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Ducks Unlimited Canada buys 96-acre property in Amaranth for conservation

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A piece of land in Amaranth will be protected for future generations to benefit from after being purchased for restoration and conservation purposes.

Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC), a private nonprofit organization that works to conserve and restore wetlands, has acquired 96 acres of habitat consisting of grasslands, wetlands and forests in Amaranth.

?Our goal is to make sure that these areas are protected in perpetuity, and not just the wetlands themselves, but the surrounding area,? said Craig Berga, DUC's head of conservation for Ontario.

Ducks Unlimited Canada acquired the nearly 100-acre property through private purchase. The property sits adjacent to land currently protected by the Grand River Conservation Authority.

?We wanted to ensure that the res of that important marsh was also protected for forever,? said Berga. ?I think the people local to the area can be quite happy to know that this place will be here for a very long time and the property surrounding that will not be developed.?

The property is situated in the Upper Grand River portion of the Lake Erie Watershed, the shallowest, most biodiverse and most sensitive of the Great Lakes.

About 93 per cent of the property is part of a provincially significant wetlands known as the Bowling Green Swamp and is home to a wide variety of species, including numerous threatened, endangered and species of special concern.

Some of the animals that can be found in the Bowling Green Swamp include the Eastern meadowlark, the Eastern wood-peewee, the terrestrial chimney crayfish, snapping turtle, and three species of bats.

?By protecting some of these spots and letting them go back to natural, we may see an uptick in some of these species,? said Berga. ?The more protected and more habitat we have, the more likely it is that these animals will start thriving again and become more prevalent.?

Like most regions, Dufferin County has experienced significant fluctuations in weather events as a result of the climate crisis. Speaking with the Free Press, Berga said the restoration of wetlands should help the surrounding area deal with these weather impacts.

?Wetlands act like a massive sponge and with climate change and storm intensities on the rise, these wetlands are massive to controlling the amount of water that moves around the area. The more wetlands we have, the less flooding we could

potentially have,? said Berga.

When asked what Ducks Unlimited Canada hopes that residents in the area get from this land acquisition, Berga said,

?It really comes down to clean water and habitat. Clean water is very important to everyone, not just our drinking water, but also recreational use water. We also hope people in the area will begin to see some of these species at risk, become more prevalent.?