



Greening of Detroit Work Crew to Assist with Coastal Habitat Restoration at Refuge Gateway

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Detroit and Grosse Ile, Mich. – A Greening of Detroit work crew has been hired to assist with restoring coastal habitats at the Refuge Gateway and Humbug Marsh in Trenton and Gibraltar, Michigan, including planting trees in riparian and upland habitats, restoring wetlands, monitoring habitats, and constructing and maintaining trails. Four Greening of Detroit workers and a work crew leader will be employed for six months on this project for the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. The Greening of Detroit workers have received hands-on training and completed Landscape Industry Technician certification (as defined by Michigan Green Industry Association). The work crew leader, Penelope Richardson-Bristol, comes to this project with experience as a biological team leader at Wayne State University for a research project at Lake St. Clair Metropark and with research and monitoring experience at Eastern Michigan University on the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

This project is part of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative launched by President Obama to develop a 21st Century conservation and recreation agenda. America's Great Outdoors builds on our nation's long history of actions taken to conserve our natural heritage. This Initiative takes as its premise that lasting conservation solutions should rise from the American people. Working with the State of Michigan, the U.S. Department of Interior has identified engaging youth in Detroit River restoration as one of only two Michigan priorities under the America's Great Outdoors Initiative. This project is part of Michigan's America's Great Outdoors priority to engage youth in Detroit River restoration.

“A central focus of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative is to inspire and train the next generation of conservation leaders. Hiring these Greening of Detroit workers to restore habitat along the Detroit River demonstrates that we can positively affect young peoples' lives and help prepare them to compete in a 21st century economy,” notes Counselor to the Secretary for America's Great Outdoors Will Shafroth. “It is wonderful to celebrate the Detroit River as part of our natural heritage, and we applaud the contribution of these young people to its upkeep.”

The work being undertaken by Greening of Detroit workers is part of a larger effort to cleanup and restore a 44-acre industrial brownfield site into the future home of the visitor center for North America's only international wildlife refuge. Funding for this restoration work comes from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfield Cleanup Program through Downriver Community Conference's Brownfield Consortium, and the U.S. Forest Service. Upon completion of this work in 2012, all required site cleanup and restoration will be finished in preparation for the Refuge's visitor center. This

cleanup and restoration effort at the Refuge Gateway has been described as transformational for the southeast Michigan region by restoring an industrial brownfield into high quality wildlife habitat that expands the ecological buffer for Michigan's only "Wetland of International Importance" identified under the international Ramsar Convention – Humbug Marsh.

"We are so proud to be a national leader in partnerships for conservation through the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge," notes Congressman John D. Dingell. "Being identified as a national priority under the America's Great Outdoors Initiative validates all the fine work the partners have been doing to restore the Detroit River for present and future generations."

"It is indeed an honor for the Greening of Detroit to work with President Obama, Secretary of Interior Salazar, the State of Michigan, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and others to help restore the Detroit River and to provide jobs for our young people," notes Rebecca Salminen Witt, President of Greening of Detroit. "These green jobs are an important part of our region's strategy to conserve our natural capital, enhance quality of life, and provide sustainable employment in the world-class metropolitan area."

For more information on America's Great Outdoors, visit:
<http://americasgreatoutdoors.gov/>.

The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge incorporates more than 5,700 acres along 48 miles of the lower Detroit River and western Lake Erie. The Refuge focuses on conserving, protecting, and restoring habitat for 29 species of waterfowl, 23 species of raptors, 31 species of shorebirds, over 100 species of fish, and over 300 species of birds. It is the first international refuge in North America and one of the few urban ones in the nation. Unique habitats being managed within the Refuge include islands, coastal wetlands, marshes, shoals, and riparian waterfront lands. Visit www.fws.gov/midwest/DetroitRiver for additional information.

About the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is "working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people." For more information on the Service, visit www.fws.gov.

About The Greening of Detroit: The mission of the Greening of Detroit is to guide and inspire others to create a "greener" Detroit through planting and educational programs environmental leadership, advocacy, and by building community capacity.

For more Informaion:

Dr. John Hartig
Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge
(734) 692-7608
john_hartig@fws.gov

Monica Tabares
The Greening of Detroit
(313) 285-1246
monica@greeningofdetroit.com

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