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The Dam Debate II: Bring river recreation to downtown Des Moines?

The Des Moines River in downtown Des Moines would become a signature recreational destination for the region – with beaches amid naturally restored riverbanks, more fishing areas with improved habitat, calm-water and whitewater channels for beginner and expert-level paddling and tubing – under a proposal to mitigate the Center Street and Scott Street dams. The dams would be replaced with a series of drops, spaced out over approximately one mile, which would maintain the water level north of the Center Street dam at current levels to preserve boating and rowing upstream.

Is that what residents of Greater Des Moines want?

The public is invited to weigh in on these recommendations at The Dam Debate II, hosted by *The Des Moines Register* as a follow up the first Dam Debate on April 26. The Dam Debate II is from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 28, in the Register's Community Room of Capital Square, 400 Locust St., Des Moines. Doors open at 6 p.m. with an open house to view river and creek recommendations and speak with planners about the proposals.

"We worked with the community to put together a vision for what the rivers of Greater Des Moines could look like as major recreational amenities for the region," said Rick Tollakson, president and CEO of Hubbell Realty Co., who chairs the Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways Steering Committee. "The question we need to answer before we go any farther is, did we get it right?"

The proposal for the downtown dams is one of many recommendations in the DRAFT [Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways Master Plan](#) that the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is developing on behalf of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. When complete later this year, the plan will become the first regional roadmap for developing a network of recreational corridors along 150 miles of rivers and creeks in central Iowa.

The Dam Debate II – Tuesday, June 28 – An open house will be held from 6 to 7 p.m. with displays of proposed recommendations. The main program will be 7 to 8:30 p.m. with a short presentation, panel discussion, and question-and-answer with panelists Rick Tollakson, Nate Hoogeveen of Iowa DNR, and Teva Dawson of Des Moines Area MPO.

Water Trails Public Meeting – Wednesday, June 29 – The draft water trails plan will be presented and public comment collected at a public meeting 6 p.m. Wednesday, June 29, at the Ding Darling Shelter, 2100 Saylor Road, Des Moines.

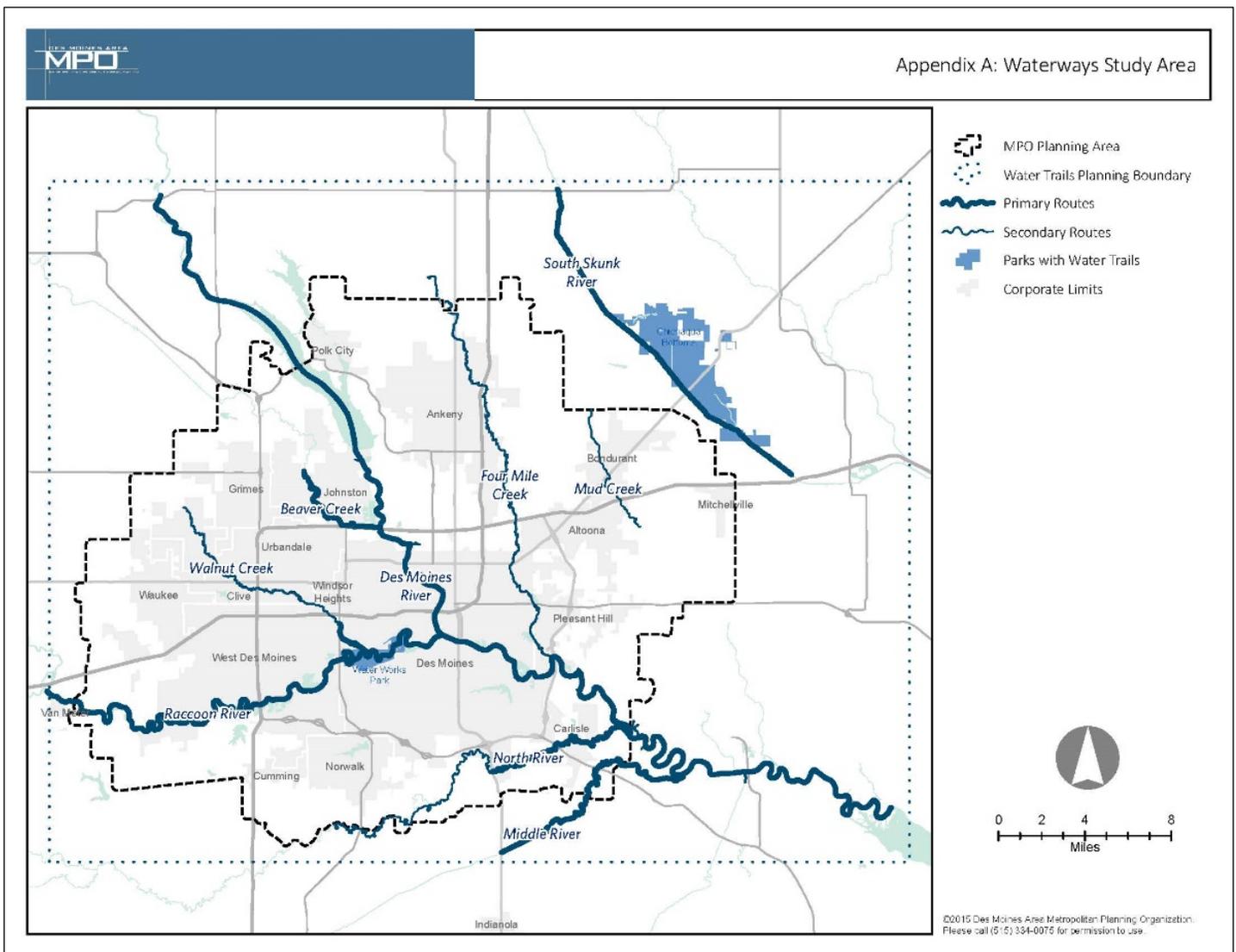
Paddle Outings – Thursday and Friday, July 7 and 8 – The public is invited to join a paddle on the Raccoon River, starting at 4 p.m. Thursday, July 7, or on the Des Moines River, starting at 4 p.m. Friday, July 8, Both paddles will last 2-3 hours. Participants need to provide their own watercraft and shuttling; rental and shuttle service is also available through Argo Adventures at 515-996-0063. Details are available at dmampo.org/water-trails/events/.

For more information, please visit dmampo.org/water-trails/, call 515-334-0075 or email info@dmampo.org.

What are Water Trails?

“Water Trails” is a designation given by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and are defined as recreational corridors and routes on rivers and lakes that provide a unique experience for all water users. Water trails help re-connect lowans to their waterways’ history, heritage, geology, fisheries, and wildlife. Water trails provide adequate access and can include amenities like riverside camping, wild spaces, picnic areas, and restrooms, and watercraft rentals provided by local, state, and federal partners. Coordinated signage and mapping systems guide users toward the types of experiences they seek, ranging from a highly social first-time river experience lasting a few hours to multi-day adventures. Water trails help boost local economies and give central lowans outdoor experiences just out their back doors.

Study Area for Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways Master Plan



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.