



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release: August 19, 2008

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers – Local 17, DTE Energy, City of Gibraltar, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and International Wildlife Refuge Alliance Partner to Construct a Bald Eagle Platform on Humbug Island

Gibraltar, Michigan –International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers – Local 17, DTE Energy, City of Gibraltar, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the International Wildlife Refuge Alliance are constructing a bald eagle platform of the south end of Humbug Island in an effort to protect and enhance bald eagle habitat in the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

On Thursday, August 21st bald eagle expert Dave Best of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will climb a utility pole placed strategically on Humbug Island, construct the bald eagle nesting platform, and seed the nest with 3-4 foot sticks. It is hoped that bald eagles will nest at Humbug Marsh next spring, but sometimes it takes longer to be successful. A press conference will be held Thursday at 11 AM at the wildlife observation deck of Humbug Marsh, during the bald eagle platform construction.

DTE Energy donated the 85-foot cedar utility pole and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers – Local 17 and the City of Gibraltar floated the pole from DTE Energy's Trenton Channel Power Plant to the south end of Humbug Island where it was erected by Local 17 workers. The utility pole is located on the southwest side of Humbug Island just south of some old growth forest habitat. This location was chosen because it is least impacted by human fishing activity, is not in the middle of the old growth area so as not to impact it, is facing inward toward the marsh that is a source of fish for the eagles to eat, and is in sight of the spotting scopes located on the wildlife observation deck on the mainland of Humbug Marsh.

Bald eagles have made an amazing recovery throughout the United States, including Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. At least seven active bald eagle nests are known to exist in the watershed of the Detroit River and western Lake Erie. On June 28,

2007 the bald eagle was removed from the federal list of threatened and endangered species in the United States.

"The bald eagle has truly made a remarkable recovery. I am proud that we are enhancing its habitat within the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge," said Congressman John D. Dingell. "This nest will provide a world class wildlife observation experience for thousands of children who will come to Humbug Marsh each year to learn conservation and have fun outdoors."

The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge covers 48 miles of shoreline along the Detroit River and western Lake Erie (<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/detroitriver/>). The Refuge focuses on conserving, protecting and restoring habitat for 29 species of waterfowl, 65 kinds of fish, and 300 species of migratory birds. The Detroit River International Refuge is the first international refuge in North America. Unique habitats being managed within the Refuge include islands, coastal wetlands, marshes, shoals and riverfront lands.

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.

For more information, contact John Hartig (734-692-7608) or Becca Sowder (734-692-7672) of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

DIRECTIONS: From I-75 either going north or south, exit at West Road heading east toward Trenton. Take West Road east for approximately three miles through Trenton to Jefferson Avenue (the main road along the Detroit River). Turn right on Jefferson Avenue and head south. You will first jog around Wayne County's Elizabeth Park and then pass the Trenton Channel Power Plant and Solutia (both on the east side of Jefferson Ave.). Immediately south of Solutia is the Refuge Gateway with a sign on the fence stating the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Center. Immediately, south of the Refuge Gateway is the north gate to Humbug Marsh. Limited parking is available along Jefferson Avenue in front of the north gate. Additional parking is available in the Knights of Columbus Hall across the street.

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