

Collaboration Adds 119-acre Chamberlain Tract to Shiawassee Refuge

April 3, 2009

A partnership between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, DTE Energy, The Conservation Fund, Ducks Unlimited, and the North American Wetlands Conservation Council added 119 acres to Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge on April 3, 2009. The complex acquisition increased the refuge to 9,620 acres. This acquisition was part of an effort to safeguard critical wildlife habitat, restore forests, and remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.



*The new land acquisition protected a bend of the Cass River as part of the refuge.
Steven F. Kahl/USFWS; 6/2008*

Situated along the Cass River, the Chamberlain Tract includes a combination of bottomland hardwood swamp, shrub marsh, and upland oak forest that provides a home for wood ducks, hooded mergansers, bald eagles, willow flycatchers, and a myriad other creatures. The property also protects an old oxbow of the Cass River that is likely to harbor rare and unique plants.

In 2007, The Conservation Fund, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and DTE Energy launched a partnership which restored 180 acres of native forest habitat on the refuge. Over 53,000 native tree seedlings were planted, including American sycamore, bur oak, white oak, northern red oak, red maple, silver maple, black walnut, and common hackberry. As the trees mature the habitat for refuge wildlife will improve, especially for such forest interior birds as eastern wood-pewee, wood thrush, American redstart, and scarlet tanager. Further, this reforestation is a scientifically recognized way to sequester carbon from our atmosphere. Detroit Edison Energy retains the rights to any carbon sequestration credits that may accrue as a result of the reforestation efforts.



Wood frogs use the forested wetlands of the Chamberlain Tract. Kevin Holcomb/USFWS

DTE Energy also donated \$100,000 to The Conservation Fund to be used to acquire key parcels for the refuge. The value of the cash and reforestation contributions were leveraged toward a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant administered by Ducks Unlimited. Both sources were used to acquire the 119 acres.