



Saskatchewan Delta Project Receives 2006/2007 Fred Heal Conservation Award

NEWS RELEASE

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The Fred Heal Award recognizes a direct initiative in preserving and/or enhancing the health of the Saskatchewan River Basin.

The Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin is proud to announce the Saskatchewan Delta Project as the 2006/07 winner of the Fred Heal Conservation Award. This project is jointly administered by Saskatchewan Environment, Manitoba Conservation and Ducks Unlimited.

The Fred Heal Award recognizes an organization that has taken direct initiative in preserving and/or enhancing the health of the Saskatchewan River Basin. "The Saskatchewan River Delta Project is an excellent example of organizations working cooperatively to improve the health of that system" says Dr. Johanne Kristjanson, member of the Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin Board of Directors.

The Saskatchewan River Delta (Delta) is important habitat for over 100's of birds, mammals and fish. It also plays an important role for the First Nation Communities in the area. Human influences within the Delta have been significant; with the most notable being the development of hydroelectric generation. Management activities in the area date back to the early 1930's. The most recent projects have been spurred on by the predictions of significant habitat loss and degradation resulting from the hydroelectric developments.

"These hydroelectric projects have altered the natural hydrology of the Saskatchewan River including a reduced flood frequency in the Saskatchewan River Delta. It is this natural cycle of flooding and drying that is important to maintaining healthy wetland ecosystems," says Brent Kennedy, Provincial Manager, Ducks Unlimited Canada. "Ducks Unlimited Canada has undertaken several wetland development projects in both Manitoba and Saskatchewan. These projects include a system of ditches, dykes and water control structures to allow managers the capability to manipulate water levels to maintain and enhance wetland habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife. Without these efforts the water supply for many of these wetlands would have been reduced significantly."

The cooperation of Ducks Unlimited, Saskatchewan Environment and Manitoba Conservation has resulted in the protection and enhancement of this delicate and important natural area.

"The recipients of this award prove there is power in working together to protect the environment. The success of these projects is a great example of partnerships between a private conservation organization and provincial governments." Said Dr. Kristjanson

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