

# Shiawassee Refuge Hosts Wetland Planting Event

*May 31, 2008*

Thirty-six people pitched in to plant several hundred native plant seedlings during a special wetland restoration event at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. In 2006, the refuge began a unique partnership with the Michigan Department of Corrections and the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network to develop a source of native plants of local genotype and ecotype for refuge habitat restoration projects. Through this partnership, seed was collected from 52 species of wildflowers, grasses, and sedges from the refuge. This seed was processed and propagated by inmates at the Saginaw Correctional Facility's horticulture program. As a result, over 40,000 seedlings were produced in 2008.



*Many came to help plant sedges, grasses, and rushes during refuge wetland restoration event. Michelle Vander Haar/USFWS; 5/2008*

On May 31, 2008, the fruits of this plant amplification project were put to good use during an American Wetlands Month event. Saginaw County Master Gardeners, Friends of Shiawassee NWR, refuge volunteers, representatives of the correctional facility, refuge staff, and members of the general public spent the morning planting swamp milkweed, New England aster, swamp oval sedge, Virginia wild rye, sawtooth sunflower, blue flag iris, marsh purslane, monkey flower, wild bergamot, mad-dog skullcap, and many other species. Seedlings were planted throughout a 10-acre site where tile was broken, and berms created to restore wetland hydrology.



*Recently planted Virginia wild rye. Michelle Vander Haar/USFWS; 5/2008*

The native seed and plant source program was initiated partly through a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Challenge Cost Share grant.