



THE ROUGE RIVER PROJECT  
A WORLD CLASS EFFORT



BRINGING OUR RIVER BACK TO LIFE

# Wayne County Wetland Mitigation Bank and Wetland Preservation Fund Wayne County, Michigan

*A publication of the Wayne County Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project*  
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## Objective

The Wayne County Wetland Mitigation Bank (WMB) and Wetland Preservation Fund (WPF) were created to provide an alternative to traditional wetland mitigation that increased economic, environmental and recreation benefits to the watershed by restoring riparian wetlands in the county park system along the Rouge River corridor.

## Owner

Wayne County

## Location

Wayne County, Michigan

## Important Dates

MDEQ rules: December, 1997

Fund Established: July, 1998

Bank Approved: October, 1999

Design Start: May, 2000

Construction Complete:

- Site #1 - May, 2001

- Sites #2 and #3 expected – November, 2001

Credits Available: Anticipated November, 2001

## Total Project Cost

\$750,000



## Demonstration Aspects

- First wetland mitigation bank created under new state rules.
- The WPF provides a permanent mechanism for funding and protecting restored wetlands.
- Streamlines permit processing time and reduces costs by increasing the availability of appropriate and successful mitigation sites.
- Creates and restores ecologically appropriate wetlands in advance of wetland loss.
- Provides model for assessing a watershed for appropriate wetland restoration areas.
- Consolidates wetland mitigation projects with watershed planning efforts and wetland restoration priorities.
- Unlike traditional mitigation efforts, the use of credits from the WMB relieves the wetland permittee from the legal responsibility for establishment, monitoring, and maintenance of the new wetlands, which becomes the responsibility of Wayne County.



## Project Highlights

- Received National Association of Counties Achievement Award, 2000.
- The WPF provides a unique, dedicated, long-term funding source to support the design, construction and maintenance of restored wetlands.

- The WMB provides for the restoration and management of beneficial riparian wetlands, while economic development is facilitated using this sound environmental alternative to on-site wetland mitigation.

### Major Elements

- The Wetland Preservation Fund (WPF) was established by Wayne County with a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to provide long-term funding for the restoration, creation, and protection of wetlands in the watershed.
- The WPF has been organized to allow the fund to be renewed from a variety of funding sources.
- All funds acquired on behalf of the WPF are restricted and can be used only for the planning, design, and construction of wetlands or for the purchase of land required for protecting existing wetland resources.



- Potential areas for wetland restoration were identified in the watershed and prioritized by their ability to provide benefits to the public through the improvement of water quality, increased fish and wildlife habitat, improved flood control and/or the provision of educational or passive recreation opportunities.
- Wetland restoration and protection sites were identified through a GIS based wetland mapping and assessment program that identified opportunities for wetland restoration and protection.
- Wetlands were designed to show the manner and extent of earth changes, design hydrology, and vegetation establishment goals.

- During construction, the wetland design consultants are monitoring the construction process to assure that the intent of the wetland creation or restoration is reflected in the constructed wetland.
- Wetlands that are created in the watershed may be sold to qualified buyers for use as mitigation credits associated with state or federal permits or as special environmental projects associated with settling a complaint from a resource agency for unauthorized wetland disturbance.
- The funds acquired by sale of created wetlands are deposited in the WPF to be used for creation and restoration of additional wetland areas for the WMB.

### Project Results

- Wayne County has an approved wetland mitigation bank and is constructing wetlands that are expected to be certified for use in November, 2001.
- When construction is complete, over seventeen acres of restored wetland along the floodplain of the Rouge River will provide desired flood control and fish and wildlife habitat as well as passive recreation opportunities.
- These wetlands will be protected in perpetuity under a conservation easement.



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