

DU “Beyond The Call” award for Fox Lake Conservation League - September 8, 2020

Ducks Unlimited’s “Beyond The Call” award is a conservation award developed to recognize individuals and organizations that go “Beyond The Call” of expectations to help Ducks Unlimited advance wetlands conservation in Minnesota. It was developed in 2000 to posthumously recognize Jason Barker, a young U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service biologist in Detroit Lakes who worked to conserve waterfowl habitat nearly up to the day he passed away from cancer, and has been presented selectively to deserving recipients several times since.

The Fox Lake Conservation League has now been selected to receive this award for their outstanding habitat conservation leadership and accomplishments in Minnesota.

For the past 27 years, Fox Lake Conservation League has contributed \$202,450 to Ducks Unlimited’s conservation mission in Minnesota, supporting our Living Lakes Initiative to directly conserve wetlands in Martin County. DU proudly recognizes the League as Diamond Benefactors, and they are well on their way to becoming a Legacy donor.

Furthermore, the Fox Lake Conservation League has been an important conservation leader in southern Minnesota, driving efforts to restore and protect wildlife habitat in and around Martin County while partnering with DU and other conservation organizations, the Minnesota DNR, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The League has publicly advanced the need to restore prairie and wetlands in Martin County with local citizens, landowners, stakeholders and elected officials alike, successfully protecting and restoring thousands of acres of public wildlife habitat in a strategic, focused approach to restore prairie-wetland complexes that were lost decades ago while maintaining positive support for conservation in the process. After working hard to help pass the Clean Water, Land, & Legacy Amendment in 2008, the League has successfully secured several Conservation Partner Legacy grants and three multi-million Outdoor Heritage Fund grants to further advance wildlife habitat conservation in Martin County, many of which include DU a restoration partner. In addition, local support from the League has helped DU protect and restore four public land tracts in Martin County totaling 615 acres for the Minnesota DNR (nearly a square mile of prairie and pothole wetland habitat) and also enhance or restore numerous other wetlands in area too.

Few other local conservation clubs in Minnesota are as actively dedicated to the mission of wildlife habitat conservation and have achieved as much as the Fox Lake Conservation League. Ducks Unlimited proudly presents our Beyond The Call award to the League now in 2020 in recognition of outstanding past conservation efforts and leadership, and we look forward to many more years of conservation partnership in the decades ahead.