

Media Release

For immediate release
June 11, 2009

Top ranked B.C. estuary protected

Duncan, B.C. — Over 200 hectares of pristine coastal habitat on southeastern Vancouver Island have been secured through a land purchase agreement, Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) announced today.

Acquisition of the Chemainus Estuary, located 12 km north of Duncan, is being heralded as a success by B.C. conservationists. Renowned as one of the south coast's most important wetlands, the estuary received a Class 1 ranking out of more than 440 estuaries in a report released by Environment Canada and Ducks Unlimited Canada.

According to the study, when compared to other major estuaries on Vancouver Island, Chemainus remains relatively free from urban disturbance. This provided conservationists with further rationale to direct more effort and resources towards protecting this important natural ecosystem.

"Securing Chemainus Estuary has been a high priority for Ducks Unlimited and Pacific Coast Joint Venture partners for decades," comments Les Bogdan, DUC's manager of provincial operations. "After several attempts over the last 20 years, we are proud to achieve this milestone and protect some of the most critically important migratory habitat on B.C.'s coast."

As a diversified complex of agricultural fields, forests and intertidal flats, Chemainus supports a wide variety of birds, mammals and fish. In combination with the nearby Cowichan Estuary and freshwater lakes, it forms a habitat of international importance to waterfowl and other birds using the coastal migration corridor along the Pacific Flyway. Averages of 1,000 waterfowl per day have been sighted during the migration and wintering periods.

Protection of Chemainus Estuary was made possible through contributions from the B.C. Trust for Public Lands, Catalyst Paper Corporation, and international partnerships under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, North American Waterfowl Management Plan and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Furthermore, this acquisition would not be possible without the tireless efforts of DUC's volunteers and supporters across B.C. and Canada.

Ducks Unlimited Canada conserves, restores and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people. DUC has been committed to wetland conservation for more than 70 years.

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Conserving Canada's Wetlands

Active by nature.