

Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
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News Release



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SEASONAL CLOSURES SCHEDULED FOR SUGAR ISLAND AFTER LABOR DAY

GROSSE ILE, MICHIGAN – Sugar Island, a 30-acre, uninhabited island located in Grosse Ile Township at the mouth of the Detroit River will close to public use for the season after Labor Day.

The island, purchased in 2012 with federal funds for conservation of fish and wildlife habitat by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, was opened for public use on its west beach prior to Memorial Day after a Compatibility Determination regarding the proposal for additional public use of the island was approved by Service officials.

The new regulations sanctioned general beach use of the island, including wildlife observation, photography, picnicking, sunbathing, and other family-oriented beach activities, such as volleyball during daylight hours. Fires, alcohol, camping, glass containers, fireworks, public access to concrete piers, staging for scuba diving, unleashed pets, and access to the uplands are prohibited.

According to Federal Wildlife Officer, Logan Cannon, the season went well. "We are really pleased with the positive response we received from the public," explained Officer Cannon. "Overall, public use on the island was responsible, and no major law enforcement violations were reported."

Grosse Ile Police Department is in agreement. "There were few issues with public use on Sugar Island over the summer," noted Grosse Ile Township Police Chief Joseph Porcareilli. "The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service public use rules for Sugar Island were a win-win for all."

The island will be reopened to the public the Saturday before Memorial Day 2014.

The Refuge incorporates nearly 5,800 acres along 48 miles of the lower Detroit River and western Lake Erie. The Refuge focuses on conserving, protecting, and restoring habitat for a broad range of native fish and wildlife and their habitats. It is the first international refuge in North America and one of few urban refuges in the nation. Unique habitats being managed within the Refuge includes islands, shoals, coastal wetlands, wet prairies, and forests.

For more information, contact Refuge Manager John Hartig (734.692.7608) or Assistant Refuge Manager Steve Dushane (734-692-7604).

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