

Living With Michigan's Wetlands: A Landowner's Guide

Third Printing – Revised and Updated

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where noted.

This book was developed through a public-private partnership of the following organizations:



Living With Michigan's Wetlands: A Landowner's Guide

A flock of Canada Geese eclipses the setting sun...A chorus of frogs ushers in an April twilight...A sundew lies in wait for unsuspecting insects...A Common Loon calls hauntingly...Delicate orchids bloom...A regal Great Blue Heron rises from the mist...

Such are the sights and sounds of Michigan's wetlands. In addition to their wonderful wildlife habitat, wetlands provide many valuable functions including water quality maintenance, erosion control, flood protection, and recreational opportunities.

Michigan's landowners are critical to the protection and management of wetland resources in the state. This book contains concise but comprehensive information to help the landowner learn more about wetlands and the value of wetland protection, basic techniques and options for wetland management, the economic benefits of various protection methods, and where to go for more assistance.

"This book is here for you, the wetland property owner, to help you manage your wetland for your personal benefit, and the benefit of all."

— *Governor John Engler*

"This book is a well-written compilation that will address just about any wetland issue a property owner might have."

— *Lisa Warner, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality*

"Whether you want to buy, sell, develop, protect, manage, donate, or restore wetlands, this book provides a wealth of information."

— *Bill Weiss, Red Mule Engineering*

"The document is thorough, informative, and beautifully written. I am certain that it will be widely read, appreciated, and endlessly useful."

— *Carolyn Bury, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

"This is exactly what I have needed! Everyone who owns and cares about wetlands should have a copy of this book. Mine already has a home next to my other prized field guides."

— *Debbie Messer, Private Landowner*

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Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and wise use of water resources.

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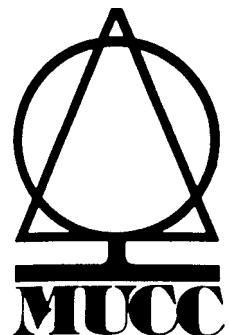


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Can you Identify the Following Species on the Front Cover?

Great Blue Heron	Northern Water Snake	Pickerel Weed
Northern Harrier	Eastern Painted Turtle	Blue-flag Iris
Marsh Wren	Leopard Frog	Arrowhead
Wood Duck	Short-stalked Damselfly	Cattail
Trumpeter Swan	Twelve-spot Skimmer	Wild Rice
Red-winged Blackbird	River Otter	Pond Lily
American Bittern	White-tailed Deer	
Four-toed Salamander	Muskrat	

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Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council

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The purpose of this document is to promote wetland stewardship by private landowners. If you would like to reproduce this book or portions of it for reasons consistent with this purpose, please contact the publisher:

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*This book is dedicated to the memory of
Jeffrey Christopher Cwikiel (1971-1996) in
honor of his love for Michigan's lakes, riv-
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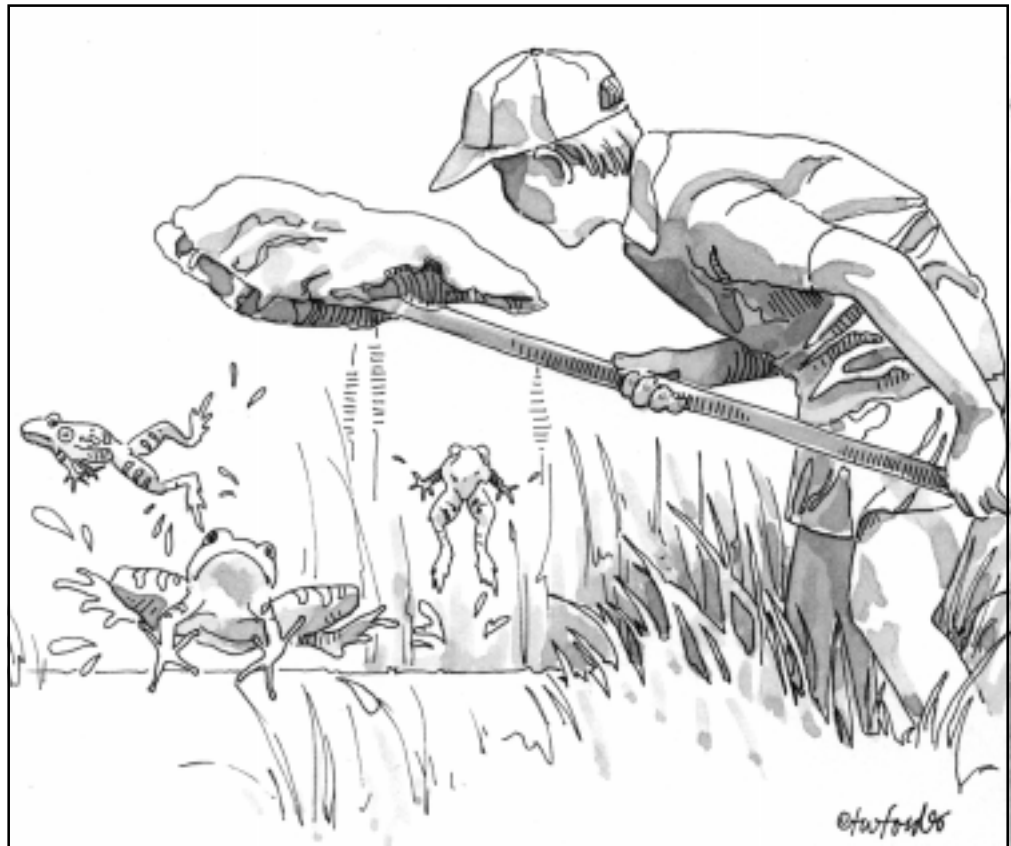


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Preface

This book was originally developed based on the belief that Michigan's wetland property owners care about their property and want to manage it in the best way possible. If the demand for this book is any indication, that belief has been proven to be true. This edition marks the third printing of this book in as many years. The first two printings, totaling around 15,000 copies, have been used by landowners and hundreds of professionals in the private, government, and the non-profit sectors that work with landowners to protect and manage wetlands. The text in this edition has been revised and updated to ensure that this book will continue to serve Michigan's wetland owners, and the professionals that serve them, well into the next century.

Private landowners value land in many different ways. In addition to using their land as a place to live or work, many landowners enjoy the natural and cultural resource values of their property for recreation or to otherwise enhance the quality of their lives. Many landowners have long practiced voluntary land and water conservation as a way to manage and retain the special natural and cultural values of their property. This type of individual stewardship has contributed considerably to meeting state and national conservation goals.

Private landowners also value their land as an economic investment and a source of income. The economic value or potential of a property is of great importance to the owner and influences decisions made about existing and future use of the land. As a result, the conservation of wetlands and riparian habitats on private lands requires an approach which is sensitive to the economic value of the land, the landowner's long- and short-range plans and expectations, and the landowner's economic situation.

The purpose of this document is to help you, the landowner, understand wetlands, the benefits of wetlands, basic techniques and options for wetland management, the economic benefits of various protection methods, and where to go for more assistance. The information in this book is meant to help you make decisions regarding protection of wetlands and other natural resources while meeting your economic needs and personal goals. All efforts were made to insure that the information contained in this document regarding current regulations and government programs was up to date at the time of publication. However, given the potential for changes in funding for incentive programs and legislation for regulatory programs, you should make sure programs are intact before integrating them into your wetland management plans.

This book is your information resource. It is designed in a way that does not require reading each chapter in order. Feel free to skip around and read those chapters that interest you most. Chapter 1 presents and promotes the concept of wetland owners as important stewards. Chapters 2-4 provide basic information on wetlands and how you can learn more about your particular wetland. Chapter 5 provides a strategy to help landowners choose the best conservation and management options for their particular situation. Chapter 6 explains some of the voluntary mechanisms used to protect wetlands, many of which offer financial benefits to landowners. Chapters 7-8 provide background on activities that impact wetlands and ways to manage wetlands to protect and enhance their functional values. Chapter 9 provides information on current wetland regulations that every landowner should know. Chapter 10 provides information on where to go for more help. The appendices serve as your resource list for agencies and nonprofit organizations working to assist landowners in conserving their wetlands.