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Kresge Foundation Awards Grant to Wayne County Parks for Green Design of Refuge Gateway

Wayne County Parks has been awarded a \$50,000 Kresge Foundation "Green Building Initiative" Planning Grant toward the design of a "green building" that will be located at the gateway to the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. Wayne County owns the Refuge Gateway site-44 acres of Detroit River waterfront property located in Trenton—that is being developed into a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)- Certified visitor center.

The Kresge Foundation Grant will be combined in an earlier DTE Energy Foundation Grant to design a LEED-certified visitor center. The Kresge Foundation grant will facilitate LEED seminars, design charrettes, and energy modeling specific to the visitor center. These forums will help develop interest in, and foster LEED certified design and construction methods. Further, this will spurn the development of an accredited pool of LEED-certified professionals within Wayne County for subsequent phases of design and construction of the Refuge Gateway.

"Wayne County is proud of providing leadership in designing and building a visitor center that promotes sustainability," said Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano. "Wayne County businesses have long been a leader in sustainability and this Refuge Gateway project will now showcase sustainability in a major public venue."

Future tenants for this "green" visitor center include Wayne County Parks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, International Wildlife Refuge Alliance, Friends of the Detroit River, Wayne County Community College, Detroit Audubon Society, Michigan Sea Grant, and possibly more. Other amenities at the Refuge Gateway will include a fishing pier and boat dock for a ship dedicated to environmental education, wildlife observation deck, outdoor classroom, canoe/kayak landing, and trails into Humbug Marsh-the last mile of a natural shoreline on the U.S. mainland of the Detroit River. A "green building" is an environmentally sustainable facility. These buildings are considered environmentally responsible, profitable and healthy places to live, work, and recreate.

"This "green" visitor center will be an outstanding example of sustainability that will showcase unique technologies and practices for sustainability," notes Congressman John Dingell. "We are rapidly gaining an international reputation for public/private partnerships for conservation, close to home recreation and sustainability."

This Kresge Foundation grant will be administered by the Wayne County Parks Division, with input from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and International Wildlife Refuge stakeholders.

For information about this release contact John Hartig of the Detroit International Wildlife Refuge at 734-692-7608 or Beth Mabry of Wayne County Parks at 734-261-1990.

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