



Finding international solutions to conservation challenges

Louisiana State University and Ducks Unlimited de México cooperate on science, education and habitat restoration



Representatives from the Louisiana Audubon Society and LSU's School of Renewable Natural Resources visit a mangrove restoration project near Celestún, Mexico.

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MEMPHIS, Tenn. – Nov. ??, 2017 – The Louisiana State University Agricultural Center and Ducks Unlimited de México (DUMAC) are joining forces in support of collaborative research in wetland and waterfowl conservation.

Through a Memorandum of Understanding signed last year, the two organizations have agreed to cooperate on the evaluation and development of wetland conservation and improvement programs, preservation of wetland birds and aquatic species and restoration and preservation of wetland habitats.

In July 2017, Drs. Kevin Ringelman, Andy Nyman and Luke Laborde from LSU's School of Renewable Natural Resources, and Katie Percy from the Louisiana Audubon Society, visited the DUMAC research facility near Celestún, on the western coast of the Yucatan peninsula. Along with staff from DUMAC and Ducks Unlimited Inc., they toured various coastal wetland areas and mangrove restoration projects to gain a better understanding of the kinds of habitats that exist in the area, as well as conservation challenges in the region.

“We are excited about these new opportunities to cooperate with our colleagues across the border,” said Eduardo Carrera, National Executive Director and CEO of DUMAC. “North America’s waterfowl don’t recognize political boundaries, and habitats on both sides of the border are extremely important to them. This new collaboration with LSU will help us conserve habitats in some of the most critical wintering areas in the United States and Mexico, while also helping build professional waterfowl and wetland management capacity in both countries.”

Beginning in the summer of 2018, students from LSU will take classes and conduct research at DUMAC’s John E. Walker Research facility in Celestún. Likewise, DUMAC staff and other Mexican wildlife professionals can take advantage of professional training opportunities through LSU.

“The DUMAC facility at Celestún is ideally suited for study abroad courses,” said Kevin Ringelman, professor of waterfowl ecology at LSU. “This is a great opportunity for our students to learn from DUMAC biologists about the challenges associated with mangrove restoration.”

Approximately 20 percent of the North America’s waterfowl winter in Mexico. This includes 85 percent of the continent’s Pacific brant, 35 percent of redheads, 20 percent of northern pintails, 15 percent of northern shovelers and 10 percent of green-winged teal. Eighty percent of blue-winged teal either winter in or pass through Mexico.

Established in 1974, Ducks Unlimited de México (DUMAC) has restored and enhanced more than 1.5 million acres that are important for wintering waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species. DUMAC has classified 27 million acres of wetlands and uplands as part of the Wetlands Inventory Program that guides their conservation efforts. DUMAC's RESERVA program is the first internationally focused, hands-on training program for natural resources professionals in Latin America. With the help of Ducks Unlimited Inc. and several other important partners, RESERVA has trained 561 professionals from 20 Latin American countries and one from Africa.

Ducks Unlimited Inc. is the world's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving North America's continually disappearing waterfowl habitats. Established in 1937, Ducks Unlimited has conserved more than 14 million acres thanks to contributions from more than a million supporters across the continent. Guided by science and dedicated to program efficiency, DU works toward the vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever. For more information on our work, visit www.ducks.org.

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