

Rhonda McDougal, Ph.D., Director, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship

Rhonda has a Ph.D. in Aquatic Ecology from the University of Manitoba and conducted research on Prairie lake and wetland ecosystems over ten years as a Research Scientist with Ducks Unlimited Canada's Institute for Wetland and Waterfowl Research, focusing on the role of wetlands and agricultural management practices in nutrient loading, carbon sequestration and climate change mitigation and adaptation. Dr. McDougal is now the Director of the Watersheds and Protected Areas Branch of the Manitoba government's Department of Conservation and Water Stewardship. She is responsible for the Protected Areas Network, the Integrated Watershed Management Planning Initiative and the Conservation Districts Program in Manitoba. Bridging the gap between science and policy is a daily part of Rhonda's current role. As a policy leader, Rhonda developed a unique Wetland Restoration Incentive Program for the Manitoba government based on the research that she led as a research scientist. Rhonda has spearheaded the development of a pilot approach for Water Soft Paths in Manitoba and is currently leading the development of a new integrated Surface Water Management Strategy for the province.