



News Release

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Next Grassy Island Forum to be Held October 12, 2006 in Wyandotte



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the International Wildlife Refuge Alliance invites the public to learn about progress in efforts to clean up contaminants at Grassy Island at an information forum on Thursday, October 12, 2006, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The forum will take place at Wyandotte Boat Club, 1 Pine Street, Wyandotte, Michigan.

Members of the public can view presentations that outline completed studies and the ongoing investigation of contaminant issues at Grassy Island. Representatives from the Service, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan Department of Community Health, and others will present the information.

Grassy Island is located in the Detroit River, and originally was a large shoal area with a few low-lying islands. In 1959, 72 acres of this area were diked by the United States Army Corps of Engineers to create a disposal location for sediments dredged primarily from the Rouge River. There are 28 contaminants in the soil that exceed state and federal guidelines and criteria. Grassy Island is owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has been part of the National Wildlife Refuge System since 1961, and is now part of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. The Service is in the process of planning for the island's clean up, so that contaminants don't pose adverse risks to wildlife or human visitors.

This forum is a follow-up to an information session held in March, during which a preliminary strategy for completing the investigative phase was presented. A summary of that forum and other information about Grassy Island is available on the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/grassyisland>

This informational forum is being sponsored by the International Wildlife Refuge Alliance.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 544 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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