

Wetlands Conservation Program



Logistics for Today

- This webinar is being recorded
- Please mute your microphone and turn your camera off
- Enter questions into the Q&A
 - Sara will moderate



Outline

- DU and DNR Introductions
- ARPA Program History
- DU and DNR Partnership
- Wetland Conservation Program (WCP)
- How to apply for project funding
- What's Next
- Q&A



INTRODUCTION



Who is DU?

- The leader in **wetland conservation** in North America, established in 1937.
- **Conserve, restore and manage** wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people.
- Biologists, engineers, construction management and topographic survey, land protection specialists, public policy, water quality specialists, working lands, contracting specialists, conservation planners, fundraising, etc.



History of conserving wetlands in Michigan

- 1937 – DU founded (fundraising for conservation in Canada)
- 1984 – DU began conservation work in USA
- 1987 – First DU project completed in Michigan & 90,000 acres conserved since
- 1998 – DU opened Great Lakes/Atlantic Region Office
- Wetlands and Waterfowl Habitat Conservation
- Ecosystem Services



What is the WCP?

- DNR awarded \$4m in **American Rescue Plan Act of 2021** funding for wetland conservation projects with partners in Saginaw Bay and western Lake Erie watersheds (Public Act 5 of 2023)
- DU is the **fiduciary agent** selected to administer the *Wetlands Conservation Program*
- Partnership projects should **conserve** wetlands and **improve** water quality



WCP Context

- WLEB
- Saginaw Bay
- Harmful Algal Blooms
 - Water Quality
 - Recreation & Tourism
- 80-99% wetland loss
 - Tile and ditch drainage
 - Development



WCP Partners



WCP Request for Proposals

12 January 2024 – 11 March 2024



How to Apply: RFP Outline

- Schedule
- Program Purpose and Geography
- Eligibility
- Allowable Costs
- Project Types
- Application
- Program Requirements



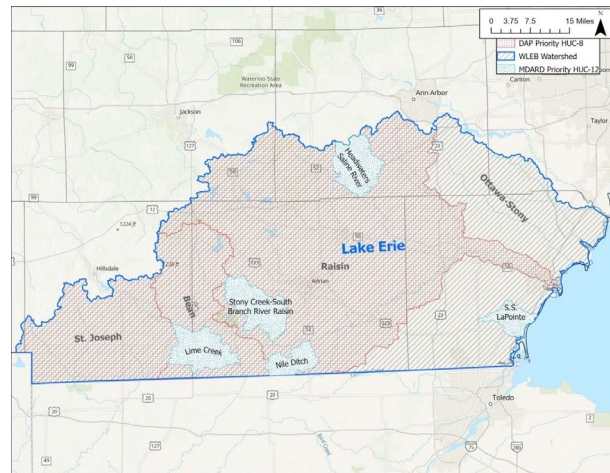
Schedule

- Request For Proposals.....12 January 2024
- Grant Application Due.....11 March; 11:59 PM 2024
- Project Selection.....Spring 2024
- Project Period Begins.....Summer 2024
- Partner Final Report Due to DU.....30 September 2026
- DU Final WCP Report Due to DNR31 October 2026



Program Purpose & Geography

- WCP will direct \$3.65m to fund approximately 5-10 wetland conservation projects that benefit water quality, recreation and/or tourism in the Saginaw Bay and western Lake Erie watersheds



Eligibility

- Eligible Applicants
 - Local, federal, NGO's, tribal
 - Project applicants may partner with DU for support
- Private landowners and for-profit businesses may partner on a proposal
- Project site is a wetland or contains primarily hydric soils
- If you think you have an eligible project, talk to us at office hours!



Allowable Costs

- Project Funding: \$250k-\$750k project funding range, \$3.65m available
 - No leverage **required**
- Must be directly related to project activities and spent within the project period
 - NO pre-award costs
- Indirect costs are eligible, applicants must provide a NICRA or elect to use 10% *de minimus rate*



Types of Projects - Acquisition

- Acquisition of existing or former wetland
 - Fee-title
 - Conservation easement
- Contracting Requirements
 - UASFLA / *Yellowbook* appraisal required
- Not eligible for stewardship endowments

Types of Projects – Restoration / Enhancement

- Engineering – survey and design
- Construction – shovel-ready projects
- Engineering & Construction – survey, design, and implementation
- Contracting Requirements
 - All construction projects are subject to Davis-Bacon Act, as amended (40 U.S.C. 3141-3148)



Scoring Overview

Scoring Criteria	Maximum Points = 110
Applicant Experience	AVAILABLE = 10 points
Project Context	AVAILABLE = 20 points
Conservation Plan Relevance	AVAILABLE = 15 points
Water Quality Outcomes	AVAILABLE = 20 points
Recreation & Tourism	AVAILABLE = 10 points
Timeline	AVAILABLE = 15 points
Partnerships & Support	AVAILABLE = 10 points
Budget	AVAILABLE = 10 points
Financial or Social Leverage	BONUS = 5 points

Providing **leverage** or working with a **disadvantaged business**

<https://www.michigan.gov/mdot/business/contractors/dbe>



Program Requirements

- Quarterly Reporting
- Completed project within allowable timeframe
- Federal contracting and procurement guidelines
- Grant documentation
- Project Agreement with DU



Submitting an Application

- Complete all Project Proposal Narrative questions, including budget table with relevant attachments (except shapefile) and statements
- Attend DU office hours to discuss your project further
- Submit **one PDF** via email to wcp@ducks.org by 11 March 2024 at 11:59pm



Office Hours

- EVERYONE is strongly encouraged to attend a session in office hours
- DU Staff will cover considerations based on the project type and status of planning
- DU staff will advise on project planning, including DU support and contracting and procurement expectations
- January 30: 11:30 am – 5 pm
- February 7: 9-11am and 1-5 pm
- February 12: 9 am-2 pm
- February 21: 1-5 pm
- March 5: 1-5 pm
- Book 30-minute sessions during these slots, *link forthcoming*



What's Next?

Keep informed by staying on our list serve!



FAQ: How does the WCP align with other wetland programs

- USFWS
 - Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program
 - Coastal Program
 - NAWCA
- USDA
 - WRE
- MDARD
 - CREP



FAQ

- Are other geographies eligible for this funding?
- If you're a private landowner, to apply you must be working directly with an eligible partner.
- The WCP funding will not be eligible for DNR projects
- How does this tie into the FWS Coastal Program blueprint efforts
- I'm a consultant, how do I get involved?
 - Must be partnered with an eligible applicant to apply
 - WCP Steering Committee may help to connect project applicants with consultants as needed.



QUESTIONS?



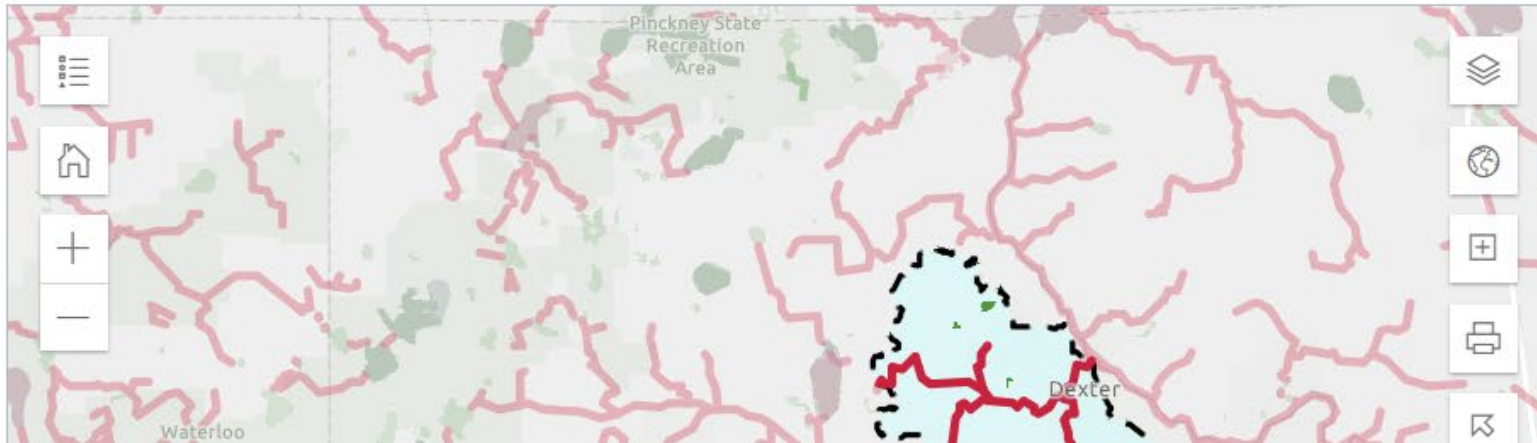
Email: wcp@ducks.org | Website coming soon!



FAQ: Watershed viewer

Let's get started!

7322 Newman Blvd, Dexter, MI, 48130, USA OR



7322 Newman Blvd, Dexter, Michigan, 48130
WATERSHED: Sutton Lake-Mill Creek (040900050204)

- Public Life
- Drinking Water
- Water Monitoring
- Identified Issues

Overview

Your Waters: What We Know

Waters in your community are connected within a local water body. **your watershed.**

