

Public Law 107-91
107th Congress

An Act

Dec. 21, 2001
[H.R. 1230]

To provide for the establishment of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge in the State of Michigan, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Detroit River
International
Wildlife Refuge
Establishment
Act.
16 USC 668dd
note.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Establishment Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) The Detroit River, one of North America's greatest rivers, was created some 14,000 years ago during the retreat of the Wisconsin Glacier.

(2) The present river channel, established when falling water levels permitted erosion of the Lake Plain and moraines, is a connecting channel linking the Upper and Lower Great Lakes, as well as linking the United States to Canada.

(3) The Lower Detroit River ecosystem is diverse with a number of distinct channels, numerous shoals that support dense stands of aquatic plants, and many islands. These nationally and internationally significant habitats and ecological features attract as many as 29 species of waterfowl and 65 kinds of fish.

(4) The Detroit River is a major migration corridor for fish, butterflies, raptors, and other birds, in addition to waterfowl. Over 300 species of birds have been documented in the Detroit-Windsor area, of which about 150 species breed in the immediate area.

(5) Because the Great Lakes are situated at the intersection of the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways, the Detroit River is an important waterfowl migration corridor. 3,000,000 ducks, geese, swans, and coots migrate annually through the Great Lakes region.

(6) The importance of this corridor is recognized in the Canada-United States North American Waterfowl Management Plan that has identified the Detroit River as part of one of 34 Waterfowl Habitat Areas of Major Concern in the United States and Canada.

(7) Some 300,000 diving ducks stop in the Lower Detroit River on their fall migration from Canada to the east and south each year to rest and feed in beds of water celery found in the region.

(8) The international importance of the Lower Detroit River area is manifested in the United States congressional designation of the 460-acre Wyandotte National Wildlife Refuge.

(9) Canada's Canard River Marsh Complex is an internationally significant waterfowl staging area which is one of the main resting and feeding areas for canvasbacks migrating from their nesting grounds in the Canadian prairies to the East Coast. Many over-winter in the area as well.

(10) The diversity of biota and habitats in the Lower Detroit River ecosystem provides substantial benefits to the over 5,000,000 people who live in the vicinity. The Lower Detroit River has an international reputation for duck hunting. On an economic basis, retail sales related to waterfowl hunting in Michigan were estimated in 1991 to be \$20,100,000. During the same year birding, photography, and other nonconsumptive uses of waterfowl contributed an additional \$192,800,000 in Michigan.

(11) More than 1,000,000 pleasure boats are registered in Michigan and about half of those are used on the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair, in part to fish for the estimated 10,000,000 walleye that migrate to the Detroit River each spring from Lake Erie to spawn. These walleye have helped create an internationally renowned sport fishery estimated to bring in \$1,000,000 to the economy of communities along the lower Detroit River each spring.

(12) All of these natural resource values and socioeconomic benefits were acclaimed when the Detroit River was designated an American Heritage River in 1998. The Detroit River is also a Canadian Heritage River, making it the first international heritage river system in the world.

(13) The Detroit River has lost over 95 percent of its coastal wetland habitats and despite increased awareness and supporting science of their importance, habitats continue to be destroyed and degraded.

(14) Protection of remaining wildlife habitats and enhancement of degraded wildlife habitats are essential to sustain the quality of life enjoyed by so many living along the Detroit River corridor.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this Act:

(1) The term "Refuge" means the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge established by section 5.

(2) The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

(3) The term "Detroit River" means those lands and waters within the area described in section 5(a).

SEC. 4. PURPOSES.

The purposes for which the Refuge is established and shall be managed are as follows:

(1) To protect the remaining high-quality fish and wildlife habitats of the Detroit River before they are lost to further development and to restore and enhance degraded wildlife habitats associated with the Detroit River.

(2) To assist in international efforts to conserve, enhance, and restore the native aquatic and terrestrial community characteristics of the Detroit River (including associated fish,

wildlife, and plant species) both in the United States and Canada.

(3) To facilitate partnerships among the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Canadian national and provincial authorities, State and local governments, local communities in the United States and in Canada, conservation organizations, and other non-Federal entities to promote public awareness of the resources of the Detroit River.

SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF REFUGE.

(a) **BOUNDARIES.**—There is hereby established the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, consisting of the lands and waters owned or managed by the Secretary pursuant to this Act in the State of Michigan within the area extending from the point in Michigan directly across the river from northernmost point of Ojibway Shores to the southern boundary of the Sterling State Park, as depicted upon a map entitled “Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Proposed”, dated July 31, 2001, which shall be available for inspection in appropriate offices of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(b) **EXISTING REFUGE LANDS.**—The Wyandotte National Wildlife Refuge is hereby included within, and shall be a part of, the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. All references to the Wyandotte National Wildlife Refuge shall hereafter be treated as references to the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

(c) **BOUNDARY REVISIONS.**—The Secretary may make such revisions of the boundaries of the Refuge as may be appropriate to carry out the purposes of the Refuge or to facilitate the acquisition of property within the Refuge.

(d) **ACQUISITION.**—The Secretary is authorized to acquire by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange the lands and waters, or interests therein (including conservation easements), within the boundaries of the Refuge.

(e) **TRANSFERS FROM OTHER AGENCIES.**—Any Federal property located within the boundaries of the Refuge which is under the administrative jurisdiction of another department or agency of the United States may, with the concurrence of the head of administering department or agency, be transferred without consideration to the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary for the purposes of this Act.

(f) **STUDY OF ASSOCIATED AREA.**—The Secretary (acting through the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service) shall conduct a study of fish and wildlife habitat and aquatic and terrestrial communities of the north reach of the Detroit River, from the northernmost point of Ojibway Shores north to the mouth of Lake St. Clair, for potential inclusion in the Refuge. Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of the Act, the Secretary shall complete such study and submit a report containing the results thereof to the Congress.

SEC. 6. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall administer all federally owned lands, waters, and interests therein that are within the boundaries of the Refuge in accordance with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act (16 U.S.C. 668dd et seq.) and this Act. The Secretary may use such additional statutory authority as may be available for the conservation of fish and wildlife, and

Deadline.
Reports.

the provision of fish and wildlife dependent recreational opportunities as the Secretary considers appropriate to carry out the purposes of this Act.

(b) **PRIORITY USES.**—In providing opportunities for compatible fish and wildlife dependent recreation, the Secretary, in accordance with paragraphs (3) and (4) of section 4(a) of the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd(a)), shall ensure that hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation are the priority public uses of the Refuge.

(c) **COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS REGARDING NONFEDERAL LANDS.**—The Secretary is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with the State of Michigan, or any political subdivision thereof, and with any other person or entity for the management in a manner consistent with this Act of lands that are owned by such State, subdivision, or other person or entity and located within the boundaries of the Refuge and to promote public awareness of the resources of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge and encourage public participation in the conservation of those resources.

(d) **USE OF EXISTING GREENWAY AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary shall encourage the State of Michigan to use existing authorities under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) to provide funding for acquisition and development of trails within the boundaries of the Refuge.

SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Department of the Interior—

- (1) such sums as may be necessary for the acquisition of lands and waters within the Refuge;
- (2) such sums as may be necessary for the development, operation, and maintenance of the Refuge; and
- (3) such sums as may be necessary to carry out the study under section 5(f).

Approved December 21, 2001.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 1230 (S. 835):

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 107-270 (Comm. on Resources).

SENATE REPORTS: No. 107-112 accompanying S. 835 (Comm. on Environment and Public Works).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 147 (2001):

Nov. 27, considered and passed House.

Dec. 7, considered and passed Senate.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS, Vol. 37 (2001):

Dec. 21, Presidential statement.