

Michigan Areas of Concern

Project Highlight: Detroit River



Blue Heron Lagoon Restoration | Sept. 2012-Apr. 2013

Project Type: Restoration
Location: Wayne County



GLRI Funds: \$1.4 Million
Local Match: \$30,655

Project at a Glance

For decades, the 42-acre Blue Heron Lagoon on Belle Isle's eastern tip has been separated from the Detroit River by a land bridge, cutting off its wetland and nursery habitat for river fish and wildlife. A Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant allowed workers to open this habitat to the river,



BEFORE

providing access for Great Lakes fish. The project also enhanced five acres of coastal wetland and nearly an acre of spawning habitat within the Detroit River, complementing an existing spawning shoal just off Belle Isle's shores.

The project will benefit Great Lakes fish species, amphibians and reptiles, such as the threatened eastern fox snake. Furthermore, Belle Isle provides resting and feeding habitat for multiple migratory bird species due to the island's location on several migratory flyways.

Enhancement to the Blue Heron Lagoon will benefit the residents of Detroit and Southeast Michigan who use Belle Isle and the Detroit River for a variety of recreational activities including fishing and bird watching.

Local Perspective

"Belle Isle has always been a jewel of the upper Detroit River and the city of Detroit. With this project, we created a project to enhance existing habitat, provide structure and value for native species and improve the fishing experience on Belle Isle and within the Detroit River. Best of all, we were able to provide a long-lost connection to the lagoon for the fish of the Great Lakes."

"This project will also provide environmental education opportunities for children from our school district and beyond. Belle Isle will continue to be a destination for the residents of Detroit now and for generations to come."

-Keith Flournoy, Belle Isle Park Manager



AFTER

Great Lakes fish can now make use of Blue Heron Lagoon habitat on Belle Isle.

Partners:



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