



News Release

Stephanie Millsap 734-692-7628

Next Grassy Island Forum to be Held March 9, 2006 in Wyandotte

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service invites the public to learn about the progress in efforts to clean up contaminants at Grassy Island at an information forum on Thursday, March 9, 2006, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Wyandotte Boat Club, 1 Pine Street, Wyandotte, Michigan.

Members of the public can view presentations summarizing a preliminary strategy for completing the investigative phase for addressing contaminant issues at Grassy Island. In January, local community groups held a public meeting to obtain a citizens' perspective on future uses for Grassy Island; the results of that visioning session will also be presented during the meeting. The public is encouraged to attend this meeting, as it provides an opportunity for people to learn more about the issues surrounding Grassy Island remediation and restoration efforts.

Grassy Island is located in the Detroit River, and originally was a large shoal area with a few low-lying islands. In 1959, 72 acres of this area were diked by the United States Army Corps of Engineers to create a disposal location for sediments dredged primarily from the Rouge River. There are 28 contaminants in the soil that exceed state and federal guidelines and criteria. Grassy Island is owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has been part of the National Wildlife Refuge System since 1961, and is now part of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. The Service is in the process of planning for the island's remediation and restoration.

This forum is a follow-up to an information session held in December 2005. A summary of that forum and other information about Grassy Island is available on the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/grassyisland>

This informational forum is being sponsored by the Detroit River Remedial Action Plan, Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, Friends of the Detroit River, Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Alliance, Wayne County, and the University of Michigan – Dearborn.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 544 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

- FWS -

*For more information about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
visit our home page at <http://www.fws.gov>*