



NEWS RELEASE

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JENNIE LAKE ENHANCEMENT WILL IMPROVE WATERFOWL HABITAT

ALEXANDRIA, Minn., April 26, 2010 – Ducks Unlimited has begun work enhancing Jennie Lake in Douglas County. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency declared Jennie Lake legally impaired in 2008 because of exceedingly high nutrient levels. A secondary benefit of the enhancement project will be to significantly improve water quality and decrease the nutrient load.



Photo by Matt Olson, DU construction manager

Photo Caption: Installing a new water control structure on Jennie Lake in Douglas County

The Jennie Lake project is the fifth of eight shallow-lake enhancement projects DU now has under way in Minnesota. These projects are partially funded by a 2009 Outdoor Heritage Fund grant as recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council.

To enhance the 316-acre lake, DU engineered and is installing a water-control structure and electric pump which will allow the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to better manage water levels and improve lake conditions.

“With the warm weather and removal of weight limits on the roads, our contractor, Duinick Brothers Inc., of Willmar, was able to begin work, and we should be able to complete the project ahead of schedule,” said Matt Olson, DU construction manager. “We’ll be working with Runestone Electric in May to run power to the site for the pump, so we should have it running later this summer.”

Additional funding for the Jennie Lake project came from a federal grant from the North American Wetlands Conservation Council, the Chippewa River Watershed Improvement Project, Viking Sportsmen and the Pioneer Heritage Conservation Trust.

“Public support for the improvement of Jennie Lake has been strong,” said Kevin Kotts, Minnesota DNR area wildlife manager in Glenwood. “We are thankful for the public concern, support and funding for this important wetland project, and we look forward to actively managing the lake.”

Jennie Lake has a long history of waterfowl use during spring and fall migrations. The lake is especially important to diving ducks as they move through the state.

“Diving ducks rely on aquatic plants, seeds, tubers and invertebrates such as freshwater shrimp to replenish nutrient and energy reserves during migration,” said Jon Schneider, DU’s conservation program manager in MN. “These resources are particularly important in spring when female ducks must maintain and improve their body condition prior to laying eggs when they reach the breeding grounds.”

Jennie Lake is also designated for wildlife management purposes by the Minnesota DNR’s Section of Wildlife. Wildlife lake designation gives the state the ability to temporarily lower water levels and restrict motor use on the lake. Temporary water level draw-downs simulate natural drought conditions that promote winterkill of invasive fish and allow sediment to consolidate, aquatic plants to germinate and grow and aquatic invertebrates to flourish.

The 2009 Outdoor Heritage Fund grant to DU is helping to fund enhancement of eight shallow lakes, engineering of three new shallow lake projects for future implementation, and conservation easements on shorelines of several shallow lakes. Work on four additional shallow lake projects is currently under way, including Ash Lake in Grant County, Cory Lake in Lac qui Parle County, Curtis Lake in Yellow Medicine County and Round Lake in Murray County. A sixth shallow lake enhancement project, Rice Lake in Faribault County, is also under contract and will begin soon. Later this summer, DU will request bids for two additional shallow enhancement projects - Smith Lake in Wright County and Lake Christina in Douglas County. These eight and other large DU shallow lake enhancement projects create and sustain Minnesota jobs that benefit local economies as well as improve wildlife habitat.

Ducks Unlimited and the DNR’s Section of Wildlife cooperatively work to enhance shallow lake habitats throughout Minnesota. This partnership will help fulfill the goals of both the DNR’s *Duck Recovery Plan* and DU’s *Living Lakes Initiative*, and will address the wetland habitat objectives of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

Ducks Unlimited is the world’s largest nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving North America’s continually disappearing waterfowl habitats. Established in 1937, Ducks Unlimited has conserved more than 12 million acres thanks to contributions from more than a million supporters across the continent. Guided by science and dedicated to program efficiency, DU works toward the vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever.

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