

**JAMESTOWN WILDLIFE AREA  
ACQUISITION AND RESTORATION  
PHASE 1**

**PURPOSE:** To restore diverse wetland plant communities and management capabilities of the Jamestown Wildlife Area. The area has aged over the last 100 years and is now filled with sediment from the upper reaches of the Marsh Creek watershed. Additively, the area is now covered with dense stands of cattails. The project will be accomplished in several phases, and will focus on increasing water management capabilities, adding wetland units to the area, establishing dependable water sources and helping with the plan to restore stream flows to the Republican River. The First Phase is underway and will focus on Gun Club Marsh and wetlands to the south along Marsh Creek. Engineering surveys, research and design are underway and are an important part of the project. Some construction activities are in progress or completed. This project will be managed by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks to maintain high-quality habitat, wildlife viewing and hunting opportunities for migrating waterfowl.

These are the accomplishments that have made this project possible and there are many partners.

Grassroots Support – Constituents of the area contacted the KDWP Commission in 2001 and as a result the KDWP administration determined Jamestown to be the number one goal for wetland restoration in Kansas. Ducks Unlimited signed on as a major partner to lend technical and financial support.

Feasibility Study (or why did we start here!)– Schwab-Eaton was hired as consulting engineers to develop the best plans to renovate the wetlands at Jamestown. Plans were developed and the Jamestown Task Force was formed from natural resource specialists to review the plans and choose among the alternatives. Those members included DU, KDWP, the Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resource and Conservation Service, The Division of Water Resources, Pheasants Forever, Corp of Engineers and representatives of other state and federal agencies that reviewed the planning documents. It was decided to break the project into several phases and Phase I was to focus on Gun Club Marsh. Phase I components were to: raise the height of the south dam to optimize storage and wetland acres lost to sedimentation; construct levees to subdivide the marsh into smaller units for more efficiency and construct a diversion dam and bypass channel to distribute water more efficiently in the wetlands. It was determined that the marsh would need to be dewatered for an extended period to dry up the accumulated sediments for ease of construction and it was decided a pilot drainage channel would need to be constructed. Environmental and water use permit applications were then applied for. During this process the possibility of constructing a new wetland on Marsh Creek was explored and was feasible. The funding for construction of the project came from KDWP and its partners while DU purchased the Nelson tract and handled the contracts and DWR worked with the water rights issues. The economics of the total project prompted KDWP and DU to start applying for a North American Wetland Conservation Act grant.

Initial Drainage Project – Completed on 10/26/04, resulted in completion of the desired goal of digging the initial drainage channels that will be used to dry out the accumulated sediments in Gun Club Marsh. (*See Pictures of marsh buggy and aerial photos of work completed by marsh buggy*)

Marsh Creek Wetland – Recent land acquisitions, water rights issues and partners KDWP, DU, The Nature Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, Westar Energy and KAWS allowed the project to come about. Construction started on the 3,180 foot long earthen berm and 150 foot concrete low-head dam on July 18 and was completed in October of 2005. The marsh will not be filled until the entire Phase I project is completed in 2007. (*See Pictures of the completed low head dam*)

NAWCA Grant Jamestown is awaiting final approval of a North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant proposal. This proposal will permit the enhancement of the 550-acre Gun Club Marsh , by raising the existing dam and gaining back water storage in the marsh, plus dividing the extensive area into two manageable units with much improved water management capabilities. Additionally, the new Marsh Creek detention structure and spillway will restore over 200 acres of wetlands. Four hundred (400) acres of adjacent cropland will be reseeded to native warm season grasses and Nine hundred (900) acres of

adjacent grasslands will be restored by intensive prescribed burning and mechanical brush removal of Eastern Red Cedars. Lastly, this proposal will allow new acquisition of 440 acres. (*See Burn Pictures*)

Land Acquisition The project has added 660 acres purchased in the last 7 years, further extending the project south along Marsh Creek, and these wetlands will be a high priority for restoration in future proposals. These properties were purchased from willing sellers and have high quality wildlife habitat values. (*Aerial photos of Marsh Creek*)

Partnerships The Jamestown project has formed many partnerships, those partners include Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., Pheasants Forever, The Nature Conservancy, Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Westar Energy, CloudCorp, Cloud County Board of Commissioners, Cloud County Tourism Committee, Republic County Board of Commissioners, Jewell County Board of Commissioners, City of Jamestown, and the Kansas Wildlife Federation.