

# Wetland Benefits



- Water Quality Protection  
Wetlands filter sediment and nutrients from stormwater.



- Flood Damage Prevention  
Wetlands reduce flood impacts by holding and slowly releasing runoff from rain and snowmelt.



- Wildlife Habitat  
Wetlands provide critical habitat for birds, fish, turtles, mammals and reptiles.



This brochure was created by the Van Buren Conservation District as part of the Paw Paw and Black Rivers Wetland Protection & Restoration Project with support from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment, the Two Rivers Coalition, the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy and Ducks Unlimited.



Department of  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
and ENVIRONMENT



Michigan's  
Nonpoint Source  
Program

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## *Landscape Level Wetland Functional Assessment*

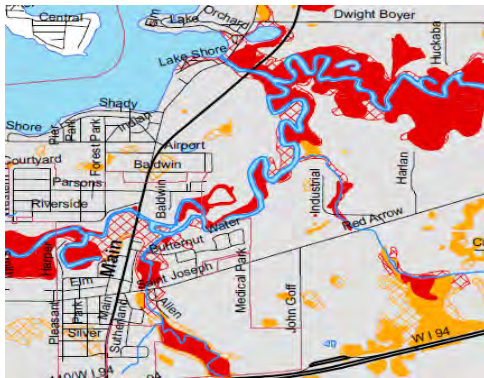
*A Tool to  
Protect & Improve  
Your Watershed*



## Landscape Level Wetland Functional Assessment (LLWFA)

The Landscape Level Wetland Functional Assessment (LLWFA) is a tool for targeting wetland protection and restoration efforts in your watershed. The LLWFA includes an analysis of wetland trends and a database with important information about each wetland.

The LLWFA can help prioritize wetlands for protection or restoration based on how well those wetlands serve specific functions. Each existing wetland, as well as every historic wetland in the watershed is ranked for functional significance. These rankings can be combined with parcel information to identify landowners for outreach efforts.



Maps produced with LLWFA data can help government officials, residents and developers understand the impact of wetland loss on local water quality and the economic benefits of protecting remaining wetlands through planning and zoning techniques.

## Assessed Wetland Functions:

### Water Quality:

**Nutrient Transformation** – ability of the wetland to remove nutrients from the water column and convert them into plant material within the wetland.

**Sediment Retention** – ability of the wetland to retain the sediment that would otherwise move downstream and buildup in rivers, streams and lakes.

**Shoreline Stabilization** – ability of the wetland to protect the shoreline by minimizing bank erosion caused by wave actions and currents.

### Hydrologic:

**Streamflow Maintenance** – ability of the wetland to provide a base flow of water for streams, especially critical during dry periods.

**Surface Water Detention** – ability of the wetland to store excess water during flood events.

**Stream Shading** – ability of the wetland to buffer water temperature fluctuations.

### Habitat:

**Fish/Shellfish** – ability of the wetland to provide habitat for fish and shellfish.

**Waterfowl/Bird** – ability of the wetland to provide habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds and forest birds.

**Amphibians** – ability of the wetland to provide habitat for amphibians and other invertebrates.



Jephtha Lake Fen Preserve in the Black River Watershed is an example of a rare wetland type.

## Accessing the Data

- The Landscape Level Wetland Functional Assessment (LLWFA) has been completed for several watersheds in Michigan.
- LLWFA data for the Paw Paw and Black River Watersheds will be available from the Van Buren Conservation District.
- The Water Resources Division of the MDNRE can provide LLWFA data for several other watersheds in the state.



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