

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Large Lakes Research Station  
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# News Release



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## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Grosse Ile Township to Host a Sugar Island Public Forum on Monday, June 18<sup>th</sup>

GROSSE ILE, MICH. – On Monday, June 18, 2012 at 7 PM, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Grosse Ile Township will host a Sugar Island Public Forum at the Grosse Ile Centennial Farm (25795 Third Street, Grosse Ile, MI 48138). The purpose of this public forum is to:

- Communicate the current position on public use of Sugar Island of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System;
- Take public comments on this issue; and
- Share information on the process of developing a Visitor Services Plan for the Refuge, including an upcoming special workshop/meeting to further discuss public use on Sugar Island.

Sugar Island, a 30-acre, uninhabited island located in Grosse Ile Township at the mouth of the Detroit River, was purchased with federal funds for conservation of fish and wildlife habitats, and it is now protected in perpetuity as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Sugar Island is part of a “conservation crescent” surrounding the southern end of Grosse Ile. Other unique Refuge units within the “conservation crescent” include: Gibraltar Bay Unit, Calf Island Unit, Humbug Marsh Unit, and Lake Erie Metropark Unit. These unique habitats serve as important stopover habitat for migratory birds and important spawning and nursery habitat for fishes.

It is the policy of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that all refuge lands are officially “closed” until a Visitor Services Plan has been completed by Refuge staff. The Plan, currently under development, will provide the direction necessary for the management of compatible public uses on Refuge lands. At this time, the Service has made a determination that Sugar Island will be closed to public use, with the exception of hunting, to protect wildlife and to eliminate public

safety issues. The Service will also offer opportunities for research and environmental education on the island under special use permits. Sugar Island includes all lands to the water's edge. Public use regulations will be enforced on this entire area.

The Detroit International Wildlife Refuge covers 48 miles of shoreline along the lower Detroit River and western basin of Lake Erie. It stretches from southwest Detroit to the Ohio-Michigan border. The Refuge focuses on conserving, protecting, and restoring habitat for 300 species of birds, including 30 species of waterfowl, 23 species of raptors, and 31 species of shorebirds, and for 117 species of fish.

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. Grosse Ile Township is a 10.5 square mile community made up of 15 islands at the mouth of the Detroit River as it enters western Lake Erie.

For more information, contact: Jamie Lanier, Refuge Visitor Services Manager (734-692-7649; [jamie\\_lanier@fws.gov](mailto:jamie_lanier@fws.gov)), or Grosse Ile Township Supervisor Brian Loftus (734-676-4422, ext. 215; [brianl@grosseile.com](mailto:brianl@grosseile.com))

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