**For immediate release**

Contact: Deena Bosworth, Executive Director

[bosworth@micounties.org](mailto:bosworth@micounties.orgo) or 517-282-1647

Aug. 13, 2018

**Nature Project in Gratiot-Saginaw State Game Area Announced**

**LANSING, MICH.** ― The Michigan Municipal Wetland Alliance (MMWA) and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) announced today that a 60-acre parcel in the [Gratiot-Saginaw State Game Area](http://www.michigandnr.com/publications/pdfs/huntingwildlifehabitat/sga/Gratiot-Saginaw_SGA_map.pdf) will be developed into the Potato Creek Wetland Mitigation Bank. Upon completion, the mitigation bank will provide below-market wetland mitigation credits to public entities whose projects unavoidably disturb or alter wetlands.

This project is one of three sites being developed this year by the MMWA, a nonprofit engaging in a public-private partnership with the MDNR to help Michigan municipalities, agricultural producers and blueberry growers abide by stringent wetland mitigation requirements. The other sites being constructed in 2018 are in the Allegan State Game Area and the Grand River State Game Area.

Under the innovative public-private partnership led by the MMWA, undeveloped state game property will be enhanced and converted into wetland mitigation banks with wildlife habitat, resulting in increased recreational opportunities for Michigan residents.

“Investing in the restoration of wetlands on State Game Areas is a great way to improve habitat, enhance recreational opportunities and advance public works projects,” touted Russ Mason, the chief of MDNR’s Wildlife Division.

The MMWA will be offering wetland mitigation credits to cities, villages, townships, counties and drainage districts for approximately $30,000 each ― less than half the market rate ― due to the investment made by the State of Michigan, led by Gov. Rick Snyder and MDNR Director Keith Creagh.

“This provides benefits on both sides — when local governments need to do work that unavoidably disturbs a wetland, they can purchase credits at a much more reasonable rate, and Michigan residents get improved natural areas for recreational use” explained David Thompson, the Monroe County drain commissioner who serves as president of the MMWA Board.

The MMWA is dedicated to preserving wetland habitat and enhancing outdoor recreation on MDNR public lands, while simultaneously addressing wetland impacts from Michigan municipalities, agricultural producers, and blueberry growers.

###