

## News From Congressman John D. Dingell

*Serving Michigan's 15<sup>th</sup> Congressional District*

<http://www.house.gov/dingell/>

**Saturday, July 26, 2008**

**Contact:** Adam Benson, 202.225.4071 (office) / 202.271.8587 (cell)

NEWS RELEASE

# Plum Creek Joins Refuge

*Secretary Kempthorne joins Dingell, Kaptur, Cherry for Signing  
Event in Monroe*

*Monroe, MI* – Today, Plum Creek Bay was included in the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. In a signing ceremony at Monroe County Community College today with Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne, Congressman John D. Dingell (D-MI15), Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (D-OH09) and Michigan Lt. Governor John D. Cherry, Jr. (D), Plum Creek Bay was transferred from Monroe County to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Plum Creek Bay is comprised of 126 acres of unique coastal wetland habitat. This donation is particularly important when one considers that the region has lost over 90% of the native coastal wetlands. Plum Creek Bay also serves a unique role for migratory waterfowl, and over 40 species of fish use the bay for spawning and nursery grounds.

"As Secretary of the Interior, it is my great privilege to have responsibility for our country's national wildlife refuge system," said Secretary Kempthorne. "So it gives me great pleasure to accept Plum Creek Bay into the Detroit International Wildlife Refuge. The Department of the Interior is grateful for Michigan's generosity and we look forward to preserving this land so generations of Americans and Canadians will be able to enjoy it for years to come."

Congressman Dingell added: "The Plum Creek Bay site is precious – one of Michigan's great treasures. Now, we can be sure it will be protected for future generations. Secretary Kempthorne here in Michigan is recognition of just how important a moment this is. I want to thank him for coming. Also, this is a wonderful decision by the Monroe County Commissioners. Led by Commissioner Sisk, they have made a choice that citizens of Monroe County - and those who come from outside the county to hunt, fish, hike, and watch wildlife – will benefit from. I want to thank the other dignitaries here – Congresswoman Kaptur and Lieutenant Governor Cherry for being a part of this event."

Lt. Governor John D. Cherry, Jr. said: "Michigan is fortunate to be home to North America's first International Wildlife Refuge. Our natural resources, including the Great Lakes, have helped define who we are as a state and the collaboration that has made this refuge possible is an example of the ongoing commitment we have to this rich legacy."

On December 21, 2001, President Bush signed legislation authored by Congressman Dingell establishing the first International Wildlife Refuge in North America. The Refuge symbolizes the region's re-birth. The first of its kind in North America, in the first five years it has grown from 304 acres to now conserve 5,173 acres on the lower Detroit River and western shore of Lake Erie. Michigan Senators Carl Levin (D) and Debbie Stabenow (D) shepherded the bill through the Senate. Senator Levin was the bill's lead sponsor and would later work on legislation that transferred a former NIKE missile site on the southern tip of Grosse Ile from the Environmental Protection Agency to the Department of the Interior for inclusion in the Refuge.

The Refuge, which includes islands, coastal wetlands, marshes, shoals, and riverfront lands along 48 miles of the Detroit River and western Lake Erie, will protect and restore habitat for 29 species of waterfowl, 65 kinds of fish, and 300 species of migratory birds in Michigan and Ontario, Canada.

[www.house.gov/dingell](http://www.house.gov/dingell)

#