

Rouge River Revived

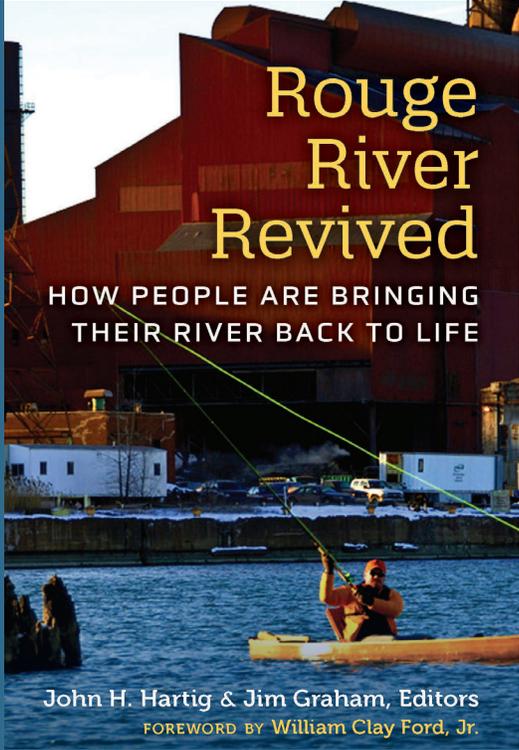
How People Are Bringing Their River Back to Life

The Rouge River is a mostly urbanized watershed of about 500 square miles populated by nearly 1.4 million people. While not geographically large, the river has played an outsized role in the history of southeast Michigan, most famously housing Ford's massive Rouge Factory, designed by architect Albert Kahn and later memorialized in Diego Rivera's renowned "Detroit Industry" murals. In recent decades, the story of the Rouge River has also been one of grassroots environmental activism. After pollution from the Ford complex and neighboring factories literally caused the river to catch on fire in 1969, community groups launched a Herculean effort to restore and protect the watershed. Today the Rouge stands as one of the most successful examples of urban river revival in the country.

Rouge River Revived describes the river's history from pre-European times into the 21st century. Chapters cover topics such as Native American life on the Rouge; indigenous floral and fauna over time; the river's role in the founding of local cities; its key involvement in Detroit's urban development and intensive industrialization; and the dramatic clean-up arising from citizen concern and activism. This book is not only a history of the environment of the Rouge River, but also of the complex and evolving relationship between humans and natural spaces.

John H. Hartig serves as a Visiting Scholar at the University of Windsor's Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research, as the Great Lakes Science-Policy Advisor to the International Association for Great Lakes Research, and as a member of the Board of Directors of the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy.

Jim Graham is an award-winning journalist for the *Detroit News* and the former Executive Director of Friends of the Rouge.



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HOW PEOPLE ARE BRINGING THEIR RIVER BACK TO LIFE

John H. Hartig & Jim Graham, Editors
FOREWORD BY William Clay Ford, Jr.

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