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***Fast Facts:***

* *Arbor Day Foundation presents Forest Lands Leadership Award to Ducks Unlimited*
* *Award recognizes leadership in sustainable forestry efforts on public land*
* *Ducks Unlimited honored for work in Mississippi floodplain, other areas*

**Ducks Unlimited receives Arbor Day Foundation national award**

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Lincoln, Nebraska – April 25, 2016 – Ducks Unlimited has been awarded the Forest Lands Leadership Award by the Arbor Day Foundation. The honor is presented to an organization or individual whose outstanding work provides leadership in advancing sustainable forestry efforts on public forest land.

The Arbor Day Foundation will recognize Ducks Unlimited and other organizations at the 2016 Arbor Day Awards on April 30 at Lied Lodge & Conference Center in Nebraska City, Nebraska.

“Ducks Unlimited is a driving leader in the sustainability of forests on public lands,” said Dan Lambe, president of the Arbor Day Foundation. “With more than 13.6 million acres of wetlands conserved, Ducks Unlimited’s stewardship is a model for other organizations throughout the country.”

As the world’s largest nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving North America's continually disappearing waterfowl habitats, Ducks Unlimited realizes the crucial impact of forests.

“We are proud to partner for conservation with an organization as strong as The Arbor Day Foundation,” said Dale Hall, Ducks Unlimited CEO. “We appreciate this honor, and are excited to continue protecting and restoring our nation’s public forests for future generations of wildlife and people.”

Ducks Unlimited has been a major catalyst behind replanting efforts in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley, the most significant winter habitat area for wildlife in North America. The Mississippi River corridor is the main spring and fall migration route for millions of waterfowl, shorebirds, marshbirds and songbirds.

Since 2009, Ducks Unlimited has conserved more than 4,000 acres in the floodplain. Bottomland hardwood forests provide critical habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife and play a huge role in floodwater absorption. As little as 20 percent of forestland remain on what was formally 24.7 million acres of forested wetlands.

This year, Ducks Unlimited will use a $6,823 grant from the Arbor Day Foundation to plant 19,500 trees on the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge in Indiana, a critical wetland habitat that directly influences water quality as far away as the Gulf of Mexico. Wetlands help clean habitats by filtering out impurities such as nitrates from agriculture land before it enters local waterways. Reforesting the Patoka River floodplain boosts the ability of these wetlands to naturally filter pollutants.

**About the Arbor Day Foundation**

**Founded in 1972, the Arbor Day Foundation has grown to become the largest nonprofit membership organization dedicated to planting trees, with more than one million members, supporters, and valued partners. During the last 44 years, more than 250 million Arbor Day Foundation trees have been planted in neighborhoods, communities, cities and forests throughout the world.**

**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 13.6 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**](http://www.ducks.org)**.**

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