

## **The Southern Michigan Water Recharge Forest Legacy Area**

The Southern Michigan Recharge Area includes all the land in the municipalities listed in the table below.

**Table 6.** Local units of government included in the Southern Michigan Recharge Area.

### **Oakland County**

ADDISON TWP  
BRANDON TWP  
COMMERCE TWP  
GROVELAND TWP  
HIGHLAND TWP  
HOLLY TWP  
INDEPENDENCE TWP  
LYON TWP  
MILFORD TWP  
OAKLAND TWP  
ORION TWP  
OXFORD TWP  
ROSE TWP  
SOUTH LYON CITY  
SPRINGFIELD TWP  
WATERFORD TWP  
WHITE LAKE TWP

### **Livingston County**

BRIGHTON CITY  
BRIGHTON TWP  
GENOA TWP  
GREEN OAK TWP  
HAMBURG TWP  
HARTLAND TWP  
MARION TWP  
PUTNAM TWP  
UNADILLA TWP

### **Washtenaw County**

DEXTER TWP  
FREEDOM TWP  
LIMA TWP  
LYNDON TWP  
NORTHFIELD TWP  
SCIO TWP  
SHARON TWP  
BLACKMAN TWP  
SYLVAN TWP  
WEBSTER TWP

### **Lenawee County**

CAMBRIDGE TWP  
WOODSTOCK TWP

### **Jackson County**

BLACKMAN TOWNSHIP  
COLUMBIA TWP  
CONCORD TWP  
GRASS LAKE TWP  
HANOVER TWP  
HENRIETTA TWP  
JACKSON CITY  
LEONI TWP  
LIBERTY TWP  
NAPOLEON TWP  
NORVELL TWP  
PARMA TWP  
PULASKI TWP  
RIVES TWP  
SANDSTONE TWP  
SPRING ARBOR TWP  
SPRINGPORT TWP  
SUMMIT TWP  
TOMPKINS TWP  
WATERLOO TWP

This area is the smallest and least forested of the FLA's (**Map 18**). In addition to the ecologically important forests on public lands, there are many aesthetically important forests on private lands.

Almost the entire FLA is in an important recharge area, and many of Michigan's major rivers arise here, including the Grand, St. Joseph (Lake Michigan Drainage), Kalamazoo, Raisin, Huron, Shiawassee, Clinton, and Flint. The forests in this FLA are under the greatest pressure from development of any being proposed. The economy of Jackson County is dependent on forests and wildlands.

### **Public Benefits**

Forests on public lands are among the most critical for maintaining the biodiversity of this FLA, and the forests that remain in private ownership serve as important buffers to these public lands. Groundwater recharge areas are also among the forested areas that are being pressured for development, which is occurring faster here than anywhere in the State. Lands that are open to public access are less abundant here than elsewhere, and keeping or adding to the areas that are open for recreation or other traditional uses could be highly valuable. Some local and county governments are establishing their own land protection measures, but the cost of land and development rights is prohibitively high and the Forest Legacy Program would be of significant help as an additional way for private land owners to protect their forested lands.

The features of Southern Michigan Recharge Area forests that could benefit from the Forest Legacy Program include:

- Rare natural communities and rare and declining species
- Forest and wildland-dependent economies
- Groundwater recharge areas
- Scenic forests

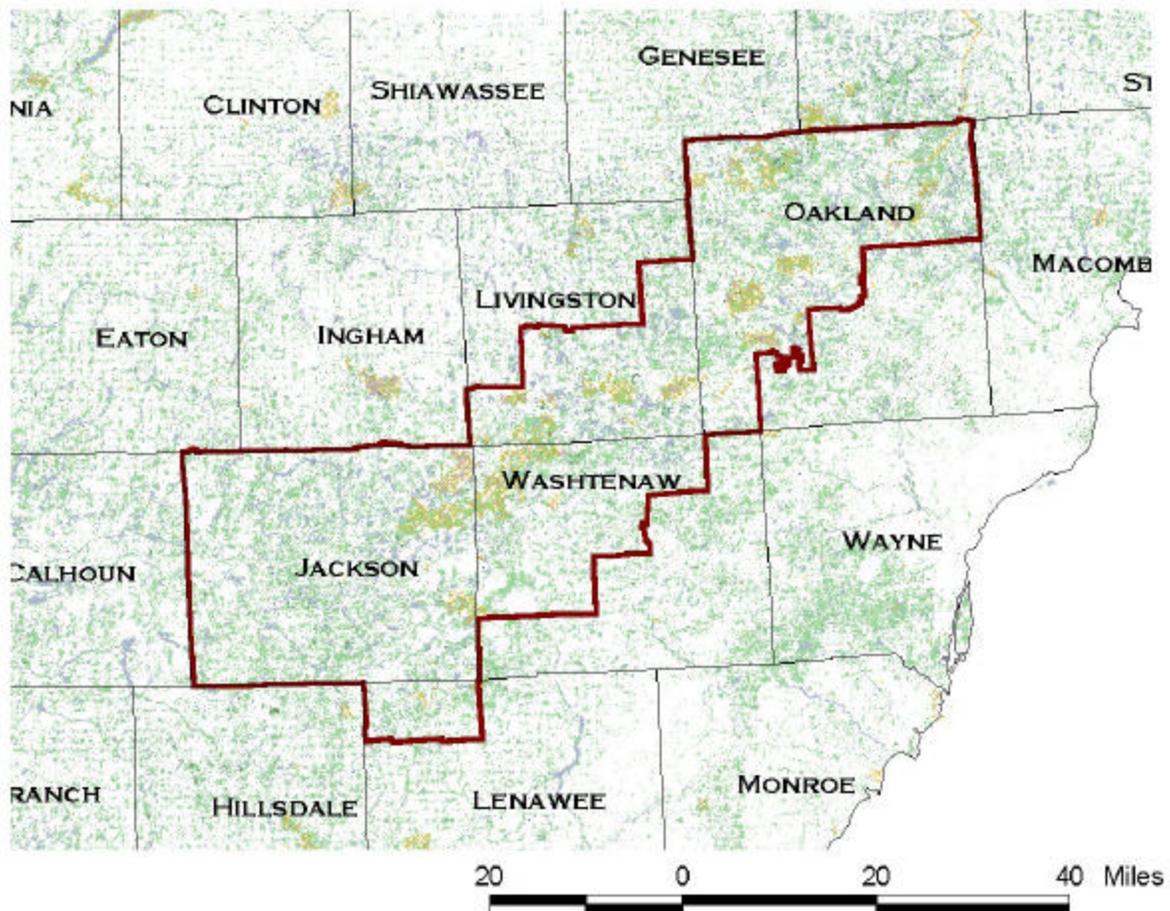
### **Analysis: Meeting Eligibility Criteria**

In order to qualify for inclusion in the Forest Legacy Program, an identified Forest Legacy Area must meet the Eligibility Criteria as established by the State in its Assessment of Need. In Michigan, the Eligibility Criteria are listed on pages 23 and 24 of this document.

The Southern Michigan Water Recharge Forest Legacy Area meets the Eligibility Criteria in the following ways:

1. The Southern Michigan Water Recharge Forest Legacy Area lies in the heart of the Detroit Metropolitan Area that contains over one-half of Michigan's ten million residents. Commercial and residential development is occurring at the most rapid rate than any other area of the State.

## Southern Michigan Recharge Area Proposed Forest Legacy Area



Map 18. Public ownership and forest cover types in the Southern Michigan Recharge Area proposed Forest Legacy Area.

2. The above will result in increased fragmentation of forestlands and a decrease in the amount of land available for traditional forest uses, public access, and protection of riparian corridors, as well as negatively impacting habitat for threatened and endangered species.
3. The Southern Michigan Water Recharge Forest Legacy Area contains a variety of publicly owned state and county park lands. The ability of these lands to maintain their quality of recreational and wildlife values becomes increasingly diminished with increasing conversion of adjacent private forestlands to commercial and residential development. Important public values provided by the Southwest Peninsula Legacy Area include:
  - a) **Wetlands, riparian areas, floodplains and/or areas of predominantly high groundwater recharge potential** - This FLA contains over 700 lakes and over 2000 miles of rivers and streams. Most of this water is adjacent to privately owned woodlands. Development pressure is highest on lands adjacent to water. Also, due to its surficial geologic characteristics, this FLA is important to the social and natural communities within and adjacent to this FLA as a source of recharge for groundwater aquifers. The Forest Legacy program can help aid in the protection of these surface and groundwater resources.
  - b) **Habitat for known rare, threatened and endangered species** - This FLA contains habitat for the state endangered bird known as the king rail. Other rare species include the cerulean warbler, Blanding's turtle and the eastern massasaugga rattlesnake. All of these species require forested landscape to survive and their habitat is threatened by the rate at which forested land is being converted to non-forest uses.
  - c) **Other ecological values** – This FLA contains an area defined as having a relatively high density of globally imperiled plants, animals and natural communities, such as the prairie fen.

## **Public Involvement and Concerns**

One meeting was held in this FLA in Dearborn, Michigan. No one attended this meeting and no concerns from the public were expressed regarding this FLA. Local governments within this FLA were contacted. However, no local units of government provided any comments regarding Michigan's AON.