



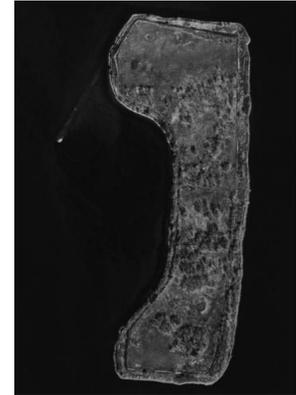
Frequently Asked Questions

Where is Grassy Island?

Grassy Island is located in the Detroit River, approximately 10 miles downstream from downtown Detroit, just east of the City of Wyandotte, west of Fighting Island (Ontario, Canada), and north of Grosse Ile.

How did it become contaminated and what is the extent?

Originally, Grassy Island was a large shoal area with a few low-lying islands. The U.S. Army Corps' of Engineers (USACE) built dikes around 72 acres of this area to create a disposal location for sediments dredged primarily from the Rouge River. From 1959 through 1987, the USACE disposed of over three million cubic yards of dredged sediments on Grassy Island. There are 28 contaminants in the soil that exceed state and federal guidelines and criteria, including heavy metals (e.g. mercury and lead), polychlorinated biphenyls, and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (e.g. oil and grease components).



What is the role of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Grassy Island is owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), has been part of our Refuge system since 1961, and is now part of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge (DRIWR). As the island's owner, the Service is authorized to be the lead agency for conducting investigations and response activities. The Service is also responsible for making final clean up decisions with Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) concurrence.

The Service is committed to meeting our cleanup responsibilities in a manner that results in Grassy Island meeting some DRIWR purpose and broad goals. These DRIWR goals include providing quality habitat that does not pose adverse risks from contaminants to wildlife, and providing wildlife dependent recreational opportunities to the public. These goals will be incorporated into clean up decisions where feasible.

The Service has forged partnerships with other government agencies including the USACE, MDEQ, U.S. Geological Survey, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Scientists and engineers from these agencies have been providing technical assistance to the Service. The Service has also been working with local community groups to help keep members of the public informed about the site's progress and receive input from them about the site and what the public views as the range of its potential future uses.

What is the current status of the site?

The Service is using the Superfund framework, established by the EPA, for cleaning up hazardous waste sites to address the contaminants on Grassy Island. The Service completed a Preliminary Assessment/Site Inspection (PA/SI), and is starting a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study. You can read more about the Superfund process at the following website: <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/action/process/sfproces.htm>

What is a Remedial Investigation?

Remedial Investigations (RI) characterize the types and amounts of contaminants present, ways in which contaminants could potentially leave the site, and the potential risks to human health and the environment from them. The extent of a Remedial Investigation varies depending on the complexity of the site and the amount of information already available. Most take two years to complete if everything runs smoothly and the RI is not interrupted.

What is a Feasibility Study?

Feasibility Studies (FS) evaluate available options to reduce risks at the site. The RI and FS are conducted concurrently — data collected in the RI influence the development of remedial alternatives in the FS, which in turn affect the data needs and scope of additional field investigations. The FS Report will present remedial response objectives for the site, identify potential remedial alternatives (cleanup options), evaluate and compare the alternatives, and recommend a remedial alternative for the site. Decisions regarding management options cannot be made until the RI and FS are completed.

Once the RI/FS work is complete, how will you tell community members what the results are?

After the investigations are complete, we will hold a public meeting to summarize the results. In addition, final reports will be available at the Bacon Memorial Library on 45 Vinewood Street in Wyandotte.

How are these activities being funded?

Congress appropriated one million dollars for the Service to further characterize contaminants on and around Grassy Island as well as to design future restoration activities.

Will there be any public meetings?

Yes. The Service has been holding, and will continue to hold, public meetings as work on the site progresses. We held the first Grassy Island Forum on December 1, 2005 and used it to create a list of short term actions needed to fill data gaps and complete necessary investigations. We will hold future meetings to report our progress on those action items and overall progress on Grassy Island.

Where can I get more information?

The easiest way to find more information is via the internet: www.fws.gov/midwest/grassyisland. The website contains detailed information about the island, reports, and upcoming meetings. Stephanie Millsap, the project manager, can also answer your questions about the site. She is available by phone (734-692-7628) or email (stephanie_millsap@fws.gov).