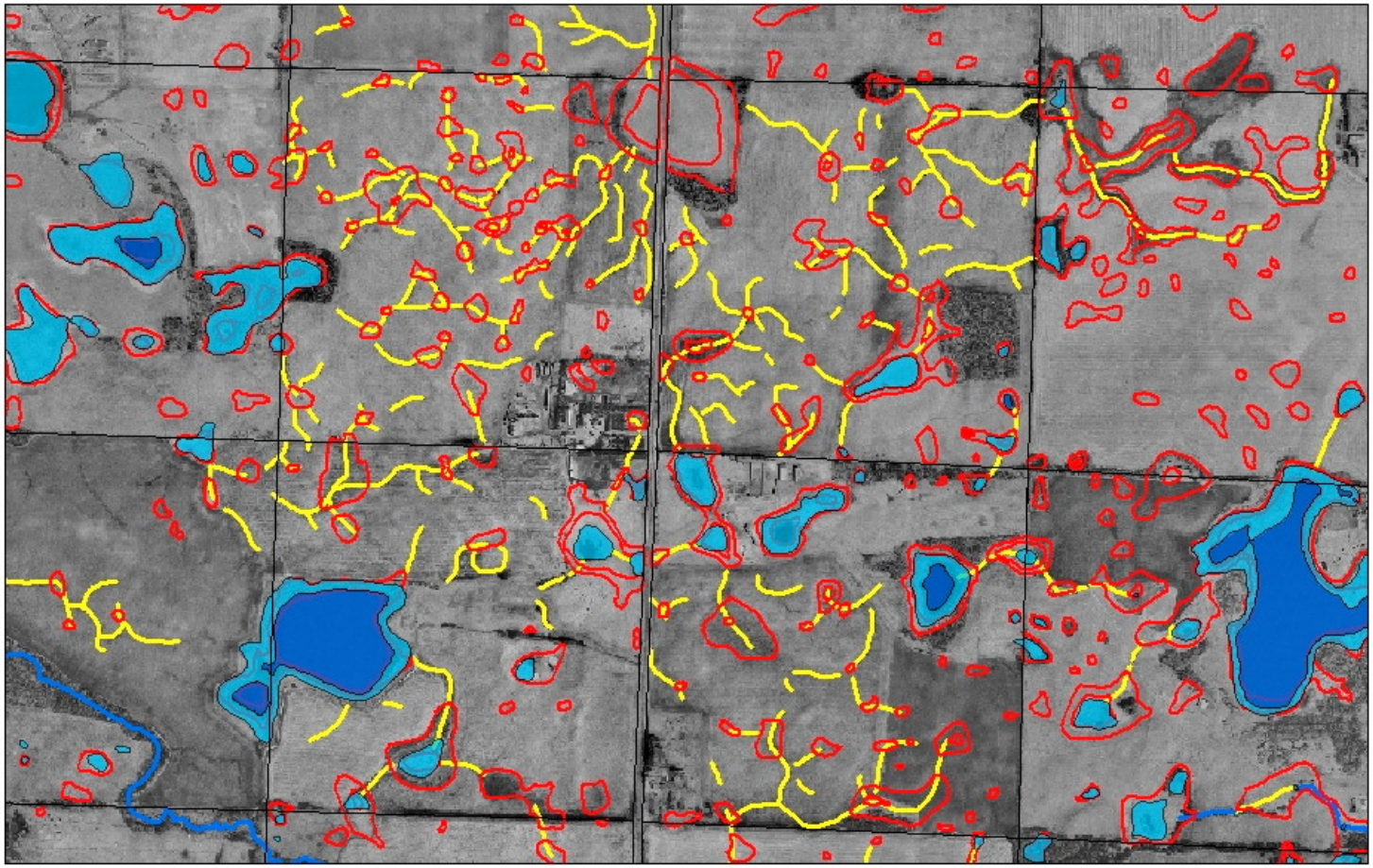
Utilize:
satellite imagery
historical aerial photography
drained wetland inventory (right)
ground truth

Assess lands for quantity of:
drained basins
drainage works
Perennial/native cover



DISAPPEARING

Current & Historical Wetlands, Current Drainage
Strathcona North Study Area



Legend

- Drainage
- Natural Stream
- Open Water
- Marsh
- Historical Open Water & Marsh

N

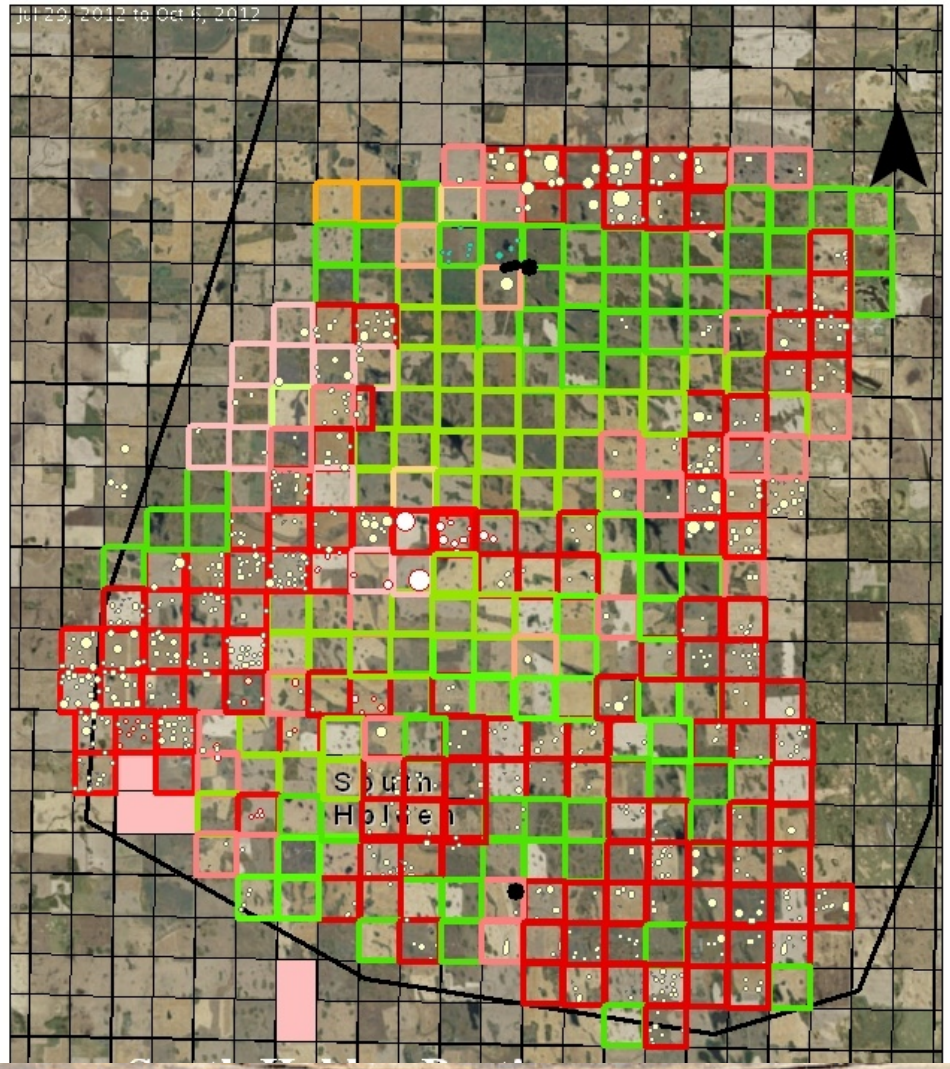
500 Meters

ATS at SE corner: NE13-54-21-W4
NW corner: NW23-54-21-W4
Photograph date: April 2001
Photographs courtesy of Air Photo Services, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development.
Cartographer: Wendy Proudfoot
Production Date: May 4, 2004.

Targeting

Develop Priority Delivery Map

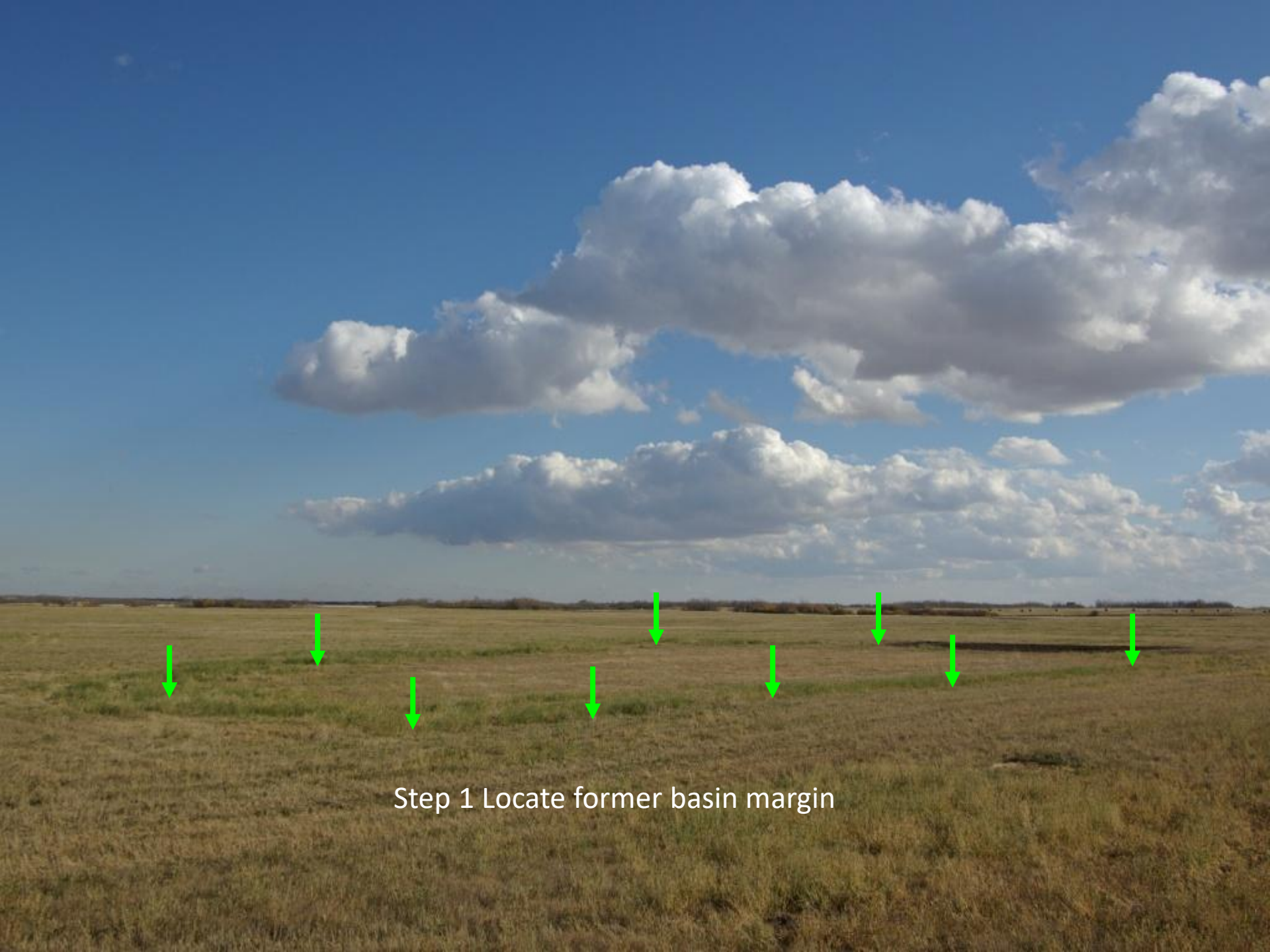
- Implement proactive delivery based on priority quarters from wetland restoration perspective
- Legend : red quarters highest to green quarters lowest



What is Wetland Restoration

Project example: Hendel

Drained small wetland


Step 1 Locate former basin margin

Step 2. Locate drainage

Step 3. Restore natural hydrology

Project example: Hendel
Restored small wetland

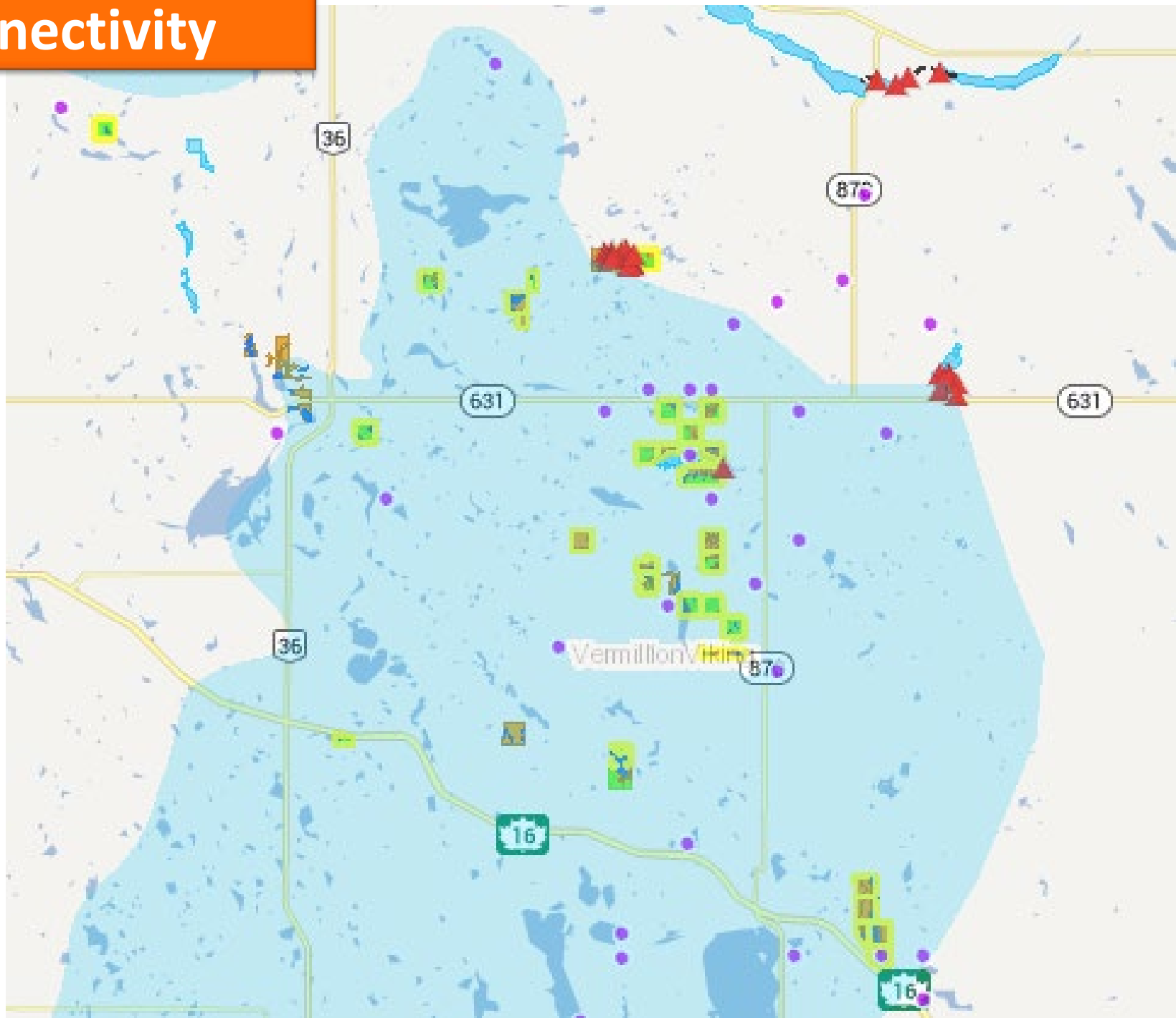
Securement

DELIVERY PRINCIPLES

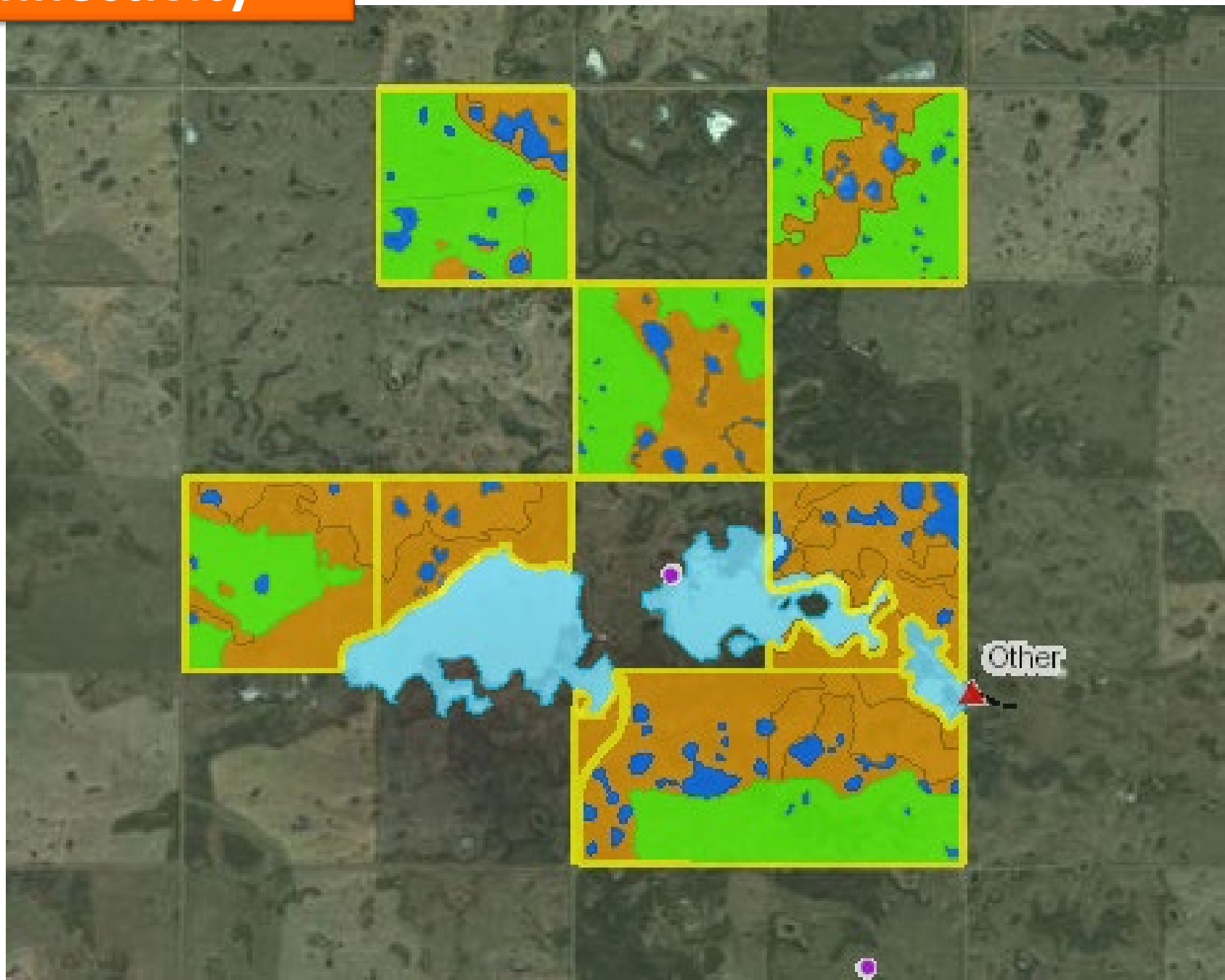
Targeted delivery of:

- **Wetland restoration focused on highest number of impacted basins & presence of perennial cover**
- **Upland restored in conjunction with wetland restoration**
- **Implement projects that achieve large block habitat impact / habitat connectivity**

Connectivity



Connectivity



Securement

Challenge: Accessing Land to accomplish wetland restoration (WR)

- **Wetland restoration need greatest on annual cropland**
- **Cropland economics and field efficiency conflict**
- **Limited opportunity with native pasture and tame**

Program Options

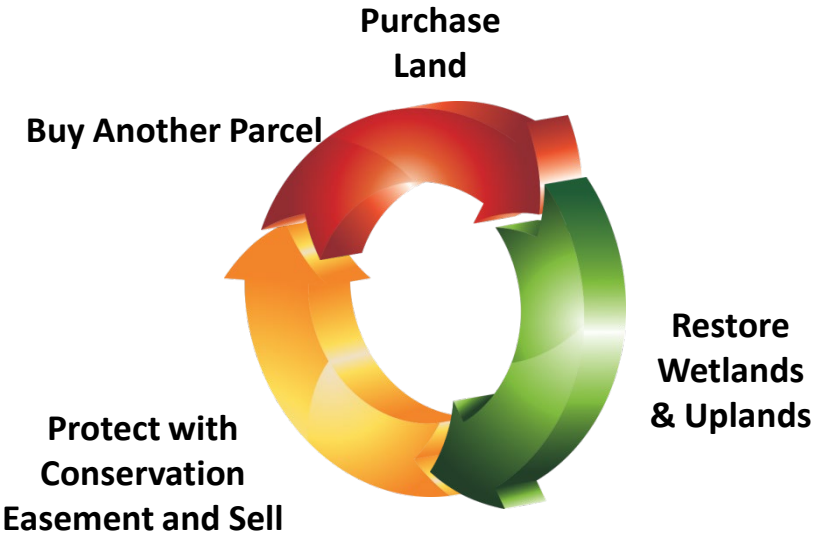
- Purchase
- Wetland Restoration Agreement
- Conservation Easement Programs
- Revolving Land Purchase

REVOLVING LAND PURCHASE PROGRAM

- DUC has a unique revolving land purchase program:

program cycle

- Conservation easement protect land in perpetuity /DUC is authorized holder
- The land is sold back into the ag sector but the CE protects in perpetuity the habitat values
- Reinvest the funds into new revolving land purchase



REVOLVING LAND PURCHASE PROGRAM

Fall 2013 RLP Sales

- 6 quarters / 5 sales / via online auction/ sale dates late October and early November
- all east of Camrose – Viking landscape
  - Gabruck NW (160 ac) and SW (155 ac)
  - Misyk 2 (320 ac)
  - Big Country 2 (160 ac)
  - Huseby (160 ac)

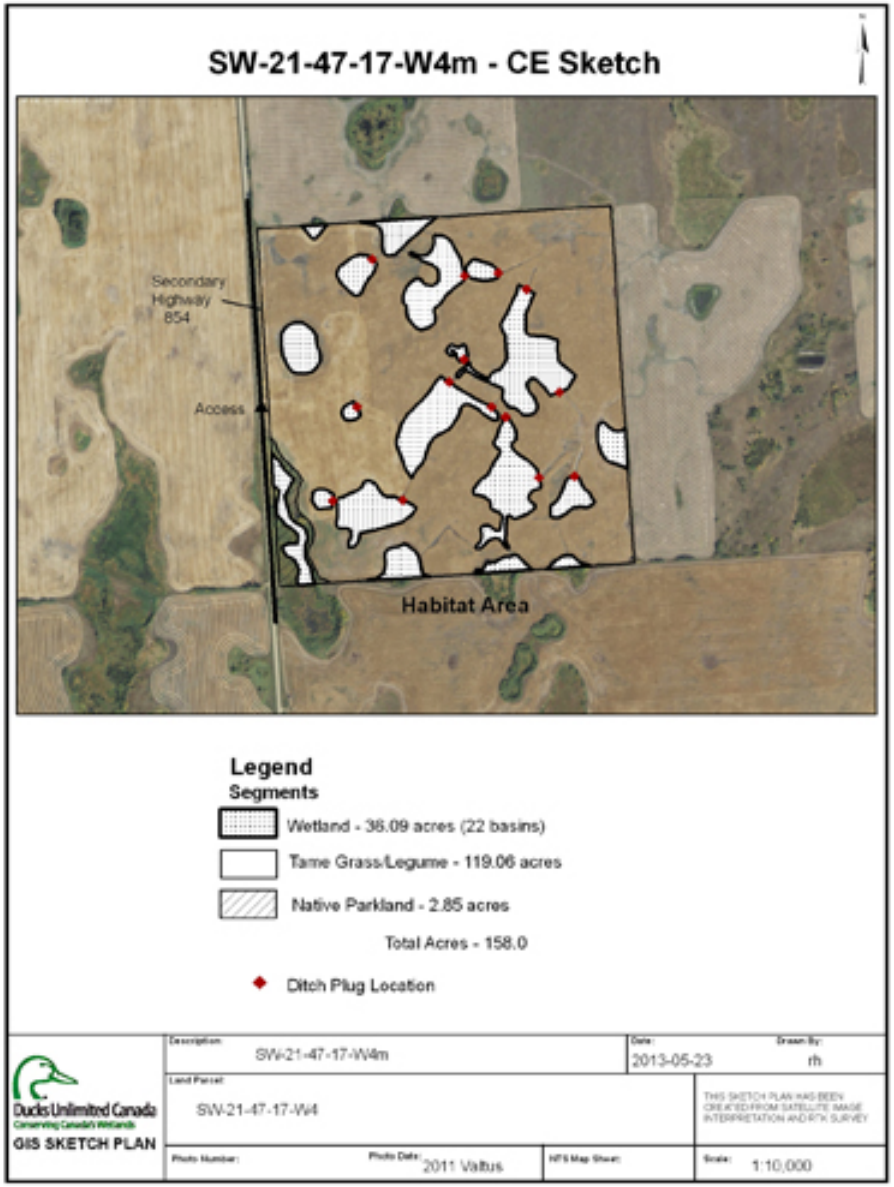
- Access: Online Land Auction Ducks Unlimited Canada

Huseby Revolving Land Purchase

On Line Auction - Ends 3 p.m.

Objective: public, open, optimize return, learn the value of CE in different

Process: appraisal , reserve price



WR Program Success

Labyrinth Lake Conservation Area - 1990's

Photo Credit: M. T. Barr

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Labyrinth Lake - 2007

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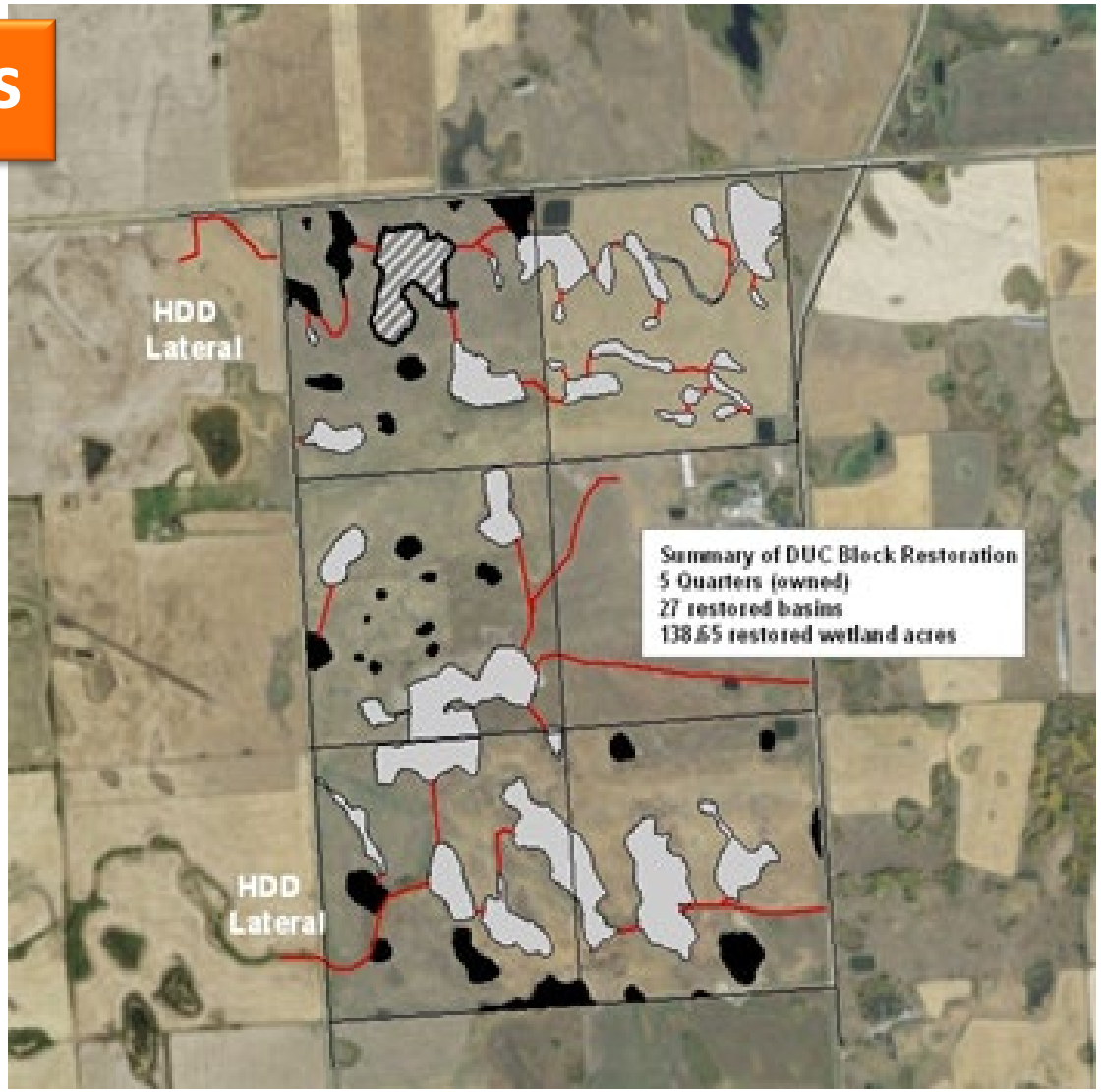
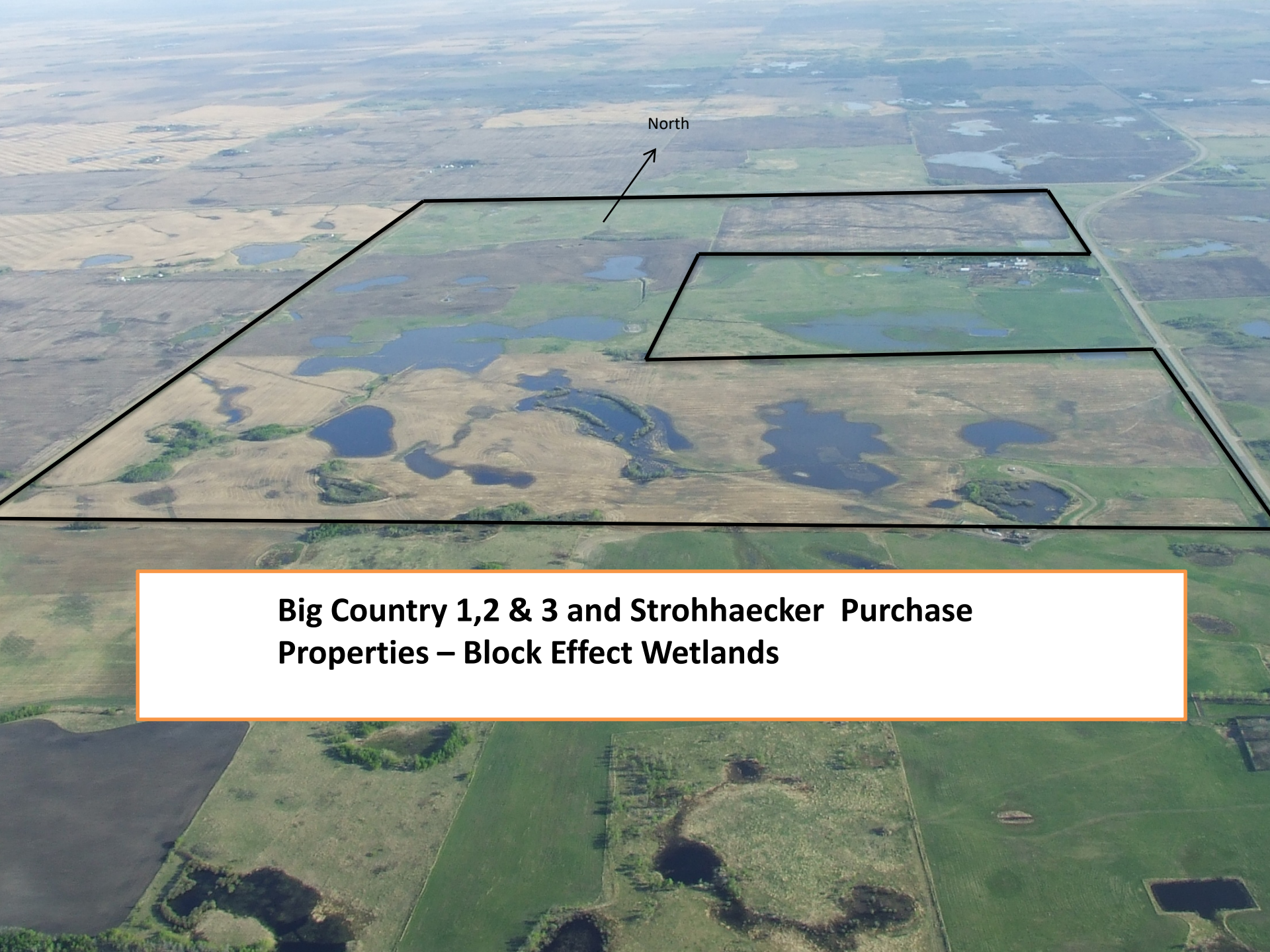
WR Program Success

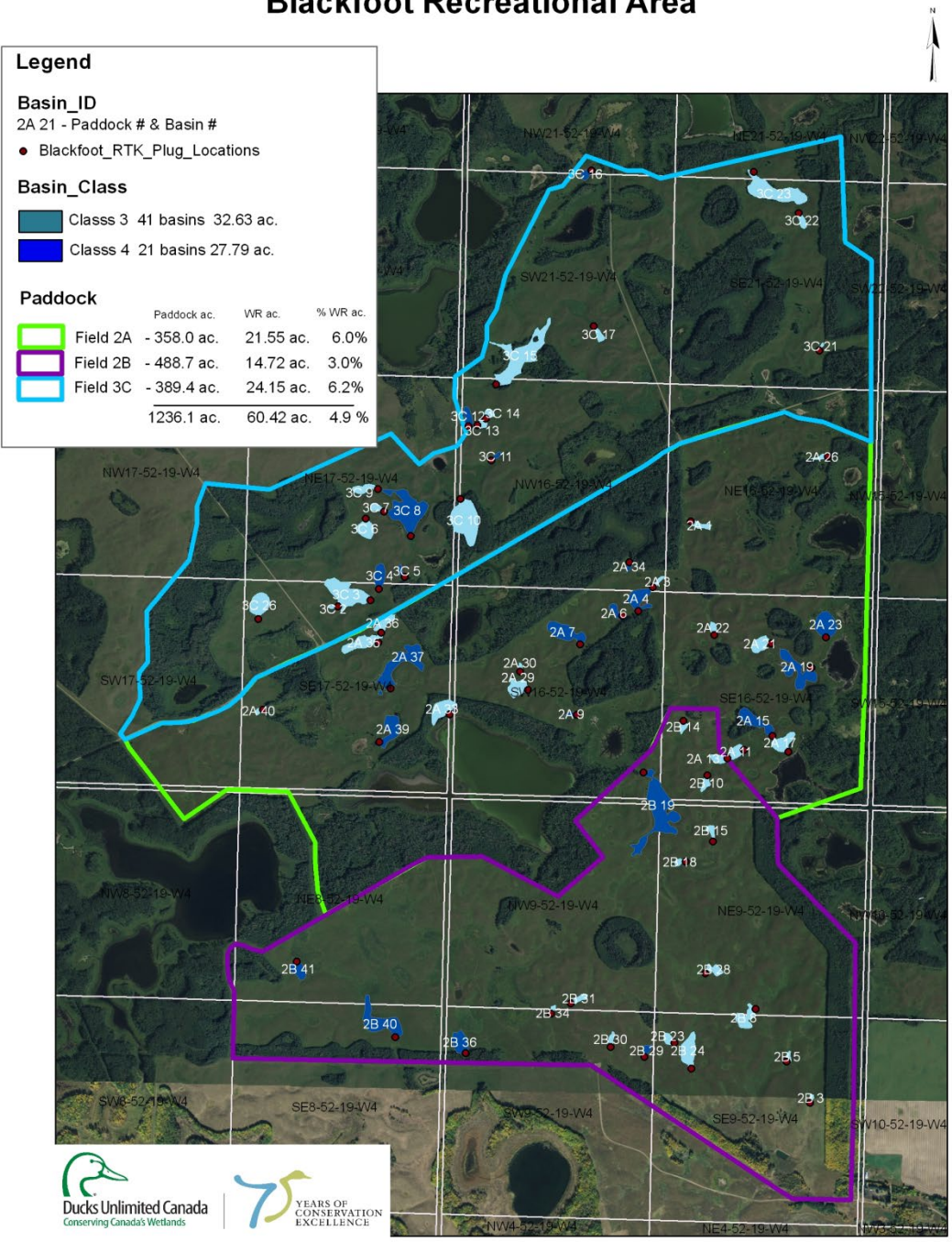
Big Country – Strohhaeker Complex





Big Country 1,2 & 3 and Strohhaecker Purchase Properties – Block Effect Wetlands

Blackfoot Recreational Area



WR Program Success

Partnership with Alberta Parks to restore wetlands at Cooking Lake Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area

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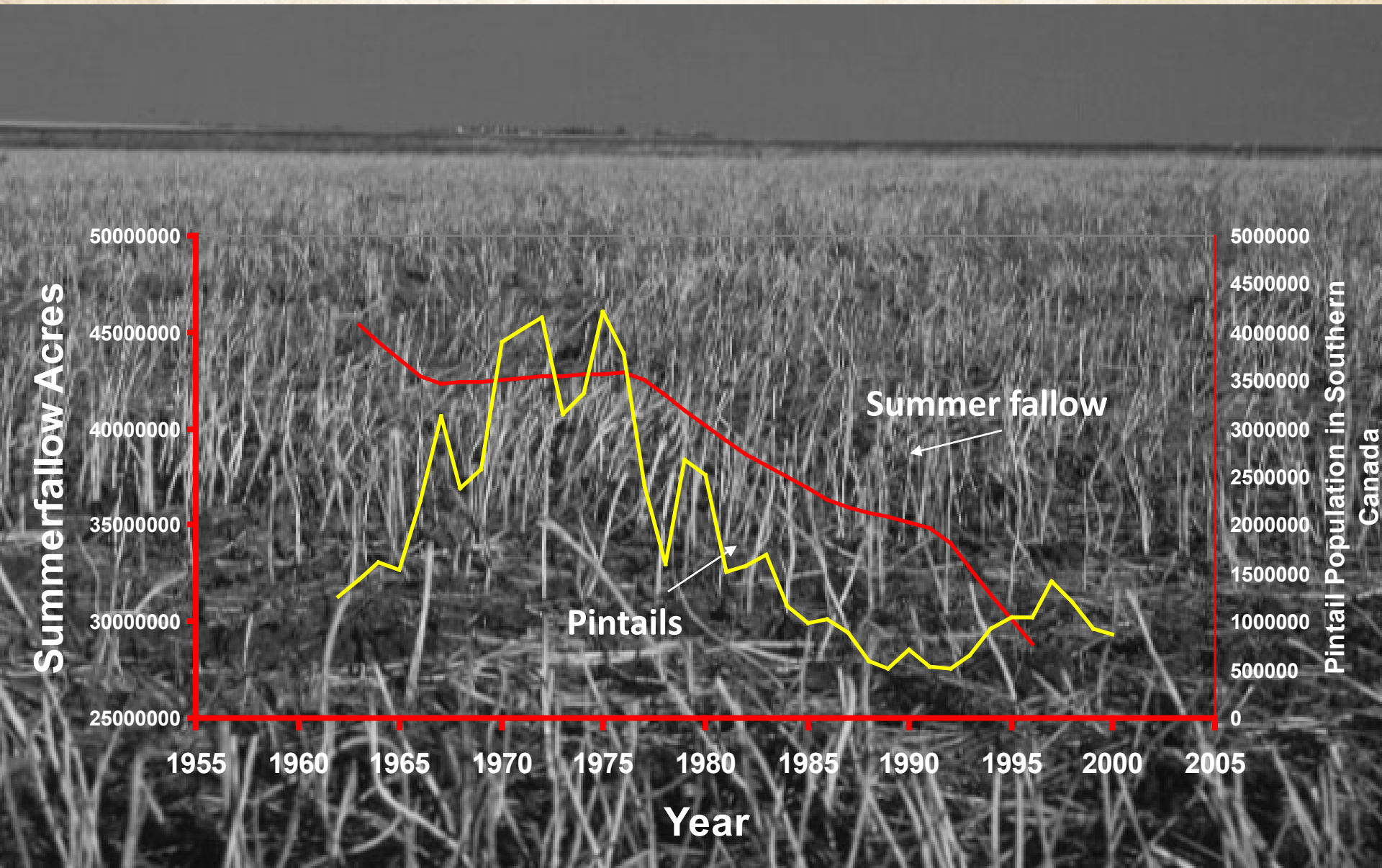
DUC & Bayer CropScience Partnership

- **Winter Cereals: Sustainability in Action**
- **20 million dollars over 5 years**
- **Split evenly between DUI & DUC**
- **Funding to the end of 2014**

Winter Cereals

Sustainability in Action

WHY WINTER WHEAT ?



Winter Wheat Programs

- **New Winter Wheat Grower Program**
  - **$1000 cash incentive**
  - **Various crop inputs**

- **Winter Wheat Promotion**
  - **Research & Demonstration**
  - **Crop Variety Development**

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Questions

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