



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release: April 26, 2011

Sacred Land Restoration Ceremony to be Held at Refuge Gateway in Trenton

Trenton and Gibraltar, Michigan – The Wyandot of Anderdon, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wayne County Parks, and the International Wildlife Refuge Alliance will be hosting a Sacred Land Restoration Ceremony on Wednesday, May 4, 2011 at the Refuge Gateway in Trenton, Michigan. This ceremony, led by the Wyandot of Anderdon, will include a blessing of the wetlands and uplands being restored at the Refuge Gateway. Over 200 high school students from Southgate Anderson High School, Gibraltar Carlson High School, and Trenton High School, and chaperones, will be participating in this ceremony and learning opportunity.

The ceremony will begin at noon on May 4th. Immediately following the Sacred Land Restoration Ceremony, the high school students will be guided in groups through five learning stations, including: the history of the Wyandot of Anderdon Nation, the industrial history of the Refuge Gateway, the Monguagon wetland system restoration, ongoing Refuge Gateway shoreline restoration, and the wildlife habitat at the Refuge Gateway.

The Wyandots, the earliest residents in this area, used Gibraltar as the “Head Village.” This area was also the headquarters of the Council House and the International Council Fires. The Wyandot were identified as a leading tribe in the Northwest Territory, therefore the Great Council of the Confederacy was also held at these lands. As this area became inhabited by other Native American Tribes of the Northwest, the Wyandot were looked to for advice and leadership. When the Native American tribes came together for council to discuss social and political issues, the Wyandot often hosted and presided over these councils, considered by all the “Keepers of the Council Fire.”

The Wyandot have lived for centuries on the waterfronts of the Detroit, Ecorse, Rouge, and Huron rivers, and the River Raisin, as well as the islands of the Detroit River and Lake Erie in the U.S. and Canada. In 1982, the Wyandot of Anderdon Nation remained in Michigan and Canada, maintaining political and social organization as a tribe. The mission of the tribe is to reinforce the commitment in a new generation to bring the Wyandot of Anderdon to a place where Culture of the Wyandot is important in the continuity of community.

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.

The International Wildlife Refuge Alliance is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to support the first international wildlife refuge in North America by working through partnerships to protect, conserve, and manage the refuge's wildlife and habitats, and to create exceptional conservation, recreational, and educational experiences to develop the next generation of conservation stewards.

Getting There:

Detroit River IWR directions:

Parking will be available at the Refuge Gateway at 5437 West Jefferson, Trenton, MI 48183. It is located between the intersections of Vreeland and Van Horn Road on the east side of West Jefferson. Turn in the gate and follow the gravel road to a grass parking area. The property is enclosed by a chain link fence and is directly south of a Solutia plant.

For more information, please contact Jane Nawrocki of the Wyandot of Anderdon (734-377-6682; jjp3308@wowway.com), John Hartig of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (734-692-7608; john_hartig@fws.gov), Allison Krueger or the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge (734-692-7672; krueger.ali@gmail.com), or Katharine Nemeth (734-558-4468; katharinenemeth@gmail.com), .