

That same day, in Washington, D.C., members of the U.S. House of Representatives Interior, Environment and Related Agencies subcommittee on appropriations will vote to determine how much, if any, federal funds will be appropriated for NAWCA.

“For 22 years NAWCA has made a positive impact not only on wetlands and waterfowl, but also on jobs, the economy, and communities,” said Dale Hall, Chief Executive Officer of Ducks Unlimited. “NAWCA’s conservation projects create jobs for construction workers, engineers and scientists. They create habitat for wildlife, and opportunities for people to hunt, fish and enjoy the outdoors. However, if Congress chooses to significantly cut NAWCA funding or eliminate the program entirely, valuable jobs and waterfowl habitat will be lost.”

NAWCA is a worthwhile investment in tough economic times because it provides matching grants to organizations and individuals partnering to conserve wetlands. On average, non-federal partners contribute \$3.20 for every federal dollar invested in NAWCA. Since its inception in 1989, the program has helped conserve 25 million acres of habitat across North America. It’s one of the most popular and cost-effective conservation programs in history, yet in recent budget talks, Congress has proposed severe cuts to NAWCA funding.

“Sportsmen need to get upset about these cuts which are far more drastic than cuts made to other programs. These cuts could imperil waterfowl populations and the future of our waterfowling hunting traditions,” said Hall. “Conservation in America pays for itself through the economic return from hunters, anglers and outdoor enthusiasts. Outdoorsmen and women spend \$76 billion a year on equipment and licenses that support our economy and fund future conservation work, as well as the return of more revenues to the Treasury through direct income taxes than is appropriated annually for this purpose. It would be a mistake to cripple such a cornerstone to our nation’s natural resources, economy and culture.”

Many of the projects slated for consideration by the Council on July 6 are located in Montana and the Dakotas, part of the prairie pothole region where the majority of North America’s waterfowl breed each year. There are also proposals to conserve key wetlands in South Carolina, Texas, Ohio, Maine and Michigan. Other states with proposed projects include California, Oregon, Missouri, Iowa, Washington, Virginia and North Carolina.

Typically, the Council recommends which projects should receive funding, and then members of the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission make the final decision in September. This year, however,

it’s not just the projects, but the entire NAWCA program that hangs in the balance of Congressional decisions.

“Ducks Unlimited is encouraging sportsmen and women to contact their members of Congress and voice strong support for NAWCA,” said Hall. “This program is too important to lose.”

For more information on NAWCA and other Ducks Unlimited public policy efforts, visit www.ducks.org/NAWCA.

In order to ensure NAWCA’s funding is not eliminated in FY 2012, Ducks Unlimited is conducting a campaign to highlight the importance of NAWCA’s conservation efforts and its economic benefits. DU encourages its members to ask their senators and representatives to support funding for NAWCA in Fiscal Year 2012.

Ducks Unlimited is the world’s largest non-profit organization dedicated to conserving North America’s 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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