

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge
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News Release



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DETROIT RIVER INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE CELEBRATES 2011 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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GROSSE ILE, MICHIGAN – Today, the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge releases its annual report that highlights significant accomplishments that: conserve fish, wildlife, and habitats; foster a stewardship ethic; improve quality of life; build partnerships; and help develop the next generation of conservationists. Major highlights from 2011 include:

- Donating of over 8,000 hours of volunteer time in support of the Refuge;
- Hosting 37 Refuge outreach events and 19 Refuge open houses;
- Controlling invasive *Phragmites* on 175 acres of Refuge lands;
- Involving over 2,000 students in World Wetlands Day at Gibraltar Carlson High School;
- Adding 58 acres of new land to the Refuge; and
- Completing over \$1.1 million of brownfield cleanup and shoreline habitat restoration work at the Wayne County's Refuge Gateway - the future home of the Refuge's Visitor Center.

The complete annual report is available online at:

http://www.fws.gov/midwest/detroitriver/documents/DRIWR_AnnualReport2011.pdf

“This 2011 annual report clearly captures another amazing year of accomplishments for our Refuge and highlights how the Refuge is creating meaningful, close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities

through a new model for conservation – one that emphasizes public-private partnerships for conservation,” notes Congressman John D. Dingell.

Partners and friends of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge will celebrate these many accomplishments of 2011 with an annual benefit dinner on Saturday, May 5th from 4:00 to 9:00 pm on Fighting Island in LaSalle, Ontario. New this year, a U.S. departure for annual benefit attendees will be available from the BASF Wyandotte facility. The benefit dinner will also include the presentation of the ‘John D. Dingell Friend of the Refuge Awards,’ silent and live auctions, and live music. Tickets are still available and can be purchased at www.iwralliance.org.

International Wildlife Refuge Chairman, Richard Micka is eagerly anticipating this year’s benefit dinner. “The Refuge continues to make tremendous strides in restoring habitats and creating world-class recreational and educational opportunities for our region’s residents and visitors,” he mused. “It is so heartening to celebrate these accomplishments and see the support for the Refuge grow.”

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, 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 the Refuge’s friends group and a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization. The Alliance’s 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.

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