



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 5, 2005

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**BASF CORPORATION RECEIVES  
INTERNATIONAL HABITAT CONSERVATION AWARD**

BALTIMORE, MD—Employees at BASF’s Wyandotte, Mich., site have received international recognition for their contributions to wildlife habitat conservation at the Wildlife Habitat Council’s (WHC) 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium, *Shades of Green*. BASF has demonstrated its commitment to environmental stewardship and increasing native biodiversity by achieving *Corporate Lands for Learning*<sup>SM</sup> (CLL) certification for Fighting Island, which is owned by BASF and located on the Detroit River.

BASF’s employees, volunteers and partners have further distinguished themselves by winning WHC’s prestigious Corporate Lands for Learning of the Year award, which recognizes a site for outstanding environmental education, stewardship and voluntary efforts. The candidates for the awards are generated from the pool of applications for certification and recertification. A panel of independent judges, which includes one representative from a conservation organization, a government agency and a corporation, reviews nominees for the awards.

“The union of conservation and industry, already well established at the Wildlife Habitat Council, serves as a model for protecting natural resources while emphasizing collaboration and community involvement. This multidisciplinary view draws on knowledge and skills from a range of disciplines working together for a better environment. Congratulations to BASF for their commendable efforts towards the restoration and enhancement of wildlife habitat. Together, we are committed to being good stewards of the earth,” said Bill Howard, WHC President.

BASF employees and volunteers working to improve habitat on Fighting Island have made a conscious effort to maintain and improve the quality of the natural resources on and around the site. Habitat projects on the 1,200-acre island benefit wildlife and increase environmental awareness among employees, the community, conservation organizations and government agencies through implementation of a cohesive, long-term wildlife management plan.

The original management plan for the site, which is located on the Canadian side of the Detroit River, included setting aside 300 acres of land for hunting programs and utilizing the remaining 900 acres for storage of lime tailings. BASF’s goal for Fighting Island is to provide a vegetation cover that eliminates the dusting concern, protects the surface of the dikes and beds from erosion while providing habitat for wildlife and enhancing the community in which the island resides.

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Revegetation and reforestation have been the primary goals since the middle, north and south lime tailings beds were shut down in 1954, 1978 and 1982 respectively. BASF has planted more than 200,000 seedlings, including poplar, Russian olive and native berry bushes. By 1982, 30 percent of the beds were covered with vegetation; today approximately 80 percent of the island is covered with vegetation.

Site employees placed thousands of bales of straw, hay and alfalfa and scattered nine years of leaves from the nearby town of LaSalle in order to increase the amount of organic material incorporated in the soil. They also introduced 300 turkeys to the island habitat and 5,000 ring neck pheasants are introduced each year. Recently developed projects include the conversion of existing runoff canals into marshlands, control of invasive weed species on existing man-made marshes, habitat management for migratory bird species, and the addition of habitat components for cavity-nesting species.

Since BASF's initial habitat certification from the Wildlife Habitat Council in 2002, Fighting Island has received many other awards and partnerships for their environmental stewardship efforts. Fighting Island is a part of the International Wildlife Refuge, Greater Detroit American River Heritage Initiative and Canadian Heritage River. The site is also a lifetime member of Pheasants Forever. Most recently, BASF Fighting Island won the 2004 Environmental Achievement Award from the Michigan Environmental Management Association.

The *Corporate Lands for Learning* program at Fighting Island uses a revitalized island habitat as an outdoor laboratory to study the environment and the environmental impacts of humans, including efforts to enhance and improve our environment. The dedicated site team, with the help of a cadre of local teachers and administrators, produced three distinct and exemplary curricula for students in grades seven and eight and for high school students.

After a highly successful pilot program in 2004, Fighting Island held a Train the Teachers event and now hosts hundreds of students each semester at this premier *CLL* facility. Students in the seventh grade study interactions with ecosystems through a program that is closely correlated to both classroom learning and Ontario Education Standards. Eighth-grade students collect data on water systems and post those results on a Web site for future study and use as a water and land management tool. High school students study the sustainability of ecosystems and the relationship between human activity and ecosystems. All programs allow students to "do science as science is done," through hands-on, research based programs conducted both in the field on Fighting Island, and in their indoor science lab.

Fighting Island was one of 143 sites recognized at the 2005 Symposium for creating a habitat program. Since 1990, WHC has certified 374 programs worldwide. The certification program recognizes outstanding wildlife habitat management and environmental education efforts at corporate sites, and offers third-party validation of the benefits of such programs. Certification requirements are strict and require that sites apply for periodic renewal.

The Wildlife Habitat Council is a nonprofit, non-lobbying organization dedicated to increasing the quality and amount of wildlife habitat on corporate, private and public lands. WHC devotes its resources to building partnerships with corporations and conservation groups to create solutions that balance the demands of economic growth with the requirements of a healthy, biodiverse and sustainable environment. More than 2 million acres in 48 states, Puerto Rico and 16 other countries are managed for wildlife through WHC-assisted projects. For more information, visit WHC online at [www.wildlifehc.org](http://www.wildlifehc.org).