Nestlé Purina commits $1 million to Ducks Unlimited in Iowa to help boost water quality

Partnership will protect and improve 1,600 acres of wetlands and grasslands

DES MOINES, Iowa, Aug. 15, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- Ducks Unlimited and Nestlé Purina PetCare Company have partnered to protect and improve 1,600 acres of wetland and grasslands across Iowa over the next three years through Ducks Unlimited's Living Lakes Initiative, promoting healthy soil, healthy crops and healthy wildlife habitat.

Purina, which operates three pet food manufacturing facilities in Iowa (in Clinton, Fort Dodge and Davenport) and sources high-quality ingredients for its dog and cat food products from farms across the state, has committed $1 million to help promote sustainability of the supply chain and improve recreational use of wetlands and lakes across the state's Prairie Pothole Region.

"Purina and Ducks Unlimited are joining in Iowa's efforts to help improve our state's water quality, and I applaud this partnership," said Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds. "These organizations represent farmers, conservationists and outdoors enthusiasts who all have a stake in preserving our natural resources for the livelihood of Iowans and wildlife."

"Farmers work hard to steward their land and the resources needed to grow crops, including ensuring the health of soil and water," said Ducks Unlimited CEO Dale Hall. "Producers in Iowa are proactively seeking ways to enhance the stewardship of key agricultural watersheds. The Prairie Pothole Region is the most critical landscape in North America for breeding waterfowl and is one of DU's highest priorities to restore wetland health. We're glad to have our partner Purina joining the effort."

This partnership will advance three conservation strategies in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and farmers to achieve:

- Shallow lake enhancement: The partnership will improve at least three natural shallow lakes in north-central Iowa, transforming lakes saturated with nutrients, sediment and algae into clean, productive wetlands resulting in improved water quality, more opportunities for public recreation, such as swimming and boating, and the return of healthy fish and wildlife populations.
- Prairie pothole complex restoration and protection: The partnership will protect and restore at least 100 acres of native grasslands interspersed with shallow prairie pothole wetlands to maximize wildlife habitat and naturally improve the overall surrounding environment.
- Iowa Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP): The partnership will restore at least two wetlands per year and, on average, treat runoff from over 1,000 acres of agricultural land per project. The CREP program restores wetlands within intensively farmed areas to support nutrient management and runoff prevention.

"At Purina we're committed to sourcing our ingredients responsibly, which includes promoting water stewardship in our supply chain, and contributing positively to the communities where we have a presence," said Joe Sivewright, Purina CEO. "Purina sources high-quality ingredients for our pet food from farms across the U.S., including Iowa, and we also have a significant business presence in the state with three pet food manufacturing facilities, employing more than 1,000 people. Working with our longtime partner Ducks Unlimited, area farmers and other conservation partners to promote water quality and quality of life in this region is a win-win."

The impact from these conservation efforts will reduce flooding and improve water quality for residents and wildlife, including ducks:

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- Restored wetlands can remove 70 percent of nitrates and 20 percent phosphorus from an upstream watershed.
- Restored grasslands filter runoff, reducing nitrates by up to 90 percent and phosphorus by up to 55 percent.

Ducks Unlimited is working with conservation partners to identify suitable project sites. The first conservation projects will launch in 2018.

Purina is a dedicated supporter of wetlands conservation, including a prior $2 million contribution to the USA Rice/Ducks Unlimited (DU) Rice Stewardship Partnership. Purina's Pro Plan brand is also the official performance dog food of Ducks Unlimited.

About Ducks Unlimited
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.

About Nestlé Purina PetCare
Nestlé Purina PetCare promotes responsible pet care, community involvement and the positive bond between people and their pets. A premiere global manufacturer of pet products, Nestlé Purina PetCare is part of Swiss-based Nestlé S.A., a global leader in nutrition, health and wellness.

SOURCE Nestle Purina PetCare

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