



**FOR RELEASE ON AUGUST 28, 2008**

## **PADDLE BY YOUR REFUGE MOVES TO LAKE ERIE METROPARK**

**Grosse Ile, MI** – The Fourth Annual Paddle By Your Refuge event will be held at Lake Erie Metropark in Brownstown, MI from 9 am to 1 pm on Sunday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

This popular kayaking event gets people out on the water to enjoy the natural beauty of Lake Erie Metropark and Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. Professional guides will assist participants in kayaking and water safety. An interpreter from the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (Metroparks) will introduce kayakers to the world-class wildlife of the refuge.

Both beginner and advanced routes will be available. The beginner route will hug the Lake Erie Metropark shoreline to discover the freshwater marsh and wildlife of the park. Weather permitting; the advanced tours will paddle out to Celeron Island where a Metropark interpreter will be stationed to discuss the island's ecology.

Tours will depart every fifteen minutes from 9 am to 1 pm. There is a \$25 fee for beginner and \$30 fee for advanced tours. The fee includes kayak and safety equipment rental, as well as a lanyard and Detroit Heritage River Water Trail Map. Participants are asked to bring water, sunscreen, snacks and water-friendly shoes. Registration is handled on a first-come, first-serve basis. A Metropark vehicle entry permit is required to enter the park, a daily pass is \$4, senior annual pass is \$12, and annual pass is \$20.

Due to construction, the event is being moved from its original location in Wayne County's Elizabeth Park. Anita Twardesky, event organizer and public relations manager for Riverside Kayak Connection, says "The new location helps us to provide a fresh experience to those who enjoy paddling and the natural beauty of the lower Detroit River."

Paddle By Your Refuge has a thirteen-member planning committee that represents a wide constituency of local, municipal, county, regional, federal and private organizations. The sponsors and volunteers include Riverside Kayak Connection, DTE Energy, Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, Metropolitan Affairs Coalition, Michigan Sea Grant, Friends of the Detroit River, Hamilton-Anderson Associates, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Dan Harrison, committee member and avid paddler, states, "the new venue allows us to work with one of the Alliance's and Refuge's key partners, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority." Lake Erie Metropark is a part of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge through a cooperative management agreement that adds 780-acres of unique wetlands and upland habitats to the refuge.

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Participants are encouraged to enjoy the many amenities of Lake Erie Metropark after their paddle, including the Hike/Bike Trail and the Marshlands Museum and Nature Center. The nature center features displays on wildlife, freshwater marsh, and lake ecology, including a 1,300 gallon Great Lakes aquarium. The museum brings the history of waterfowl hunting to life through artifacts, displays and pictures. Picnic tables, grills, and restrooms will be available for people to enjoy a scenic picnic along the Lake Erie shoreline in-between activities.

The event brochure can be accessed at [www.riversidekayak.com](http://www.riversidekayak.com). For more information or to receive a mailed copy, please contact the International Wildlife Refuge Alliance at (734) 692-7671 or [iwr\\_alliance@yahoo.com](mailto:iwr_alliance@yahoo.com). For information on directions and hours at Lake Erie Metropark, please visit their website at [www.metroparks.com](http://www.metroparks.com).

All event proceeds will benefit the International Wildlife Refuge Alliance. The International Wildlife Refuge Alliance is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that builds the capacity of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to deliver the mission of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. Major in sponsors in 2007 include General Motors Corporation, BASF, ITC Holdings Corp., and DTE Energy Foundation.

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