



For Immediate Release: December 2, 2009

Daylighting and Wetland Restoration at Refuge Gateway Creates Win-Win Situation for the Environment and Economy

Trenton, Michigan – This fall the Monguagon Daylighting and Wetland Restoration project was completed at Wayne County’s Refuge Gateway in Trenton, recreating six acres of wetlands in an area that has lost 97% of its coastal wetlands to development. This project will improve the quality of urban stormwater entering the Detroit River through creation of a stormwater treatment basin and prairie wetland that naturally filter stormwater, restoring the natural hydrology of the site. Additional benefits include wildlife habitat creation and opportunities for hands-on environmental education and natural resource interpretation.

This \$750,000 project was funded in partnership by Wayne County, Clean Michigan Initiative of Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Cleanup grant awarded to Downriver Community Conference, Metropolitan Affairs Coalition, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In addition to its ecological benefits, this project catalyzed work in the region’s architecture, engineering, and construction industries, including the creation of 10 jobs at Glencorp Inc, the primary construction contractor, for individuals previously out of work.

“The Monguagon Daylighting and Wetland Restoration project at the Refuge Gateway is best described as transformational for our region,” notes Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano. “This project is literally transforming the Downriver area by cleaning up a brownfield site, restoring wetlands, treating stormwater, furthering environmental education, and leading by example in public-private partnerships for meeting the 21st Century’s sustainability challenge.”

“I would like to personally thank Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano, Wayne County Commissioner Joseph Palamara, the Commission as a whole, and Wayne County Parks for their leadership on this project which delivered these truly remarkable results. For those seeing this dramatic change for the first time, it is difficult to imagine this revitalized site as it was only a few months ago,” said Congressman John Dingell. “Furthermore, the County’s partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. EPA, and other local agencies on this project resulted in the creation of nearly a dozen jobs and is a perfect example of the ability of conservation projects to serve as another source of green jobs in our state. I am looking forward to many more of these announcements in the future as we continue to build this Refuge along the Detroit River.”

The 44-acre Refuge Gateway in Trenton, Michigan is the future home of the headquarters for the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge and its Visitor Center, and is the entry point for

over for over six million residents in the region to access North America’s only international wildlife refuge. The Refuge Gateway is being transformed from a former industrial brownfield to a world-class center for conservation, environmental education, and sustainability. Future tenants in the Visitor Center include: Wayne County Parks, Wayne County Community College, Detroit Audubon, Friends of the Detroit River, Michigan Sea Grant, International Wildlife Refuge Alliance, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge covers 48 miles of shoreline along the Detroit River and western Lake Erie (www.fws.gov/midwest/detroitriver/). The Refuge focuses on conserving, protecting and restoring habitat for 30 species of waterfowl, 117 kinds of fish, and 300 species of birds. The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge is the first international refuge in North America. Unique habitats being managed within the Refuge include islands, coastal wetlands, marshes, shoals and riverfront lands.

For more information, contact Steve Alman of Wayne County Parks (734-261-4312) or John Hartig (734-692-7608) or Rebecca Robinson (734-692-7672) of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

DISCOVER OUR WILD SIDE



REFUGE GATEWAY, before wetland restoration



REFUGE GATEWAY, after wetland restoration