

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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# News Release



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## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prescribed burn planned at Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge near Estral Beach Village

**GROSSE ILE, MICHIGAN** – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will conduct a prescribed burn this spring at the Strong Unit of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge near Estral Beach Village in Monroe County. Encompassing 266 acres, the prescribed burn is intended to reduce Phragmites (known as *Phragmites australis*), an invasive plant that creates poor wildlife habitat and can be a wildfire hazard. The prescribed fire will also reduce shrub growth in wet prairie where fire is a natural process that benefits this rare natural habitat.

Particular dates of the burn are dependent on appropriate weather and it will be conducted only if conditions are favorable. The fire will occur when the smoke will be directed in a path that limits potential exposure. The Region 3 of the USFWS annually treats approximately 70,000 acres of refuge lands with fire. Much planning and care are taken to craft a prescription for each controlled burn that is safe and achieves the desired objectives. Further, much communication and outreach is conducted with local cities, fire departments, townships, corporations, and other government agencies. USFWS works with the Estral Beach Volunteer Fire Department to provide notice to local residents and to manage vehicular traffic on Port Sunlight Road during the burn.

The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge manages over 2,000 acres of land along the Detroit River and western Lake Erie for fish and wildlife habitat ([www.fws.gov/refuge/Detroit\\_River](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Detroit_River)). Specific public uses are allowed on some lands such as wildlife observation/photography, hunting, and environmental education/interpretation. An additional 3,700 acres are cooperatively managed for habitat with partnering landowners. The purpose of the Refuge's prescribed fires are to enhance habitat, visitor use, and safety.

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