

Rouge news

River cleanup goes well

BY WAYNE PEAL
STAFF WRITER

Rouge River cleanup projects are flowing smoothly, area officials said, but some warned they could hit a log jam if federal funding is lost.

Substantial progress has already been made toward cleaning the heavily polluted river, experts said during Friday's Rouge River legislative conference.

The event coincided with the global environmental summit in Rio De Janeiro.

"In Rio, they're getting together but they're only doing it once every 20 years," University of Michigan-Dearborn professor Olin Gidycz said. UM-D has hosted each of the seven annual conferences.

There is good news locally, said Paul Zenger, water quality chief of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

"Progress has been strong, major efforts are being planned," Zenger said.

Many communities are already taking steps to eliminate combined

ENVIRONMENT

sewer overflows by reworking their sewer systems. Old, outmoded combined sewers — CSOs for short — dump both storm-water and sewage into the river as they back up during heavy rainfall. CSOs are considered the leading cause of Rouge pollution.

A \$300 million multi-community sewer replacement plan is under way. An interim plan is expected to be revealed in May 1993, with 1997 set aside as the year for sewer construction.

U.S. Rep. John Dingell, D-Trenton, predicted projects could hit a log jam if a proposed federal balanced budget bill passes.

County home gets new field

Long in planning, the Oakland County Children's Village athletic field will be dedicated today in ceremonies featuring retiring county Executive Daniel Murphy.

The field includes a one-quarter

"I'm voting against it," said Dingell, who said it could jeopardize \$82 million in federal money sought for the Rouge. The Rouge project has already received a \$48 million federal grant.

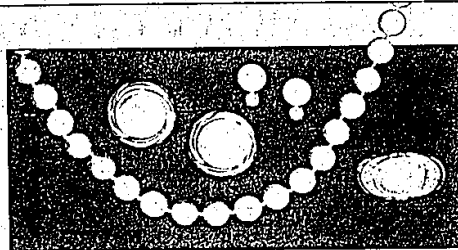
Federal money has thus far been reserved for cleaning the river; though Rouge boosters envision the river eventually coming alive as a recreation area.

Toward that end, they've applied for consideration as a National Heritage site like the Lackawanna River Valley in Pennsylvania, as well as areas near Lowell, Mass.

The heritage program pulls together business, and community leaders to restore the "cultural landscape" of an environmentally sensitive area like the Rouge.

mile track, fitness trail, volleyball pits and covered pavilion.

The project was made possible through the 12-member Oakland County Children's Village Advisory Council appointed by Murphy.



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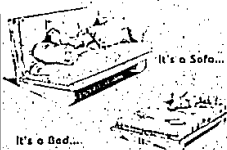
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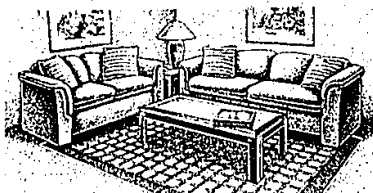
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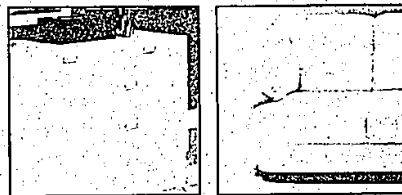
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