

## Maryland Wood Duck Initiative (MWDI)

### Activity Report #3 - Jan 3, 2005. Update from Oct 18th Report

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**USF&W** - Obtained software routines / instructions for BOX and REPORTs used in the 1997 WD Initiative study from James Kelly. Suitability looks OK for short term use w/ description modifications. Trying to get source code and investigate if mods can be easily made to enhance.

**MD DNR** - Millington WMA staff inspected WD boxes and found 61 boxes in various clusters. The boxes are generally not built for annual monitoring (no access doors among other things). Numerous other good habitat areas identified to expand program. Meeting likely in January w/ DU (C. Heaps and T. Crow - Kent Co Chrm) to inspect further and define 2005 objectives, work program scope. Relocating some boxes, creating access doors and some new box installation is likely. An access and location map will be prepared and the boxes profiled for future reference. Use of certain former impounded areas for spring brood rearing habitat has not been finalized. Josh - thanks for the help!

**Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage** - CAB met Ned Gerber in October. General willingness to assist conveyed, specifically with Kent Co Initiative where more detailed box work is initially planned. Freon canister nest plans sent.

**Eastern Neck Refuge** - meeting Jan 4 to review their box inventory (uninstalled) and results of prior box tour to help define 2005 work scope and coordinate volunteer leads for assistance.

**Drum Point** - re-installed 2 boxes after wetland work and camouflaged 4 boxes in other wetlands for research on utilization, dumping. Can you effectively hide a box which is "stark" and in the "open" to enhance its attractiveness by making it more "private" and can you reduce competition for it where density is generally tight?

**Habitat aerial photos** - received final proof of a selected sector. Lat/long coordinates are not yet available but may not be initially needed. Final delivery timing for some counties is less certain until some Homeland Security and other issues.

**Ducks Unlimited** - C. Heaps has developed a source for empty Freon canisters and we have enough to make 8-9 for this year's experiment which will include a heat test and field (woods) placement at Chesapeake Farms, Eastern Neck, Millington and Drum Point. Construction has begun on these units. A request for 10-20 wooden boxes has been made to certain DU members for use at Ches. Farms & Millington WMA. Napley Green Farm is also making 6-8 boxes for their use. Thanks Chip!

#### **Organizational Matters:**

With more definition of my personal work requirements and an assessment of how to best succeed, the emphasis in 2005 will be (1) placed on maturing the Kent Co Initiative and (2) recruitment of Project Managers to focus on developing the WD programs at other MD DNR WMAs and other larger scale properties. I'd like to get it right on a smaller scale and it's clear that the database aspects need some TLC before getting too grandiose. I still intend to launch this as a statewide initiative and field all queries towards that end to build awareness and support. Identification of all box locations will still be sought but active integration and assessment of their box profiles and proximate habitat will be likely be deferred initially.

A draft press release will be circulated within a few weeks for your review and creation of a simple website will also occur soon. Activity in February and March will focus on getting Eastern Neck, Ches Farms, Millington and Napley Green Farm ready for this years' nest program and more active monitoring.

Thank you for your ongoing interest and assistance.

Cliff Brown

**Monday, January 03, 2005**