

**NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF THE FARM SERVICE AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR
VOLUNTARY PUBLIC ACCESS HABITAT INCENTIVE PROGRAM STATE OF MICHIGAN**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announces its intent to adopt the Farm Service Agency (FSA) FINAL PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR VOLUNTARY PUBLIC ACCESS HABITAT INCENTIVE PROGRAM STATE OF MICHIGAN dated August 2011 according to the provisions of the Council on Environmental Quality regulations at 40 CFR 1506.3. Further, NRCS announces the availability of a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) to address those proposed uses of 2014 Voluntary Public Access Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP) grant funds in Michigan that were not addressed in the FSA environmental assessment.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) applied for and received funding through the 2014 VPA-HIP. This grant is the second VPA-HIP grant awarded to the MDNR and is intended to further expand the objectives set forth in the initial 2011 project proposal. The MDNR proposes to use 2014 VPA-HIP grant funds to continue enrolling land into the states Hunting Access Program (HAP) and promoting outdoor recreational opportunities within the State. The MDNR now proposes to further expand the HAP area to include sharp-tailed grouse and small game hunting in the eastern Upper Peninsula. This was not the case with 2011 grant funds. Additionally, the MDNR now proposes to use \$50,000 of VPA-HIP funds annually for the life of the grant to carry out habitat restoration projects on lands enrolled in the HAP. Habitat improvements were not funded under the previous VPA-HIP grant. As a result, NRCS has prepared a Supplemental EA to analyze the potential impacts of the proposed expansion of the HAP area and the habitat restoration projects associated with the 2014 VPA-HIP grant. The 2011 EA as supplemented assesses the potential environmental effects of the VPA-HIP project in Michigan. NRCS anticipates that only minor, short-term adverse effects will occur during project implementation as a result of using VPA-HIP funds to make wildlife habitat improvements as described in the document. In the long-term, early successional habitat will be improved and other benefits described in the 2011 Programmatic EA will be obtained.

The NRCS will accept comments on its intent to adopt the 2011 EA at the address below until January 8, 2015. A copy of the 2011 EA and the Supplement is available at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/ea>. NRCS will review comments and determine whether it is appropriate to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact or to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement before the action proceeds.

For further information concerning actions being taken by the NRCS, to obtain a hard copy of the 2011 EA, or to provide written comment, contact the NRCS National Environmental Coordinator by email at andree.duvarney@wdc.usda.gov or by mail at:

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