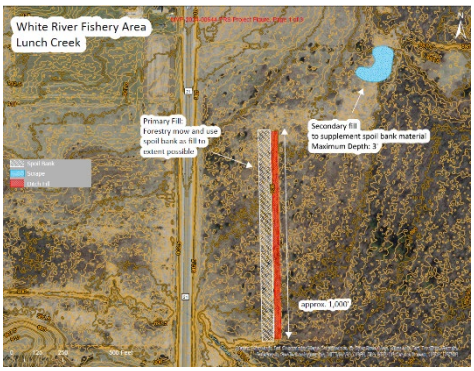
Wisconsin Waterfowl Association Project Report

Project Site: Lunch Creek – White River Fishery Area **Completed: February 2025**

Background: WWA identified an approximately 1,000' ditch on this property in February 2024 at the headwaters of Lunch Creek in Waushara County. The ditch drains a spring. It is unclear when the ditching occurred –between 1937 and 1979, likely in the hopes of draining the wetland enough to improve pasture.

Project development: WWA first visited the property in mid-February, with additional survey work completed in summer 2024. After several discussions WWA and DNR agreed upon a restoration plan. Project goals were to balance diverse but complementary interests: improve habitat for nesting and migrating waterfowl where appropriate, restore native wetland vegetation and function to a unique but degraded wetland, and contribute to the health of the nearby trout stream. The restoration plan incorporated a 1,000' ditch fill and a small scrape located to the northeast of the main wetland adjacent to upland prairie and floodplain forest. Spoil material located on the west bank of the ditch was used for initial fill material, with additional material obtained from the scrape as necessary.



Wetland permits were applied for and WWA developed and distributed an RFP in fall 2024. Steerhead Excavating LLC was selected to complete the work.

Ditch prior to restoration.

Immediately following construction.

Scrape immediately following work.

Construction began in February 2025, requiring just under 6 days of work. WWA staff met with the contractor throughout the project, and upon review requested several alterations to the work in order to improve project longevity and habitat quality. Sediment transport to nearby Lunch Creek and disturbance to sensitive wetland vegetation were primary concerns. The majority of the work was conducted during a cold spell in February, limiting soil disturbance to surface-level impacts, and woody material was placed immediately south of the ditch fill to limit sediment transport as much as possible. Water quality immediately south of the ditch fill was good with minimal sediment transport when monitored shortly after project completion. Bare soil was seeded with a cover crop to minimize soil erosion during spring snow melt or rains.

Costs, Funding:

DNR	Wetland General Permit Surcharge	$11,729
DNR	Waterfowl Stamp Funds	$8,692
	TOTAL	$20,421

County: Waushara **HUC 12:** 040302010803 (Aggregate HUC 12 Rank: 5) **Lat./Long.:** 44.059729 N, 89.364125 W

Cost/acre: Lateral effect conservatively suggested 15 acres of impact, at approximately $1,360/acre

Other Comments: A visit shortly after construction was completed showed the scrape filling quickly. Eventually, many of the upland trees and shrubs that have established in the drained wetland will die out, leaving excellent habitat snags behind alongside scattered native wetland shrubs and trees more tolerant of saturated soils.