

M·N·R·G



Midwest Natural  
Resources Group

# ***Detroit/St. Clair River Corridor Focus Area***



## **Background**

The Detroit River/St. Clair River corridor is the part of the connecting channel system in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway which includes the St. Clair River, the Detroit River, Lake St. Clair, and a large land mass in Michigan and Canada within the affected watersheds. The Detroit metropolitan area supports a population of 5.1 million people representing a diverse mix of cultures and socio-economic status. Due to its close proximity to the metropolitan area, the river system and Lake St. Clair are highly utilized for fishing, recreation, and as an international shipping corridor. On July 30, 1998, President Clinton designated the Detroit River one of 14 American Heritage Rivers, recognizing it as an economic, cultural and natural resource, and pledged the support of all federal agencies.

Since the settlement of Detroit in 1701, the area has been a prominent industrial center, placing high stress on the natural environment. The Michigan portion of the corridor has five major rivers designated as Areas of Concern under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, two of which are binational. Numerous impaired uses have been identified on these rivers and the environment of the entire area continues to suffer. Based on a survey that was conducted by involved federal agencies, the problems include: high levels of toxic industrial releases to the land, air and water; over development and poor land use planning; loss of fish and wildlife habitat; contaminated sediments; invasive exotic species; lack of greenways and public access; contaminated Brownfield sites; and cumulative impacts of shoreline development.

## **Activities**

Detroit American Heritage River, Four Agency Letter of Commitment for binational Areas of Concern and Lake St. Clair, Detroit River candidate site for habitat protection and remediation, Development of corridor-wide biodiversity atlas, acquisition and protection of critical habitat in U.S. and Canada.

## **Partners**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, American Heritage Rivers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Geological Survey, National Park Service, U.S. Coast Guard, Walpole Island First Nation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Great Lakes Commission, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, Local Governments, the Canadian Governments, Grasse Ile Land Conservancy, environmental organizations, business, industry and private citizens.

## **For More Information**

Laura Lodisio, Focus Area Team Leader  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Chicago, Illinois  
Phone: 312/886-7090

## **On-The-Ground Projects**

- Belle Isle transportation and environmental enhancement projects
- Improved, more efficient, alternative transportation
- Habitat restoration and preservation
- Soft shoreline engineering
- Recreational opportunities
- Alternative storm water management
- Native landscape restoration
- Development of an International Wildlife Refuge Area on lower Detroit River