

Shiawassee Refuge Acquires Kaufmann Tract

September 18, 2007

Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge acquired a 74-acre parcel of land from Dave and Eileen Kaufmann on September 18, 2007. This tract is the first added to the refuge since 2000 and it is directly contiguous with current refuge lands. Emergency inholding dollars from the Land and Water Conservation Fund paid for the property located in James Township. The Kaufmann Tract lies within the area of the refuge's acquisition boundary that is most threatened by advancing urban sprawl. In fact, many nearby tracts have given way to development over the past ten years.



The newly acquired Kaufmann Tract provides excellent habitat for nesting waterfowl and grassland birds. Steven F. Kahl/USFWS; August 2007

Approximately 40 acres of the site were planted to upland prairie vegetation while it was enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program. Consequently, the new property provides excellent nesting habitat for waterfowl such as mallards and blue-winged teal. Further, it provides habitat for many grassland bird species, including nesting sedge wrens and eastern meadowlarks, migrant northern

harriers, and wintering short-eared owls. Grassland birds have suffered the steepest, most long term, and most widespread declines of any group of North American birds. Short-eared owl is on the list of endangered species in Michigan. Approximately 30 acres of the Kaufmann tract remain in corn, but will be restored to prairie vegetation within three years.



*Eileen and Dave Kaufmann with Refuge Manager Steve Kahl at the Kaufmann Tract.
Edward P. De Vries/USFWS; October 2007*

“The refuge takes good care of its property,” said Dave Kaufmann. “Eileen and I felt strongly that we wanted to see our land preserved and that the next best owner would be the refuge.”