



ROUGE RIVER AOC HABITAT - COLONIAL & VENOY RESTORATION

In partnership with:



\$1,834,000 in grant funds provided by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) through the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) for design & implementation

The Rouge River AOC Habitat Colonial & Venoy Restoration Project will:

- Create 6 acres of wetland habitat
- Create 5 acres of tree plantings/reforestation
- Improve 3 acres of wetland habitat
- Create 0.5 acres of meadow habitat

In 2020 the Alliance of Rouge Communities (ARC) received grant funding from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) to design and implement habitat restoration at Wayne County's Colonial Park and Venoy Dorsey Park within the Rouge River Watershed.

The Rouge River watershed is a designated Area of Concern (AOC) under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) and has three Beneficial Use Impairments (BUIs) associated with fish and wildlife habitat: Degraded Fish and Wildlife Populations, Degradation of Benthos, and Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat. The Rouge River Advisory Council (RRAC), the Public Advisory Council (PAC) for the Rouge AOC, in March 2016 approved a list of projects that need to be completed to remove the Rouge AOC habitat BUIs. As part of that list, habitat restoration at Wayne County's Colonial Park and Venoy Dorsey Park were considered as having significant impact on the removal of the BUIs.

As water quality in the Rouge River continues to improve, this project will build on past efforts to restore some of the damage done during the last century. Tributaries of the Rouge River have suffered from loss and impairment of aquatic habitat and increased frequency and magnitude of flood flows, primarily due to increasing urbanization within the watershed. The flat river slope and the meandering channel can not pass the large flows associated with rain events. Upstream urbanization continues to exacerbate this problem as runoff from increased amounts of impervious surfaces culminates in flooding within the river system, bank erosion, and continued habitat degradation. This project will create habitat in the floodplain by restoring degraded areas and converting mowed areas to habitat. This will provide habitat for birds, amphibians, and pollinators while providing stormwater storage and filtration to aid in the reduction of damaging flood flows within the river itself.



Rouge River prior to rain event



Rouge River after rain event

Conditions Prior to Restoration at Colonial & Venoy Dorsey Parks



Often flooded areas will be converted to wetlands/wet meadows



Maintained lawns will be converted to prairie/wet meadows

This project is funded through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (grant # GL-00E02830-0)

Colonial Park Restoration

Colonial Park is located adjacent to the Lower Rouge River in the City of Inkster. Much of the park area is routinely mowed and used for active recreation. However, the park is low and often floods. This project plan proposes creating wetlands in maintained lawn areas by establishing wet meadow habitat and depression wetlands to provide habitat and manage floodwater. Additionally, invasive species will be treated and managed in the proposed wetland enhancement areas. Wetlands will be restored in maintained lawn areas by excavating shallow depressions and planting a native wet-meadow seed mix. The wet meadow community will contain diverse flowering forbs that provide food for pollinators. Small mammals and birds will benefit by the increased habitat diversity and cover. Wetland diversity in the maintained lawn areas will also increase through the excavation of shallow depressions in low lying areas that store floodwater. The more diverse topography will increase plant diversity by creating varying hydrological conditions.

Anticipated Outcomes

- Increased wetland habitat
- Improved water quality
- Improved floodwater storage
- Increased plant diversity

Venoy Dorsey Park Restoration

Venoy Dorsey Park is located along the Lower Rouge River with sections in both the City of Inkster and the City of Westland. Portions of the park area are routinely mowed and used for active recreation. However, the park is low and often floods. Some areas in the park are forested wetlands but many wetlands are not hydrologically connected. This project plan proposes to create and restore wetlands in the park by establishing depression wetlands which will hydrologically connect existing wetlands. Additionally, streambank stabilization methods will be implemented on portions of the Lower Rouge River. Fish habitat structures will be used to improve fish and aquatic organism habitat and minimize streambank erosion. Lastly, invasive species will be treated and managed in a portion of the existing riparian and wetland habitat.

Anticipated Outcomes

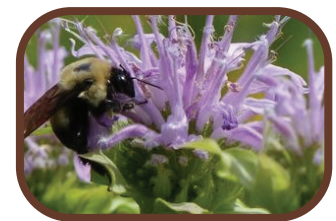
- More diverse and intact riparian habitat
- Improved water quality
- Improved stormwater management
- Increased plant diversity



Seeded area filled with black eyed susan at Colonial Park



Restored wetland at Venoy Park



About the Alliance of Rouge Communities

The ARC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization consisting of local municipalities, counties, educational institutions and stewardship groups working together to improve the Rouge River. Founded in 2005, the ARC is funded by membership dues from local governments and supported by grants. The ARC and its partners work cooperatively to meet water quality requirements mandated by the state's stormwater permit and to restore beneficial uses, such as canoeing, fishing and other recreational activities, to the Rouge River. That means better water quality for less cost to its members!

For more information about this project and other ARC activities visit our website at: www.allianceofrougecommunities.com

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