

# THE MANITOBA HABITAT HERITAGE CORPORATION



A N N U A L   R E P O R T   2 0 0 6 / 2 0 0 7



Cover Photo: purple finch  
This Page: Wilson's snipe

Wildlife images (cover, inside cover and pages 2, 5, 24) in this report are supplied by Fred Greenslade, an internationally acclaimed wildlife photographer who lives in Portage la Prairie and captures many of his images in Manitoba's famed Delta Marsh.



## **BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR HABITAT CONSERVATION**

The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation is a non-profit Crown Corporation established in 1986 by the *Manitoba Habitat Heritage Act* and is responsible to the Manitoba Minister of Water Stewardship.

Its objective is to work in partnership with public and private agencies and organizations as well as individual landowners to conserve, restore, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat in Manitoba.



# Letter of Transmittal

The Honourable Christine Melnick  
Minister of Water Stewardship  
Legislative Building  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

The year that ended March 31, 2007 was highlighted by continued progress in conservation by The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation.

With heightened awareness of water issues and the need to restore Lake Winnipeg water quality, MHHC's new riparian conservation agreement (easement) initiative focusing on the Red River and the Lake Winnipeg watershed is being well received by landowners. In 2006/07 MHHC targeted critical areas along the Red River with considerable success.

Implementation of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) continues, with 2006 representing the twentieth anniversary of the signing of the NAWMP agreement. Recognized by many as the most successful wild-life conservation partnership on the continent, Manitoba remains a priority area for NAWMP program delivery.

MHHC's involvement in riparian areas goes beyond conservation agreements. Its *Managing the Water's Edge* initiative offers landowners and other land managers useful information on sustainable use of riparian and associated lands. Requests for workshops and presentations more than doubled over the previous year. MHHC staff also provided riparian area assessment input into watershed planning efforts across the province.

MHHC continues to deliver conservation agreements on important habitats identified for species at risk. This conservation tool has been well received by landowners.

This is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of MHHC. Looking back, it is clear that MHHC has carved out a unique role and has become an effective force for incentive and information based habitat conservation in Manitoba. Looking forward, we anticipate a bright future.

Yours truly,



John Whitaker  
Chairperson

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## MANDATE AND ROLES

Established by the *Manitoba Habitat Heritage Act* of 1986. The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation's (MHHC) mandate is conservation, restoration and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat in the province of Manitoba. This is achieved through partnerships with private landowners, farm organizations, conservation groups, corporations and government agencies. While its mandate is broad, MHHC programming focuses on private land in the agricultural region of Manitoba, MHHC promotes conservation practices that enhance wildlife habitat, encourage productive uses of the land and help to sustain farm family income.

MHHC conducts activities under three major program areas.



### North American Waterfowl Management Plan

MHHC coordinates North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) implementation in Manitoba in partnership with other agencies and organizations. It also directly delivers NAWMP activities in partnership with Delta Waterfowl Foundation through the Potholes Plus Program. The emphasis is on conserving and enhancing wetland and associated habitats.



### Riparian Habitat Management

Riparian habitat, found along streambanks, lakeshores and wetlands, is rich in biodiversity and contributes to water quality. MHHC programs encourage landowners to adopt land use practices that protect this important habitat, support water quality objectives and sustain agricultural productivity, particularly for livestock.



### Species At Risk

MHHC delivers voluntary habitat securement programs for species at risk, with a focus on mixed-grass prairie and riparian habitats, as well as specific habitats of importance for species of concern.

In addition to its program areas, MHHC receives donations of land and conservation agreements (easements) from private landowners.

## MHHC LAND CONSERVATION SUMMARY

The agricultural region of Manitoba, which has been intensively developed for crop and livestock production, remains an important

region for wildlife. MHHC's overall objective - conserving habitat important to a wide array of plants, birds, land animals, fish and other aquatic animals - is achieved through cooperative agreements, easements, leases and, in some cases, land ownership.

MHHC's land conservation activity summary is found in Table 1. It highlights the cumulative accomplishments of MHHC and includes purchased and donated lands, conservation agreements, leases and cooperative management agreements with landowners. To date, nearly 3,000 agreements with landowners, conservation agencies and other organizations have been implemented. As of March 31, 2007, MHHC's cumulative activities had conserved or influenced 206,590 acres of habitat.

**Table 1: MHHC Land Conservation Activity Summary<sup>1</sup> to March 31, 2007**

	# sites	# acres
<b>Acquired and Donated Lands</b>		
North American Waterfowl Management Plan	35	7,910
Critical Wildlife Habitat Program <sup>2</sup>	22	4,217
<i>Lands held in title by MHHC</i>	57	12,127
<b>Conservation Agreements</b>		
Potholes Plus	183	26,925
Habitat Stewardship Program	107	23,315
Riparian Habitat	10	861
Other Agreements	14	2,489
Donated Agreements	21	2,149
<i>Conservation Agreements held by MHHC</i>	335	55,739
<b>Leased Lands (cumulative acreage)<sup>3</sup></b>		
North American Waterfowl Management Plan	204	19,137
Critical Wildlife Habitat Program	121	18,501
<i>Leases held by MHHC</i>	325	37,638
<b>Cooperative Agreements</b>		
North American Waterfowl Management Plan	683	8,146
Riparian Stewardship Projects	231	59,020
Manitoba Agro Woodlot Program (to March 31, 2005) <sup>4</sup>	1,207	33,920
<i>Cooperative Agreements held by MHHC</i>	2,121	101,086
<b>Total, to March 31, 2007</b>	<b>2,838</b>	<b>206,590</b>

<sup>1</sup> This table summarizes MHHC's cumulative accomplishments and includes activities that are still active as well as those that are no longer under agreement.

<sup>2</sup> Includes lands that are held by MHHC in trust on behalf of CWHP partners

<sup>3</sup> Includes current and lapsed leases and cooperative agreements

<sup>4</sup> MHHC delivered this program from 1992 to 2005

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### ***Board of Directors***

The *Manitoba Habitat Heritage Act* of 1986 requires MHHC to be governed by a Board of Directors responsible to the Manitoba Minister of Water Stewardship.

As of March 31, 2007 the MHHC Board consisted of 10 members:

John Whitaker*, Chairperson	Citizen Representative
Don Norquay* (Vice Chair)	Manitoba Water Stewardship
Bob Grant	Ducks Unlimited Canada
Murray Dubowits	Citizen Representative
Cornie Goertzen*	Manitoba Conservation Districts Association
Michael Kingdon	Keystone Agricultural Producers
Roger Wilson	Association of Manitoba Municipalities
Patrick Rakowski*	Environment Canada (Canadian Wildlife Service)
Robert Olson	Delta Waterfowl Foundation
Barry Todd	Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives

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### ***Ex officio Members***

Deanna Dixon	Prairie Habitat Joint Venture
Jack Dubois	Manitoba Conservation
Mike Moore	Nature Conservancy of Canada
Lawrie Hilton	Manitoba Wildlife Federation (Habitat Trust)
Jim Tokarchuk	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration)
Brian Sterling	The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association

\*Executive Committee Member

The MHHC board conducted three meetings in 2006/07 as well as one field tour of MHHC projects.

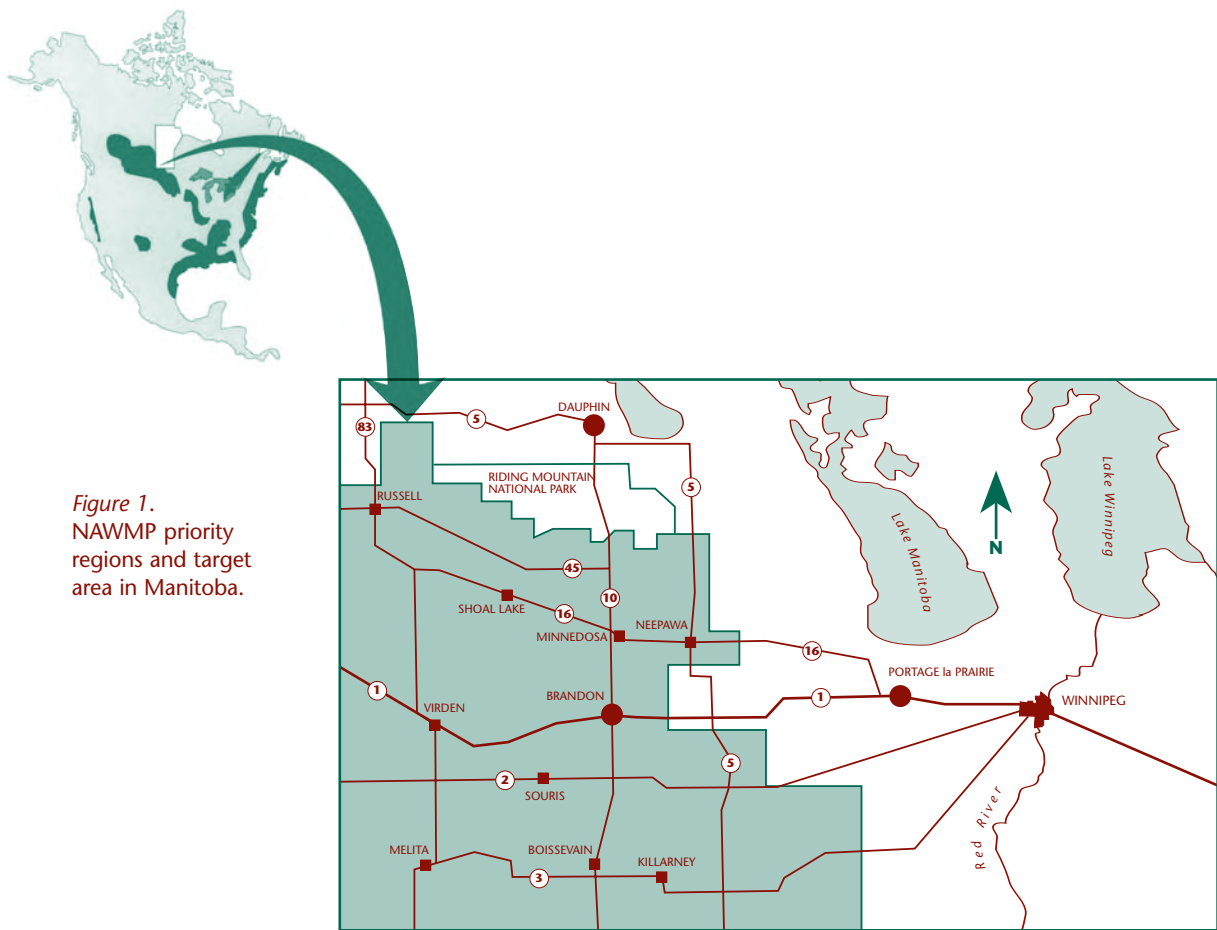




## North American Waterfowl Management Plan

*The North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) is a conservation partnership that operates in Canada, the United States and Mexico. The Plan, built on sound biological principles and the best science available, is designed to influence large areas of the landscape rather than simply concentrate on any one species or site.*

*MHHC coordinates NAWMP activities in Manitoba in cooperation with several funding partners and public and private program delivery partners. Activities target the "Prairie Pothole" region of southwestern Manitoba, emphasizing conservation and enhancement of wetland and associated habitats. Potholes Plus is an apt name for the NAWMP program that MHHC delivers in conjunction with the Delta Waterfowl Foundation. MHHC also provides coordination, communication, reporting and evaluation services to the partnership.*



The NAWMP began in 1986 as a written agreement between the governments of Canada and the United States, and was joined later by the Government of Mexico. The success of this continental initiative focused on waterfowl population recovery is evident by its longevity, the thousands of partnerships established and in the millions of acres conserved and influenced in Canada, the United States and Mexico.

North America's most important waterfowl breeding habitats lie within the Great Plains region that includes the prairie and aspen parkland regions of southern Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. These habitats provide critical nesting areas and migration stopover sites for much of the continent's duck population and are recognized as one of the highest priorities for waterfowl conservation. Here, NAWMP activities are coordinated under the Prairie

Habitat Joint Venture. Figure 1 shows the prairie pothole region of southwestern Manitoba, the main area of the province in which NAWMP activities are conducted.

Program planning and accomplishments in Manitoba complement broader continental efforts. NAWMP partners across North America influence all types of habitats used by waterfowl including breeding grounds, migration resting sites and wintering areas. NAWMP success in Manitoba is demonstrated by the thousands of acres that have been affected by its programs, some through long-term conservation agreements and others by information and incentive programs that stimulated adoption of conservation farming activities. This has been made possible by the investment of \$122.43 million in conservation activities in this province, 87 per cent of which has been contributed by public and private sources from outside the province.