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## NEWS RELEASE

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### Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority partners with Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge to manage unique habitats

Brownstown, MI – The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (Metroparks) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announce a cooperative management agreement that brings 780 acres of unique wetlands and upland habitats at Lake Erie Metropark into the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. Located at the mouth of the Detroit River as it enters Lake Erie, and identified as a “unique habitat area” in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, the area is part of one of the top 20 Biodiversity Investment Areas in the Great Lakes.

One of the top birdwatching sites in the Great Lakes Region, and one of the premier locations in North America to watch hawks, Lake Erie Metropark is well recognized for its Marshlands Museum and Nature Center, a 200-acre nature study area, and its annual Hawkfest that attracts thousands of birders and naturalists.

"For those of us who love this Refuge project one of the most gratifying elements is seeing groups that don't normally work together unified by the common cause of protecting the land and those creatures that inhabit it," said Congressman John D. Dingell. "I am so pleased to see Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority teaming up with Fish and Wildlife to make this happen. These partnerships are truly making a difference in reconnecting people with nature, enhancing

outdoor recreation, improving our economy and quality of life, and providing exceptional experiences that help develop the next generation of conservationists."

"This is an exciting opportunity for us to partner with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to further conservation and outdoor recreational opportunities like fishing, environmental education, wildlife photography, wildlife observation, and wildlife interpretation," said James Bresciami, director, Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority. "We are pleased to become part of this international conservation effort that champions outdoor recreation."

As part of the partnership, the Huron-Clinton Metroparks and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will work together to manage the wetlands and unique habitats within the park's property. Future projects will include making Lake Erie Metropark the premier birding site on the regional bird driving tour under development, partnering on controlling exotic species like *Phragmites*, and collaborating on environmental education and other outdoor recreational opportunities. The defined property includes most of the park's eastern shoreline and connecting wetlands, and nature study area.

The HCMA is dedicated to providing outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities at 13 Metroparks in southeast Michigan. The mission of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is to work 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 Mr. Paul Muelle, Chief of Natural Resources at Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (810-227-2757, ext. 5152) or Dr. John Hartig, Refuge Manager of Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge (734-692-7608).

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