

Shiawassee Refuge Hosts Biology Network Meeting

December 11, 2008

The Great Lakes/Laurentian Mixed Forest Biology Network held its third annual meeting at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge on December 9 - 11. Seventeen biologists from refuges throughout the Midwest attended to learn more about implementation of Joint Venture plans, forest health, fire program updates, partnerships, grants, and more. The network was initiated in 2006 and has been used by biologists as a way to learn more about projects and biological expertise that are available in the region. Biologists are getting to know each other and this has greatly increased the communication between refuges and private lands activities.



Refuge and private lands biologists assembled at Shiawassee NWR. USFWS; 12/2008

Field tours of Shiawassee Refuge and several private lands sites were also part of the annual agenda. Jim Dastyck, Refuge Biologist, guided attendees to several areas of the refuge to showcase water management, forestry issues, and fish passage accomplishments. Dr. Holly Petrillo of the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point was on hand to discuss forest health and the importance of

maintaining and enhancing forest diversity. Private Lands Biologist, Michelle Vander Haar, lead a tour to a potential road-stream crossing replacement site and a dam scheduled for replacement. Fish passage issues, funding, design, and invasive species were discussed at these locations.

The Network also discussed the formation of workgroups to accomplish priority tasks on refuges and private lands. A decision was made by the group to submit a grant proposal for forest assessment on refuges. A second grant to determine avian abundance on private lands was also discussed and may be submitted at a later date. The last item on the agenda was to vote in a new network president. It was decided that Wayne Brininger will be handing the reigns over to Partners for Fish and Wildlife Biologist Michelle Vander Haar for 2009. A site has not yet been chosen for the 2009 Annual Meeting but, with the continued support of our leaders in Region 3, we hope to have another successful meeting.