

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



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SERVICE TO HOST SUGAR ISLAND PUBLIC USE WORKSHOP ON SEPTEMBER 25TH

GROSSE ILE, MICHIGAN – On Tuesday, September 25, 2012 at 7:00 pm, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will host a Sugar Island Public Use Workshop at the Grosse Ile Middle School (23270 East River Road, Grosse Ile, MI 48138). The Service committed to this workshop at a June 18th Sugar Island Public Forum. The purpose of the workshop will be to obtain public input for a potential “win-win” situation for Sugar Island where wildlife and habitats are protected and some responsible public use of the two beaches is allowed.

Sugar Island is a 30-acre, uninhabited island located in Grosse Ile Township at the mouth of the Detroit River that was purchased earlier this year with federal funds for conservation of fish and wildlife habitats. Sugar Island is also 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.

“Sugar Island is now protected from development as part of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge and the National Wildlife Refuge System,” notes Refuge Manager John Hartig. “The Service is looking forward to getting public input through the September 25th workshop on what could be done to protect wildlife and habitats, while offering responsible public use of the beaches.”

The September 25th workshop will review Service policy for public use on Refuge lands and use facilitated breakout sessions to obtain public input on:

- What could be done to ensure protection of wildlife and habitats on Sugar Island consistent with the “wildlife first” priority of the National Wildlife Refuge System?
- What could be done to assist with enforcement of laws and regulations on Sugar Island?
- What could be done to assist with island stewardship and beach cleanups?
- What other issues should be addressed?

The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge requests that anyone interested in attending this workshop please **register in advance** by contacting the Refuge headquarters at 734-365-0219 and leaving a message or by email at DetroitRiver@fws.gov. All registrations will be confirmed within three business days. Questions or concerns regarding the upcoming workshop may be directed to Jamie Lanier, Visitor Services Manager, at 734-692-7649.

The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge incorporates more than 5,700 acres along 48 miles of the lower Detroit River and western 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 Service is both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation. Visit www.fws.gov to learn more.

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