



Polk County Supervisor Tom Hockensmith, Chair
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Walnut Creek gets new Watershed Management Authority

The watershed for Walnut Creek, a tributary of the Raccoon River and a source of drinking water for the Des Moines metro area, has a new regional body of governments looking after its health and wellbeing.

The Walnut Creek Watershed Management Authority was created in 2014 to address environmental concerns including high nitrate levels, high bacteria levels, high turbidity, flash flooding and stream bank erosion. The new entity subsequently received a \$123,000 grant from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to develop a watershed plan, which will be developed by consulting partner RDG Planning & Design. The planning process will start in February.

“Water knows no political boundaries,” said Tom Hadden, the chair of the Walnut Creek Watershed Management Authority and the city manager of West Des Moines. “This is a great example of local governments working together for the benefit of all metro residents for generations to come.”

The Walnut Creek watershed is one of the most quickly urbanizing watersheds in Iowa, encompassing 52,643 acres in Dallas and Polk Counties and including portions of Clive, Dallas Center, Des Moines, Grimes, Johnston, Urbandale, Waukee, West Des Moines and Windsor Heights. The watershed is approximately 60 percent urban land use and 40 percent agricultural land use.

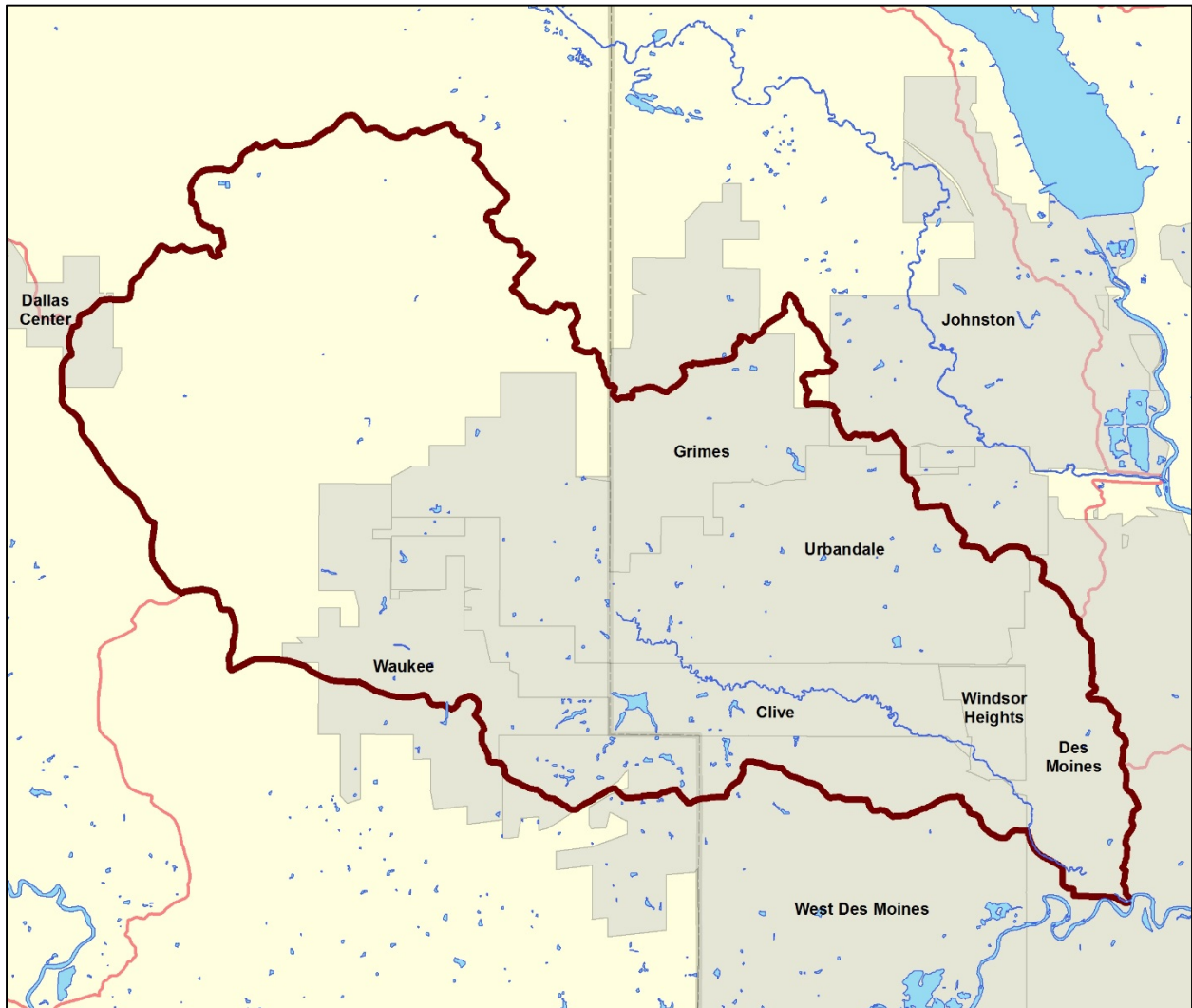
The effort to protect the Walnut Creek watershed is part a larger regional goal of preventing further deterioration of the natural environment. This goal was identified in The Tomorrow Plan, a long-range plan for Central Iowa’s sustainability that was developed by Des Moines area metro communities and adopted in 2013. The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is helping to establish the WMA in its role of coordinating multiple local governments for the good of the region.

For more information about the Walnut Creek Watershed Management Authority, please call MPO Planner Teva Dawson at 515-334-0075 or email her at tdawson@dmampo.org.

(See second page for map and listing of members of the Walnut Creek Watershed Management Authority)

The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Acts as a regional forum to ensure coordination between the public and local, state, and federal agencies in regard to planning issues and to prepare transportation plans and programs. The MPO develops both long- and short-range multimodal transportation plans, selects and approves projects for federal funding based upon regional priorities, and develops methods to reduce traffic congestion.

Walnut Creek Watershed Management Authority boundary



What is a Watershed Management Authority?

A Watershed Management Authority, also known as a WMA, is a mechanism for cities, counties, Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) and stakeholders to cooperatively engage in watershed planning and management. The WMA is formed by a Chapter 28E Agreement, does not have taxing authority and may not acquire property through eminent domain.

Voting members of the Walnut Creek Watershed Authority:

Polk County, Clive, Dallas Center, Grimes, Johnston, Urbandale, Waukee, West Des Moines, Windsor Heights, Dallas County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Polk County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Other stakeholders in planning process:

Des Moines, Iowa Soybean Association, Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance, Des Moines Water Works, Green and Sustainable Clive, the Walnut Creek Watershed Coalition and RDG Planning & Design.