DELTA WATERFOWL

PREDATOR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

PREPARED FOR
MR. WILLIAM T. GREEN

DECEMBER 2020

DELTA WATERFOWL
1412 Basin Avenue | Bismarck, ND 58504
Telephone 888-987-3695

December 23, 2020

Dear Bill,

I enjoyed our meeting last week and especially appreciated the stories you shared about your spirited hunting trips with John Doe. Connections are at the heart of Delta—the relationships among our leadership and members as well as the symbiotic relationships between ducks and predators that, when managed well, put more ducks in the bag for hunters throughout North America every year.

During our visit, you and I discussed Delta's commitment to research as a factor that distinguishes us from other hunting and conservation organizations, as well as your interest in trapping, which has been proved to increase duck production. Your membership dues help support these efforts, and we are genuinely grateful. In particular, Delta Waterfowl's Predator Management program, which John discussed with you, conducts and incorporates research to protect breeding ducks from the birds and animals that are most likely to destroy them.

Bill, we're nearing the end of the year and, as you requested, we have developed a proposal outlining an opportunity for you to invest in Delta's Predator Management program. It also includes information about Delta's Research and Education program, which may be of interest. I hope you will consider this invitation carefully and will choose to partner with the Foundation in our mission to produce more ducks over decoys and secure the future of waterfowl hunting for generations to come. I look forward to discussing this opportunity with you.

Sincerely,

Jane Smith
Major Gifts Director
Delta Waterfowl Foundation

A proposal to
William T. Green
to fund Delta Waterfowl's Predator Management Program

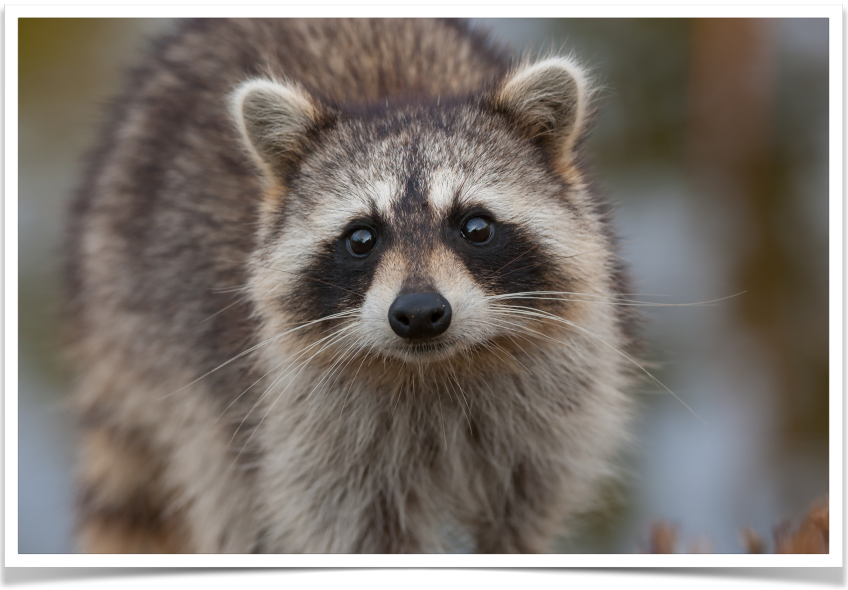
As a member of Delta Waterfowl Foundation, you are already helping to support duck production for the more than 900,000 avid waterfowl hunters across the United States who share your passion for the sport.

But the North American waterfowl population is only as strong as it is safe. In key areas of many breeding grounds, nest success is less than 10 percent—far below the 15 to 20 percent needed to sustain duck populations and ensure strong fall flights. Given the opportunity, raccoons, skunks, red foxes, opossums, mink, snakes, crows, ravens, and other birds and animals will seek out and destroy duck nests. Delta's Predator Management program maximizes the impact of our duck production work by trapping these predators in areas where ducks breed in high numbers but where nests success is low because of heavy predation.

Predator Management is critical to waterfowl conservation. **Your investment of $20,000 in Delta's Predator Management Program will will cover all work done on a key hot spot "grass-only" trapping block for a season and will add more than 2,500 ducks to this year's fall flight.**

INCREASING DUCK PRODUCTION THROUGH PREDATOR MANAGEMENT

Over the past 24 years, Delta has conducted scores of studies to examine the distribution and abundance of predators on the prairie duck breeding grounds and analyze the effects of Predator Management on duck production. Using this research, Delta biologists have developed specific criteria for selecting areas that are best suited for Predator Management to produce the most ducks, significantly boosting nest success.



To accomplish Delta's Predator Management goals, we enlist the best trappers available using input from local fur buyers, game wardens, state/provincial furbearer biologists and state/provincial trapping associations. After determining our trapper roster, we partner with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to examine computer models of the flyways. Then, as the snow melts in the spring, our trappers head to their assigned sites and work tirelessly to increase duck production.

In 2019, Delta identified 26 sites, including 25 program blocks in North Dakota and one research block in Manitoba. Using data from the Foundation's 2018 trap and bait study, the Manitoba site was trapped as part of ongoing research to study the impact of reducing predators, especially raccoons, on over-water nesting ducks such as canvasbacks, redheads, and ring-necked ducks. The Predator Management goal at the North Dakota sites was to significantly boost production of upland-nesting ducks like mallards, pintails, and gadwalls.

Long-term findings indicate that predator management can increase the nest-success rates by 200-300 percent and is a proven tool to add ducks to every fall flight.

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

Delta Waterfowl Foundation's emphasis on science-based research distinguishes it from other wetlands and waterfowl conservation organizations. In 1911, founder James Ford Bell was inspired to put two ducks back for each one shot by hunters at his club on Manitoba's Delta Marsh. Partnering with Aldo Leopold, considered to be the father of modern game management, he established a waterfowl research facility that is now Delta Waterfowl Foundation.

Early studies focused on breeding duck ecology and made key discoveries on habitat use and behavior. These efforts continue today. All of Delta's key programs—Predator Management, Hen Houses, Working Wetlands and First Hunt—are operated and streamlined based on innovative research findings.

Here are snapshots of several Delta-funded research projects:

EVALUATING BROOD USE OF WETLANDS IN AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES

A team at Louisiana State University will explore whether trapping in the fall, in addition to the spring, is more effective in reducing key mammalian nest predators, especially raccoons. Broods will be counted using drones equipped with thermal and visual cameras—an approach that has proven superior to field assistants doing ground counts.

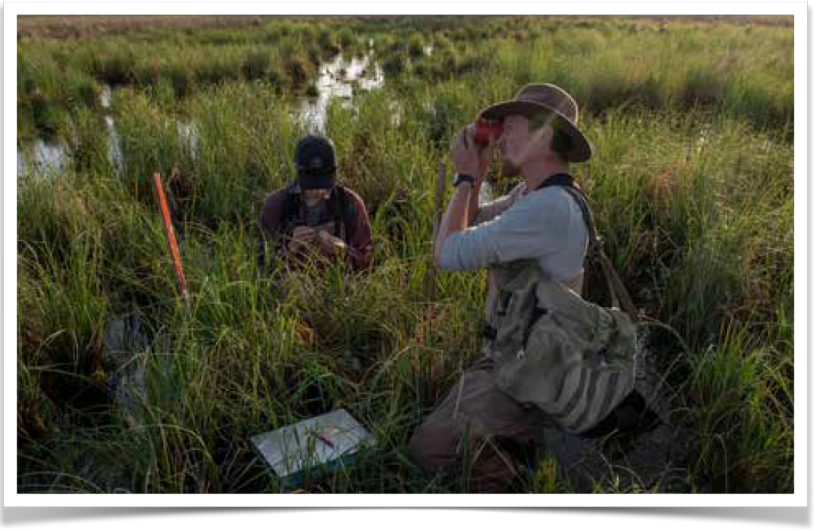
DETERMINING DUCK LOCATIONS DURING HUNTING SEASONS AND MIGRATION

To better understand the migration and wintering ground habits of dabbling ducks in the Mississippi Flyway and to determine whether further management strategies are needed, Delta researchers installed radios powered by miniature solar panels on mallards, green-winged teal, and American wigeon to record movements throughout a calendar year.

MONITORING MOVEMENTS OF GEESE AND DUCKS IN THE PACIFIC FLYWAY

This is the third largest scale satellite telemetry project ever undertaken, having marked more than 1,100 waterfowl across 14 species in the past five years. Numerous partners assisted in fitting birds with radios, maintaining large sets of data, and writing papers. The three primary objectives are to assess the full annual cycle of habitat use; how different populations of the same species are delineated; and how overpopulations of some geese impact the limited food resources of ducks.

ANALYZING NEST SUCCESS IN RELATION TO HABITAT VARIABLES



After several seasons of extensive field work on nesting canvasbacks in Manitoba, Ph.D. candidate Michael Johnson and Dr. David Koons at Colorado State University will analyze habitat variables to determine their impact on nest abundance, nest success, and brood counts. This information will help waterfowl managers target where to best invest in wetland conservation programs to benefit canvasback production.

INVITATION

We invite you to consider making a gift of $20,000 to support Delta Waterfowl's Predator Management Program, which will fund all work done on a key hot spot "grass-only" trapping block for a season and will add more than 2,500 ducks to this year's fall flight.

Bill, I appreciate your interest in investing in Delta's mission and thank you for your thoughtful review of our request.