

# News Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:**

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**Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center Environmental Assessment  
Open for Public Comment Through September 7, 2012**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is making available for public review and comment an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the construction of a new visitor center at the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. The EA evaluated the *No Action Alternative*, in which case the refuge administrative offices would continue to be housed in the Large Lakes Research Station on Grosse Ile, Mich. that has no public facilities for environmental education, outreach or interpretation, as well as the *Preferred Alternative* that constructs a new visitor center at the Refuge Gateway in Trenton, Mich. and another option of a visitor center in Humbug Marsh in Trenton, Mich.

The proposed new visitor center at the Refuge Gateway would be approximately 12,000 square feet and would include space for a lobby, information desk, interpretive exhibits, a multipurpose room that could be divided into two educational classrooms. The space could also include a refuge bookstore, an indoor wildlife viewing room, public restrooms and a large outdoor wildlife-viewing patio overlooking the islands of the lower Detroit River. The building would incorporate sustainable design concepts using energy-efficient systems for passive solar heating, cooling and natural lighting. It is also recommended that sustainable building materials and features be incorporated sufficient for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification.

The Refuge Gateway is located adjacent to the Refuge's 410-acre Humbug Marsh Unit. Humbug Marsh is Michigan's only *Wetland of International Importance* designated under the international Ramsar Convention. It represents the last mile of natural shoreline on the U.S. mainland of the Detroit River and supports great biodiversity including: 51 species of fish, 90 species of plants, 154 species of birds, seven species of reptiles and amphibians, and 37 species of dragonflies and damselflies.

Because public participation is very important to the success of the project, the Service encourages your review and comments on the EA. The EA will be on public review for 30 days,

with comments accepted through **September 7, 2012**. The document is available electronically for review and comment online by visiting [http://www.fws.gov/midwest/planning/detroitriver/EA/Visitor\\_Center\\_EA-July19\\_final\\_draft.pdf](http://www.fws.gov/midwest/planning/detroitriver/EA/Visitor_Center_EA-July19_final_draft.pdf).

A hard copy of the document will also be available for review at the following locations:

- The Refuge Office (9311 Groh Road, Grosse Ile, MI 48138; 734.692.7600)
- The Dorsch Library (18 East First Street, Monroe, MI 48161; 734.241.7878)
- The Trenton Veterans Memorial Library (2790 Westfield, Trenton, MI 48183; 734.676.9777).

Comments also may be sent to the Refuge Manager at the address below:

Dr. John Hartig, Refuge Manager  
Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge  
9311 Groh Road  
Grosse Ile, MI 48138

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.

For more information on the Midwest Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service visit <http://midwest.fws.gov>.

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