

River Rouge

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The suburbs of River Rouge are situated between the Marathon oil refinery and the highly industrialized Zug Island located on the Detroit River; this makes the area one of the most polluted zip codes in the country. River Rouge has played a huge roll in Detroit's industry, dating all the way back to when the French were practicing fur trapping. In 1969 the section of the river surrounding the Henry Ford plant caught on fire, which was a common occurrence in highly industrialized areas of the Midwest at that time. Since the clean water act was instated in 1972 the conditions of the area have improved, but health issues are still astronomically higher in River Rouge compared to surrounding areas. Even though the environment is harsh, the people in River Rouge are extremely welcoming. Every time I've gone out for a shoot there, people have been understanding, enthusiastic, and willing to share their story with me. The resilience of these people is reflected down to very small details of the community. Murals of dogs, trees and cartoon characters on the plaster wall dividing the residential area from the huge holding tanks of oil is a great example of this...





















