

The Cost of Wetland Loss in Manitoba

Every day we allow wetlands to be lost, we significantly harm our environment.

We lose **fifteen acres of wetlands every day in southwest Manitoba**. That is the same as **seven and a half football fields**. Every year, estimates are that we lose over 5,400 acres or 8.5 square miles of wetlands due to drainage in the southwest corner of Manitoba alone.

Every day, wetland drainage in southwest Manitoba:

- Emits **over 1,200 tonnes of carbon dioxide** into the atmosphere, which is equivalent to the annual emissions of **225 more vehicles** being put on the road each day and running for a year.
- Adds **90 acres or 45 football fields** of additional drainage area that contributes to downstream flooding and erosion. For every acre of wetland that is drained, six additional acres of drainage area contribute to downstream flows.

Every year, wetland drainage in southwest Manitoba:

- Emits **over 438,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide** into the atmosphere, which is equivalent to the annual emissions of **82,000 more vehicles** on the road.
- Adds **32,000 additional acres** of drainage area equivalent to **50 square miles** that contributes to downstream flooding.
- Contributes an additional **6.2 tonnes of phosphorus** or **30,000 bags of commercial lawn fertilizer** (seven kilograms each) to downstream flows contributing to water quality problems such as algae in Manitoba's lakes and streams.



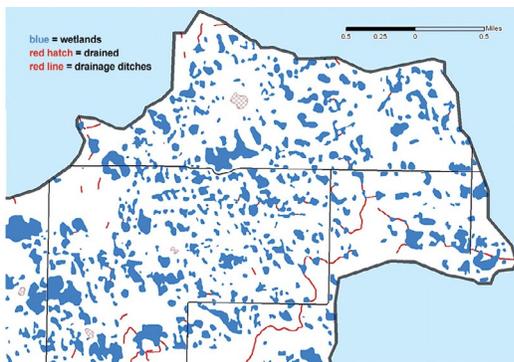
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

Active by nature.

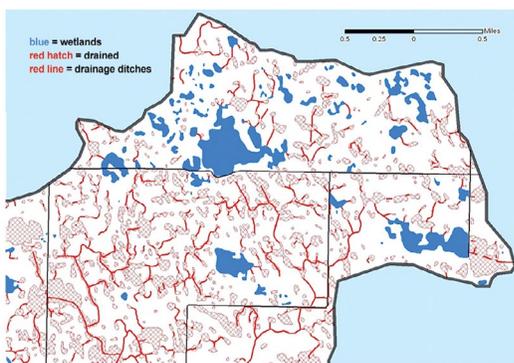
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BROUGHTON'S CREEK WATERSHED.



PORTION OF BROUGHTON'S CREEK WATERSHED, 1968



PORTION OF BROUGHTON'S CREEK WATERSHED, 2005

Ducks Unlimited Canada recognizes that other climate change and water quality programs provide important contributions in the removal of greenhouse gases, phosphorus and other pollutants. As such, using these initiatives as comparisons is not meant to be critical, but rather to underscore the important contribution that wetlands make to these and other environmental priorities in Manitoba. **Stopping wetland loss in southwest Manitoba will:**

- prevent 7.5 times more CO₂ from entering the atmosphere than the Province of Manitoba's biodiesel strategy.
- be 10 times more cost efficient in preventing phosphorus from entering our water resources relative to the City of Winnipeg's waste water treatment facility upgrades.
- be equivalent to adding 9 methane capture facilities (Brandon's landfill) every year (valued at 1.275M each).

These estimated impacts for wetland loss are ONLY in the southwest corner of Manitoba. The cumulative impact of wetland loss and degradation across all of Manitoba would be staggering. And not all of the negative impacts of wetland loss that occur every day have been accounted for. When we allow wetlands to be lost we also lose important habitat for biodiversity, ground water recharge potential, ecotourism opportunities, flood and drought attenuation, and important social and cultural benefits like hunting and trapping.

Wetland loss is an important issue to all Manitobans and our governments need to hear from you. Save wetlands and their important functions by calling your local politician to support wetland conservation today. Your voice is crucial in assuring the Government of Manitoba develops a wetland policy that includes financial incentives for landowners to protect and restore wetlands across the province. **If you only do one thing for the environment in your lifetime, speak up about your concerns for wetland loss in Manitoba and make your voice heard. Take a stand for wetlands today.**

