Black Duck

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Goal: Vital Habitats (Black Duck)

Outcome: By 2025, restore, enhance and preserve wetland habitats that support a wintering population of 100,000 black ducks, a species representative of the health of tidal marshes across the watershed. Refine population targets through 2025 based on best available science.
Black Ducks and the Chesapeake

- Historically the primary dabbling duck in the Chesapeake Bay
- Chesapeake Bay critical wintering area
- Experienced drastic decline with a recent population stabilization
- Important indicator species of the health of the Chesapeake Bay
What is our Expected and Actual Progress?

2014 Baseline: 566,477 acres
2025 Goal: 717,749 acres

Restoration goal: 151,272 additional acres

*based on results from the Decision Support Tool (DST)*
Learn

What have we learned in the last two years?
Successes and Challenges

- Most actions have been completed, are on track, or are ongoing
- Current factors affecting progress are still accurate
- Development of DST is biggest success
- Biggest obstacle tracking of wetland restoration acres towards outcome
Black Duck Decision Support Tool (DST) was a successful project that fills the info. gap of knowing which areas are highest priority for restoration and conservation.

New available science related to the DST is informing an update to the model and will affect the restoration goal when completed.

Successes and Challenges
Challenges

- Biggest obstacle: tracking of restoration acres toward the outcome
- Overlap of project partners (double counting)
- Types of projects (Restoration/Enhancement)
- Project boundaries are not clear cut
- Turnover of staff implementing projects
- Common theme with Wetland Workgroup
On the Horizon

▪ **Scientific:** The update to the DST is currently underway and is expected to be complete in 1-2 years.

▪ **Updates:**
  1) a new NWI layer
  2) Impacts of Climate Change
  3) changes to the model that will more accurately calculate the restoration goal

▪ Will likely lead to a change in the number of acres that are needed to support a population of 100,000 black ducks, which impacts the outcome.
Adapt

How does all of this impact our work?
Based on what we learned, we plan to...

- Continue ongoing habitat restoration work
- Improve our tracking of habitat restoration so we can accurately track progress towards the outcome
- Work with the Indicators Team at the Bay Program to develop this indicator
Help

How can the Management Board lead the Program to adapt?
How You Can Help

- Unsure what our progress is due to data collection challenges
- Biggest challenge is development of indicator
Help Needed

- Support and coordination in tracking the acres of restored wetlands (both tidal and non-tidal habitat)
- Reaching out to partners individually to collect the last 5 years of wetland restoration data has had little success
- MB could help coordinate this data collection by instituting a formal data call or by encouraging the partners in their respective jurisdictions to provide their restoration numbers each year
Discussion