

NORTH AMERICAN

WETLANDS

CONSERVATION ACT

project flash

## Michigan Partnership Receives \$1,000,000 for Wetlands Project

On September 8, 2004, the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, as authorized under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, approved **\$1,000,000** in funding for the **St. Mary's River Bird Migration Corridor Phase II Project in Michigan's Chippewa and Mackinac Counties in Congressional District 1**. The Act is nonregulatory and calls for voluntary partnerships to develop and implement wetlands and associated uplands projects to benefit wildlife. Projects must meet certain biological criteria to be considered for funding, and partners must be able to match the grant request 1:1 with nonfederal funds. This project's partnership exceeded the match requirement with **\$4,711,000**.

Partners will acquire eight tracts in fee title and two conservation easements, for a total of **1,418 acres**, which includes 949 acres of wetlands and 4 miles of shoreline. The owner of the key parcel, the 175-acre Vermilion Point Tract on Whitefish Peninsula, with 1.5 miles of Lake Superior shoreline, will sell his property to the partners at less than half the appraised value: \$1.8 million! Located roughly 8.5 miles from the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, Vermilion Point is a hotspot for birders and researchers.

The point's marshes support the largest nesting concentration of the federally and state-listed endangered piping plover in the Upper Peninsula. The entire project area is important to nesting mallards, common goldeneye, American black ducks, blue-winged teal, ring-necked duck, and red-breasted and common mergansers. Wood ducks and hooded mergansers nest in the wooded uplands adjacent to the project's marshes. Spectacular rafts of thousands of greater scaup, redhead, bufflehead, and long-tailed ducks are seen along the lakeshore during migration. Heavy migrations of passerines pass through the project area, including such species as sedge and marsh wrens, yellow-bellied flycatcher, and Le Conte's Sparrow. The project area also carries an Important Bird Area designation for migrating birds of prey, with at least two of the project tracts being raptor migration focal points.

Partners of this project include Little Traverse Conservancy, Wild Shore Foundation, John Woollam, Jim and Betty Vosper, Dr. Leonard and Loraine Pickering, George and Margaret DeMuth, Michigan Audubon, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, Lake Superior State University, and USDA Forest Service. Their work helps to advance the conservation goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan's **Upper Mississippi River & Great Lakes Joint Venture**, U.S. Shorebird Plan, Partners in Flight, and North American Waterbird Plan.

*For more information about this project, contact Anne Fleming, Project Coordinator, Little Traverse Conservancy, (231) 347-0991, [afleming@racc2000.com](mailto:afleming@racc2000.com), or David Buie, Standard Grants Program Proposal Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (301) 497-5870, [david\\_buie@fws.gov](mailto:david_buie@fws.gov).*

DIVISION OF BIRD HABITAT  
CONSERVATION  
NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS  
CONSERVATION COUNCIL  
4401 NORTH FAIRFAX DRIVE  
MAIL STOP 4075  
ARLINGTON, VA 22203  
[birdhabitat.fws.gov](http://birdhabitat.fws.gov) • 703/358-1784

