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GEORGIA WILDLIFE BLOG

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30 Years of Wetlands Conservation



Date: **December 10, 2019**

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Today marks the 30th anniversary of the signing of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, or **NAWCA**.

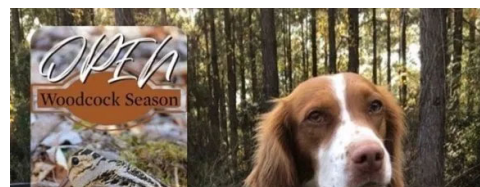


Photo Credit: Katy Manley

It's not just a feat of time, but a celebration of waterfowl conservation successes across North America over the past 30 years. The past three decades have included the acquisition and restoration of wetland habitat in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, which provided healthy wetlands where:

- Waterfowl populations have increased
- Waterways and water sources are cleaner
- Recreational opportunities (birding, hunting, hiking and boating) have all increased

Through wildlife science, boots-on-the-ground fieldwork,



outreach, and policy engagement, NAWCA has demonstrated how continental-scale conservation can be achieved.

What is NAWCA?

NAWCA is a grant program that was passed, in part, to support the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The plan is an international agreement and strategy for long-term wetlands and habitat protection to benefit waterfowl and other migratory birds in North America.



Wookcocks taken by Jase Brooks and retrieved by Brittany Spaniel, Alba, in Screven County, Georgia.



Examples of priority bird species inhabiting the Altamaha River Basin include Northern Pintail, Mottled Duck, American Black Duck, Mallard, Wood Duck,

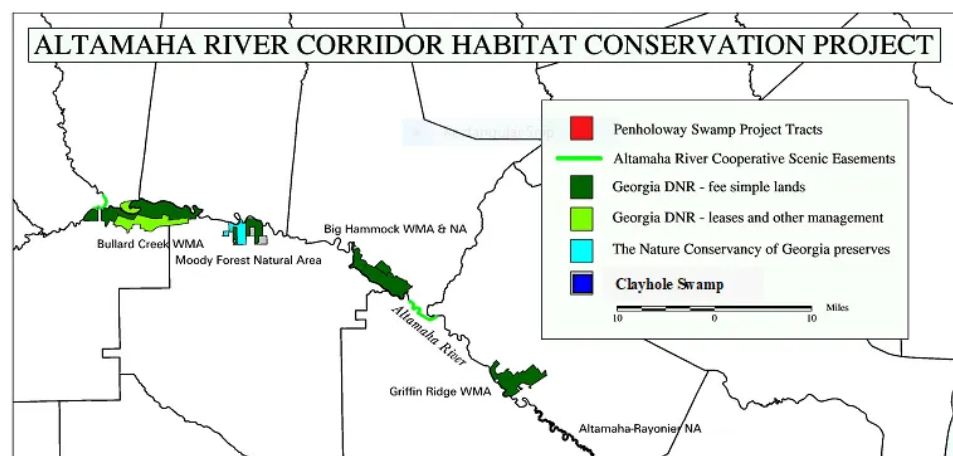
Little Blue Heron, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, American Woodcock, Wood Stork, Swallow-tailed Kite, Swainson's Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Wood Thrush, and Northern Parula. The Altamaha River Basin is recognized as a Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network site and an Important Bird Area by both Audubon Society and American Bird Conservancy. PC: Jenny Burdette.

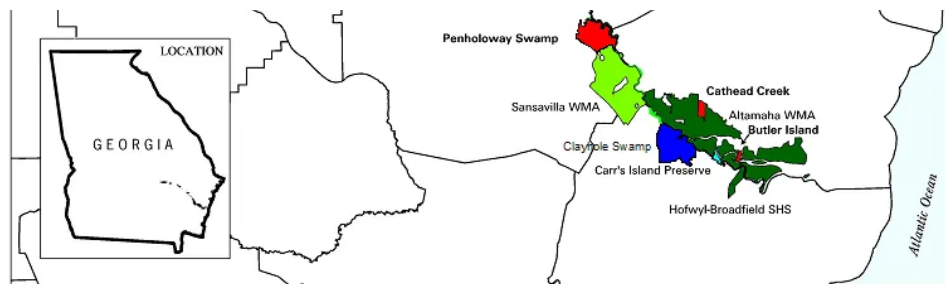
NAWCA by the Numbers

Over the years, NAWCA has funded over **2,950 projects**, including the **Altamaha River Corridor Habitat Conservation Project**, totaling:

- \$1.73 billion in **grants** in addition to the
- \$3.57 billion in **matching funds** that more than
- 6,200 **partners** have contributed to support
- 30 million **acres of habitat**.

NAWCA grants increase bird populations and wetland habitat while supporting local economies and American traditions such as hunting, fishing, bird watching, and agriculture. Wetlands protected by NAWCA provide valuable benefits such as flood control, coastal erosion reduction, water and air quality improvement, and recharged ground water. When waterfowl and wetlands win, we all win.





The Altamaha River basin is the second largest watershed on the eastern seaboard and drains more than one-quarter of the state of Georgia. Conservation of bottomland forests in the Altamaha River corridor is critical to meeting objectives for numerous priority species of land birds, shorebirds, and waterbirds. Portions of the Altamaha River basin are included in a network of protected habitats, many of which have been acquired through NAWCA grants and through the efforts of other conservation programs such as The Nature Conservancy's Altamaha River Bioreserve initiative and Georgia Department of Natural Resources' (GDNR) Preservation 2000 and RiverCare land acquisition programs.

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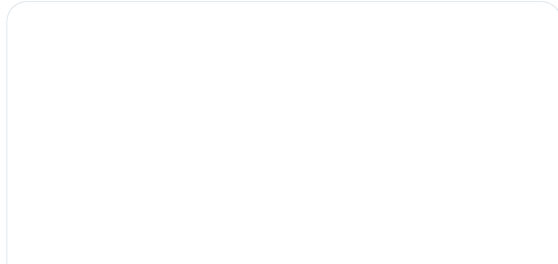


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ow.ly/rJEV50xtXEO



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