



Missouri Water Trails

a good thing waiting to happen



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Great Rivers Pedal and Paddle

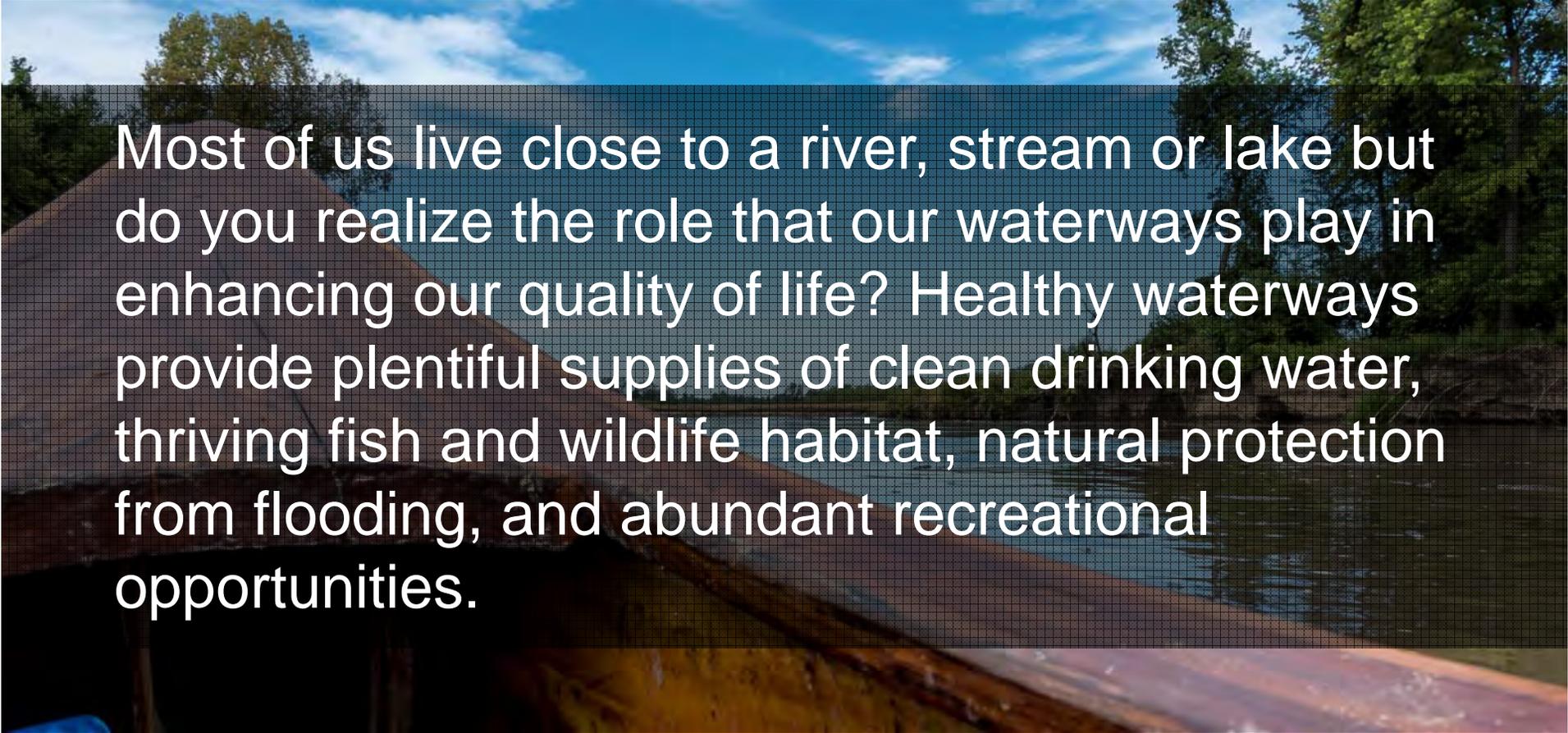


Katy Bike Rental
Bike Stop

Big Muddy Adventures
Great Rivers Greenway
Greenway Network



WATER TRAILS



Most of us live close to a river, stream or lake but do you realize the role that our waterways play in enhancing our quality of life? Healthy waterways provide plentiful supplies of clean drinking water, thriving fish and wildlife habitat, natural protection from flooding, and abundant recreational opportunities.

Water Trails

A good thing waiting to happen

A Water Trail is a waterway adopted by a local community or organization that is dedicated to improving family-friendly recreation such as fishing, boating, and wildlife watching, and conserving land and water resources. Just as hiking trails are designed to help people explore the land, Water Trails help people discover their waterways and provide them with a host of benefits.

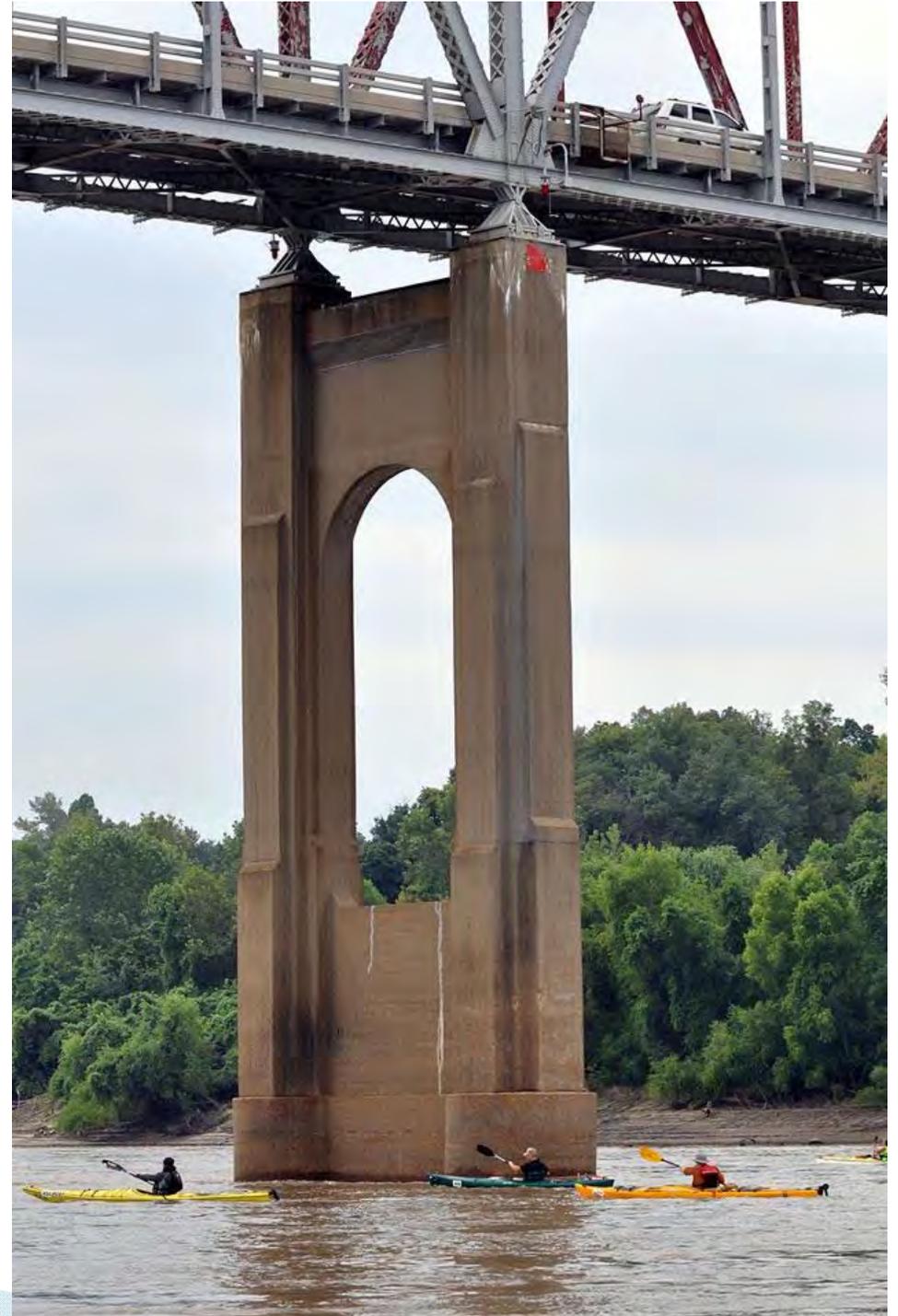


What is a water trail?

- ▶ Water Trails are **marked routes** on navigable waterways such as streams, rivers and lakes for **people using small non-motorized boats** such as kayaks, canoes, rafts, or rowboats. Some Water Trails may be suitable for float tubing or developed in concert with motorized use. Water Trails not only **require suitable access points and take-outs for exit** but also provide places onshore to camp and picnic, and other facilities for boaters.



When people don't **feel a connection with their waterway**, they're less likely to care for it - which can lead to pollution, irresponsible development, and overall negligence. Water Trails can help remedy this problem and **inspire people to view their waterways as a resource and take action to protect and restore them.**



Why do we need Water trails?

- ▶ **Protect the environment.** Water Trails galvanize citizen support for clean water and healthy streamside lands. They inspire people to protect important habitat and provide corridors for people and wildlife. While specific protections vary from state to state, **Water Trails are often associated with conservation easements, land acquisition, stream buffer requirements, stream flow protections, and higher water quality standards.**
- ▶ **Enhance local economies.** Water Trails are economic drivers that benefit businesses and quality of life. According to The Outdoor Foundation, 113 million Americans enjoy fishing, paddling, and trail activities yearly, **generating 1.6 million jobs and \$20 billion in state and federal revenue.**

Why do we need Water trails?

- ▶ **Promote healthy living.** Exercise is important for maintaining good health in all stages of life, however many people do not regularly exercise. Water Trails provide a safe, inexpensive avenue for regular exercise for people living in urban, suburban, and rural areas.
- ▶ **Preserve history and community identity.** Water Trails have the power to connect us to our heritage by preserving historic places and providing access to them. Through these cultural, historic and natural places, Water Trails enhance a sense of community identity and pride.
- ▶ **Connect people and places.** Water Trails connect urban and rural communities to parks, forests, and refuges. Through them, we create a valuable legacy that honors the past, enriches the present, and provides a precious gift to the future.



Existing water trails





<http://www.greatriverwatertrail.org/>

About Us



The Mississippi River Water Trail Association was established through the American Canoe Association to support and enhance the Mississippi River Water Trail and encourage community involvement.

The Association showcases the Mississippi River as a paddling destination rich with cultural heritage, wildlife, natural areas, and history. The Association promotes and encourages safe paddling opportunities on the Mississippi River. Volunteers provide support by maintaining trail rest areas, primitive campsites, and facilities to ensure quality recreational opportunities for

paddlers.

The Association promotes safety awareness and provides activities, events, and educational opportunities. The water trail association also facilitates collaboration with communities, organizations, and agencies to foster sound safety and conservation practices along the river.



NATIONAL WATER TRAILS SYSTEM

Log In

<https://www.nps.gov/watertrails>

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About

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What is the National Water Trails System?

Over the years, a variety of local, state, and federal organizations have identified and developed numerous water trails on rivers, lakes, and other waterways throughout the United States. The new **National Water Trails System** (NWTS) serves to bring existing and newly identified water trails together into one cohesive national network of exemplary water trails. The National Water Trails System is a network of water trails the public can explore and enjoy, as well as a community of water resource managers that can benefit from information sharing and collaboration.

The **National Water Trails System** is a distinctive national network of exemplary water trails that are cooperatively supported and sustained.

More specifically, the National Water Trails System has been established to

- protect and restore America's rivers, shorelines, and waterways and conserve natural areas along waterways.
- increase access to outdoor recreation on shorelines and waterways.

The National Water Trails System will uniquely connect Americans to the nation's waterways and strengthen the conservation and restoration of these waterways through the mutual support and cooperation of federal, state, local, and nonprofit entities by

- establishing a national system of exemplary water trails.
- becoming a catalyst for protecting and restoring the health of local waterways and surrounding lands.
- building a community that mentors and promotes the development of water trails and shares best management practices.

Welcome to the Quad Cities Water Trails

Experience the Mississippi River as it was first discovered, while paddling!

The Quad Cities area is rich with water. Paddling conditions on the Mississippi and Rock Rivers are perfect for multi-day excursions with camping access, afternoon urban getaways, and getting in touch with nature for all levels of paddlers.

The 45 miles of Quad Cities Water Trails also ties directly into 73 miles of recreational trails for exceptional cycling and hiking.

The Mississippi River is arguably the most important waterway in the United States. Throughout its history, whether for Native Americans, explorers, or modern commerce, the Mississippi has always been a major navigation route through the center of North America. It is 2,320 miles long and has the third largest catchment basin in the world collecting water from 1.25 million square miles.

The 285-mile long Rock River flows through southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois before emptying into the Mississippi River in Rock Island. The Rock is a long-time source of paddle recreation, pleasure boating, and fishing. It supports hundreds of species of wildlife vital to the Midwestern ecosystem.

As the mighty Mississippi River carves its way toward the Gulf of Mexico, it carries with it a sense of great adventure, mystique and respect. Paddling the Mississippi and Rock Rivers can be a challenging, rewarding and awesome experience. It demands your full attention at all times. Watching a towboat with a tow of barges navigate the river is an exciting experience, especially from the seat of a kayak or canoe.

You're sure to treasure the time you spend on the Quad Cities Water Trails.

Driving Directions

For detailed maps of any of the launch sites go to: <http://www.maps.google.com>. Enter the GPS coordinates of the launch area in the search bar separated by a comma [i.e. for (7) Fisherman's Corner type in "41.569, -90.396"] and hit enter. Google Maps will center on the launch site (green arrow) so you can print a map or "Get Directions."

River Wildlife

The Mississippi and Rock Rivers support over 400 different species of wildlife. The river ecosystem features approximately 40 percent of North America's migratory waterfowl and about 20 percent of the nation's duck population.

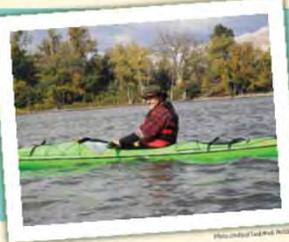


Photo: David LaBreck/Red Bull



Photo: David LaBreck/Red Bull



Photo: David LaBreck/Red Bull

The main types of migratory birds include: Black, Wood, Mallard, Teal, Widgeon, Pintail and Ring-necked ducks, Canada Geese, swans, American White Pelicans and many types of songbirds. We are also home to one of the most magnificent birds in the world, the great bald eagle. The eagles are very plentiful along the shores of the upper Mississippi.

The river also provides a home to many different fish and other types of animals. Over 100 different species of freshwater fish can be found in the Mississippi including: catfish, walleye, bass, northern, sunfish, and crappie. The many different types of fish found in the great river allow for some of the best fishing in the entire world. The Mississippi River can be fished year round, which allows one to enjoy the sport and all of the magnificence that each season in the upper valley has to offer.

Canoe or kayak fishing can be a great way to catch dinner or a fun recreational activity. Iowa or Illinois licenses can be used by hook-and-line anglers on the Mississippi River. For more info go to the Iowa or Illinois Department of Natural Resources web sites.

River Traffic

At first sighting, a tow heading in your direction is usually two or three miles away. At that distance, you still have 20 to 30 minutes to relocate to a more comfortable location on the river. Being aware of traffic on the river is always important, but it should never prevent you from safely paddling the Mississippi. Always steer clear of the main channel and industrial areas.

Up and Downstream Connections

Paddlers who want an extended trip should look into the Wapsipiconic River Trail, which meets the Mississippi River three miles north of Princeton, IA, and Odessa Water Trail, 30 miles south of Buffalo, IA on the Mississippi. Careful planning is needed when traveling downstream of the Quad Cities as paddlers will encounter Lock & Dam 16 at Muscatine, IA.

Water Safety

Safety is critical when paddling the Mississippi or Rock Rivers. Be sure to monitor water conditions before starting your trip. Go to www.rivergates.com and click on "Rock Island District" for current conditions at Locks & Dams 14 and 15.

Be aware of:

- High water and floods – High water travels swiftly and carries much debris

- Cold water – Mississippi waters are the first to cool off and last to warm up
- River traffic – Stay out of the main channel (designated by green and red buoys) and be aware of traffic when crossing the river
- Dams – Stay well clear of dams and utilize designated portage areas

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Navigation Charts are online at: <http://www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/NIC2/mrcharts.cfm>

Hunting Seasons

Water trail users need to be aware of their surroundings for not only game traffic, but hunting seasons as well. Duck blinds, structures covered with vegetation cuttings and located in the river, are used for waterfowl hunting. Some temporary blinds may be used on a daily basis. Refer to state regulations for additional information.

Bike Trails

There are 65 miles of scenic trails along the Mississippi River in the Quad Cities region and many more along the Rock River. Trails can be accessed from most of the water trail launch sites. Bike the trails back upstream in lieu of driving separate pick-up vehicles or for solo paddle excursions. Trail maps available at www.riveraction.org.

For a real adventure, check out the off-road trails on Sylvan Island in Moline and Sunderbruch Park in Davenport. These rugged single-track mountain bike trails offer a fantastic workout and outdoor fun.

'Taming of the Slough'

River Action hosts the Taming of the Slough Adventure Race each September, consisting of a paddle section (2 miles), mountain biking (8 miles), and run/off-road hill climb (2 miles). The race is geared for all levels of participation. Compete as an individual, two-person team, or three-person relay. More info is available at www.riveraction.org.

Locking Rules for Advanced Paddlers

- There is no fee for locking through
- Stay out of posted/restricted areas
- Stay in your boat when locking through
- Inform lockmaster that you want to lock through by pulling the small boat signal chain located at the end of the wall or call lock on marine radio (Channel 14)
- Enter the lock when the gates are fully open and you receive the green signal light to enter

- All vessels are required to hold a line (hanging from the lock wall) or tie off on the side of a vessel, holding on to the line
- One short signal blast designates that lockage is complete, and you may exit the lock

Common Sense Paddling Safety Tips

- Wear your life jacket
- Be prepared to swim
- Never boat alone
- If you collide with an obstruction, lean toward it
- File a float plan with a relative or friend
- Paddle within your experience and fitness levels
- Confine your first outings to calm backwater areas
- Consider taking a paddling safety course
- Be familiar with capsiz recovery techniques
- Always check weather forecasts and river conditions before setting out
- Paddle in groups whenever possible and know the experience levels of those in the group

Adhere to 'Leave No Trace' Pledge

- Plan ahead and prepare
- Dispose of waste properly
- Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
- Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
- Carry-in, carry-out
- Respect wildlife
- Be considerate of other visitors
- For more information on "leave no trace", go to www.lnt.org

Learn to Paddle

A variety of paddling classes are available year-round for all abilities. Classes are taught by licensed instructors and address water safety, technique and skills. For a full listing go to: www.riveraction.org.

Kayak/Canoe Rental

Kayaks or canoes can be rented from Princeton Outdoor Adventures, Princeton, IA (online at: www.princetonoutdooradventures.com, or call: 563-289-5445) and Fluid Adventures, Moline, IL (online at: www.fluid-adventures.com, or call: 563-508-2040).

Trips for Beginners

• **Sylvan Slough** – Sylvan Slough is a wonderful backwater of the Mississippi River. The urban environment gives way to natural surroundings including lily pads and numerous water lilies. The current is slow and allows for a relaxing round-trip paddle. **Put-in:** Sylvan Slough Docks (12) **Take-out:** Same; Distance – 2 miles; Paddle time – about 1.5 hours.

• **Middle Rock River Trail** – This area of water is a safe place to practice your canoe or kayak paddling. The scenery is generally urban with many cabins along both sides of the river. Pleasure boaters and jet-skiers like to use the Rock River but traffic is low during the week. **Put-in:** Greenvalley Public Access (21) **Take-out:** Harold's Landing (20); Distance – 2.5 miles; Paddle time – about 1 hour.

Trips for Intermediates

• **Upper Mississippi River Trail** – Casual upstream trip along the shoreline of the Mississippi River has moderate current. Exceptional views of the river to Princeton Beach where paddlers can stop for a picnic and swim. Rentals available at Princeton Outdoor Adventures. **Put-in:** Princeton Boat Ramp (1) **Take-out:** Same; Distance – 3 miles; Paddle time – about 2 hours.

• **Middle Mississippi River Trail** – Travel the Iowa shoreline from Lock and Dam 14 Boat Ramp to the Eagles Landing Boat Ramp. This paddle offers great views of the Iowa and Illinois shorelines. Stop at Pigeon Creek Park for a nice hike and picnic. **Put-in:** Lock & Dam 14 Boat Ramp (6) **Take-out:** Eagles Landing (8); Distance – 2.5 miles; Paddle time – about 1 hour.

• **Lower Rock River Trail** – Paddle a short distance down the Mississippi to the Rock River. The current up the Rock is generally low to moderate if the shoreline route is taken. Circumnavigate Turkey Island to see a wide variety of wildlife in this remote area. **Put-in:** Sunset Park (15) **Take-out:** Same; Distance – 5 miles; Paddle time – 3 to 4 hours.

Trips for Advanced

• **Upper Mississippi River Trail** – (River crossing required - strong current possible) Travel the Iowa shoreline from LeClaire briefly before crossing to Illinois to portage at Fisherman's Corner (P1). Finish at the Eagles Landing Boat Ramp in Iowa or stick to the Illinois shoreline until Empire Park. This paddle offers great views of the Iowa and Illinois valley particularly during the fall with the changing color of tree foliage. **Put-in:** LeClaire Boat Ramp (4) **Take-out:** Eagles Landing (8); Distance – 6 miles; Paddle time – about 3 hours.

• **Middle Mississippi River Trail** – (River crossing required - strong current possible) Urban paddling at its best...put in at Eagles Landing and cross to follow Campbell's Island to the Illinois shoreline. Travel downstream along the Ben Butterworth Parkway to Sylvan Slough. Great mix of natural and urban landscapes. **Put-in:** Eagles Landing (8) **Take-out:** Sylvan Slough (12); Distance – 5 miles; Paddle time – about 3 hours.

• **Lower Mississippi River Trail** – (River crossing required - strong current possible) Check out the great views of the Mississippi on this trip. After putting in at Credit Island, you'll need to choose a safe crossing to the Illinois shoreline. Enjoy the beautiful backwaters of the Andalusia Slough. Continue the trip to Loud Thunder Campground for an extended paddle. **Put-in:** Credit Island (16) **Take-out:** Andalusia (17); Distance – 7 miles; Paddle time – 3 to 4 hours.



Photo: Kathryn Malyon/Red Bull



Photo: Kathryn Malyon/Red Bull



Photo: Kathryn Malyon/Red Bull



Photo: Kathryn Malyon/Red Bull

PHOTOS BY DAVID LABRECK FOR RED BULL. COURTESY OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER AUTHORITY. PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID LABRECK FOR RED BULL. COURTESY OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER AUTHORITY.



Quad Cities Water Trails





<http://iowawatertrails.org/>

Canoeing and Kayaking

Iowa is blessed with a variety of rivers, creeks, and lakes offering a number of different types of experiences for beginner to expert paddler. 18,000 miles of *navigable* streams await exploration by curious paddlers from across the state. The Iowa DNR wants you to enjoy, appreciate, and respect Iowa's rivers. We hope you find this site very useful.

What is a Water Trail?

Water Trails are recreational corridors and routes on rivers and lakes that provide a unique experience all water users. Water trails help re-connect Iowans 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 trail partners at the local level are encouraged to steward the natural and economic values of their waterways to help boost local economies and give Iowans outdoor experiences just out their back doors. Iowa DNR water trails staff lead through setting standards for planning requirements, providing funding and technical assistance, and maintaining the framework of the overall system.

IDNR Canoe and Kayak Schools for 2016

Learn to paddle more efficiently and develop new skills. These classes will fill fast. Contact [Todd Robertson](#) with any questions. Open the links below to see descriptions of the classes and fill out the registration form that you will find at the bottom. Again, these classes will fill up quickly as there are a limited number of spots available.

[2016 Paddling Schools Schedule.doc](#) DOC

[2016 Paddling Schools Schedule.pdf](#) PDF

On-Line Paddle Safety Boating Course

Check out this free resource and improve your safety knowledge when it comes to paddling. This course is NASBLA (National Association of State Boating Law Administrators) approved. All new paddlers should take this free course and it is a great review for the experienced. Register for a free account and get started today! [Free Paddling Course](#)

[Iowa Water Trails Association](#)

Signage

A major revision to our water trails and dams sign manual was released in the Spring of 2010. The new manual addresses a number of issues and includes many updates.

The [sign manual](#) PDF contains guideline for the standard statewide water trails way-finding and informational signage system.

Available Grants

Dam Mitigation Grants

The Iowa Legislature appropriated funds for fiscal year 2016 for the development of dam mitigation and water trail projects. A portion the funds are available competitively for dam mitigation cost-share grants. Dam owners and other eligible entities are encouraged to apply for cost-share assistance for projects that reduce recreational hazards and enhance aquatic species connectivity.

For guidance on how projects might be approached, please read " [Solving Dam Problems: Iowa's 2010 Plan for Dam Mitigation](#)" and/or " [Developing Water Trails in Iowa](#)."

[Dam Grant Application Form](#) DOC

[Dam Grant Application Form](#) PDF

Total amount available: \$277,901

Application post-mark deadline:

Closing date February 3, 2017

Dam Mitigation Grants Contact:



River connections

Bringing people and their rivers together



Saturday, April 8, 2017

Washington River Festival and Clean-up 2017

Rennick Riverfront Park - Washington, MO



Washington, Mo. is one of the most river-centric towns on the Lower Missouri River. The beautiful park overlooking the river is the ideal place to hold, not just a community river clean-up, but also a local river festival highlighting the town's connection to the river.

<http://www.riverrelief.org>

Saturday, April 29, 2017

RIDE THE RIVER WITH A RANGER

Learn how to float with the experts

Hideaway Harbor Park near Portage de Sioux to West Alton



Ride the River with a Ranger, a new program led by St. Charles County Park Rangers, teaches guests ages 12 and older how to safely canoe down the river. These guided river excursions are perfect for individuals, groups, scouts and organizations.

www.stccparks.org

Floatzilla goes for world record of largest connected raft of canoes and kayaks



The record of 2,099 was set last year in Suttons Bay, Mich. The count at last year's Floatzilla in Des Moines, Iowa was just less than 1,400, according to Kathy Wine of River Action, which organizes the event.

<http://www.floatzilla.org/>

Floating Dreams **By Paul Jackson**

Aerial visual documentary of the 10th annual MR340 Missouri River “death race”.



This race is a 340 mile, non-stop endurance test from Kansas City to St. Charles, across Missouri by human-powered boats. With only 88 hours to complete, only about two thirds of the teams finish.

<http://rivermiles.com/mr340/>



Paddling the Missouri River

Paddling the River



Picture of a kayaker on the Missouri River

It is worth pointing out that paddling on the Missouri River is often not as complex as is initially perceived from shore. The concentrated near river training ed to as wing dams or dikes and are reinforced with large rock. The dikes (wing dams) typically start from the river bank and can reach out several hundred feet towards the rivers channel. These structures are designed to deflect the rivers flow towards the main channel to promote a "self-scouring" channel. In most cases a paddler can maneuver to avoid these structures completely and thereby avoid much of the "pushy water" that can be generated by the dikes.

Paddling in the main channel is very much like being on an escalator or moving treadmill at an airport, where once you are up to speed, things are straightforward. Conversely, the rivers currents are most complex at the interface of the main channel flow and slower water surrounding the dike structures. As a result, a paddler is often best served by simply staying in the middle of the river on the straight-aways and trending to outside of the large bends in the river.

The Navigation section also provides tips on using the navigation channel markers to definitively locate the main river channel. This can be important, as paddlers will occasionally have to share the main channel with the large barges that operate on the river. Fortunately on the open river these vessels can be seen well in advance and appropriate evasive action taken. More information on dealing with barges is provided in the navigation section.

Paddling the lower Missouri River is in many ways analogous to being on a very long moving lake. The challenges to paddlers are similar to those found on open water lakes, such as the effect of high winds, exposure to storms and general isolation from shore. Almost without fail, first time paddlers on the Missouri River find themselves relaxing within minutes, as the intimidation felt



Paddling the Missouri River

Paddling the Missouri River

Getting Started

River Levels

Sand Bars

Trip Planning and Distances

Weather Factors

Gear Selection

Navigation

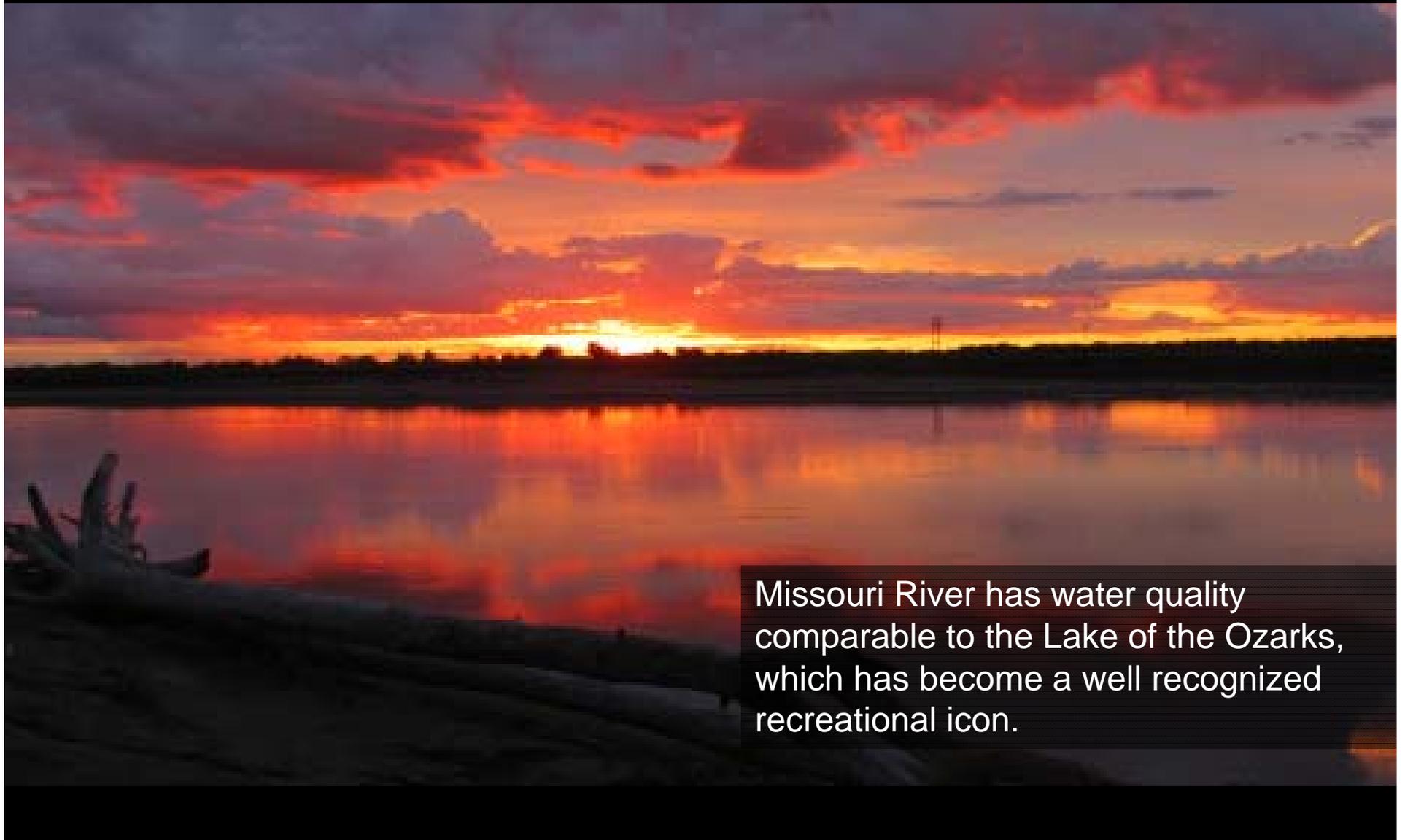
Almost without fail, first time paddlers on the Missouri River find themselves relaxing within minutes, as the intimidation felt from shore simply melts away.

Paddling the Missouri River Water Trail **missouririverwatertrail.org**



Paddling on the Missouri River is not as complex as is initially perceived from shore. The majority of the turbulent water is concentrated near river training structures. Paddling in the main channel is very much like being on an escalator or moving treadmill at an airport, where *once you are up to speed, things are straightforward.*

"YUCK, I wouldn't paddle on that river...the water is filthy and I heard that it stinks". This can unfortunately represent a typical response from those who have never been on the lower Missouri River.



Missouri River has water quality comparable to the Lake of the Ozarks, which has become a well recognized recreational icon.

Support Water Trails in your Community

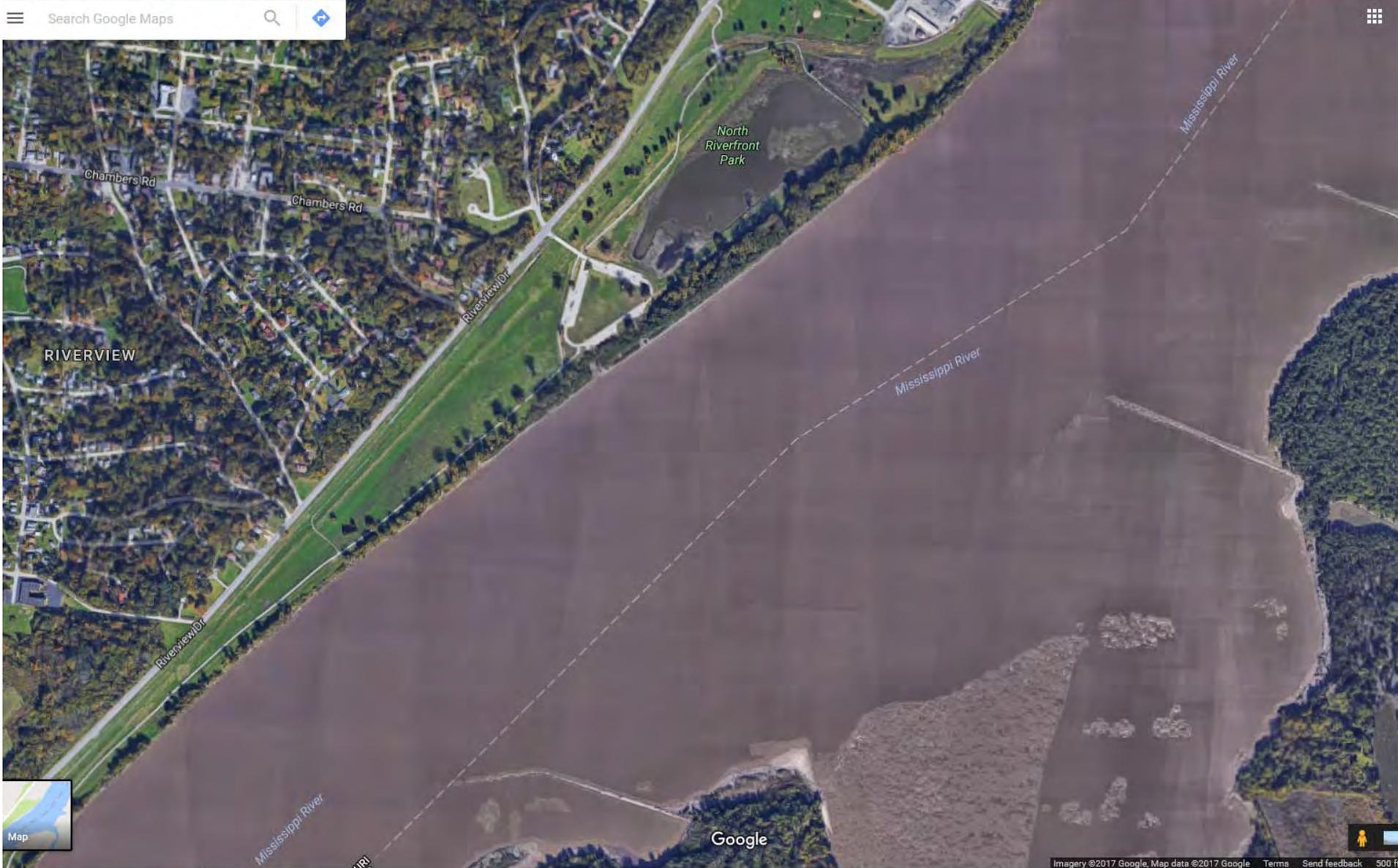


Chain of Rocks portage

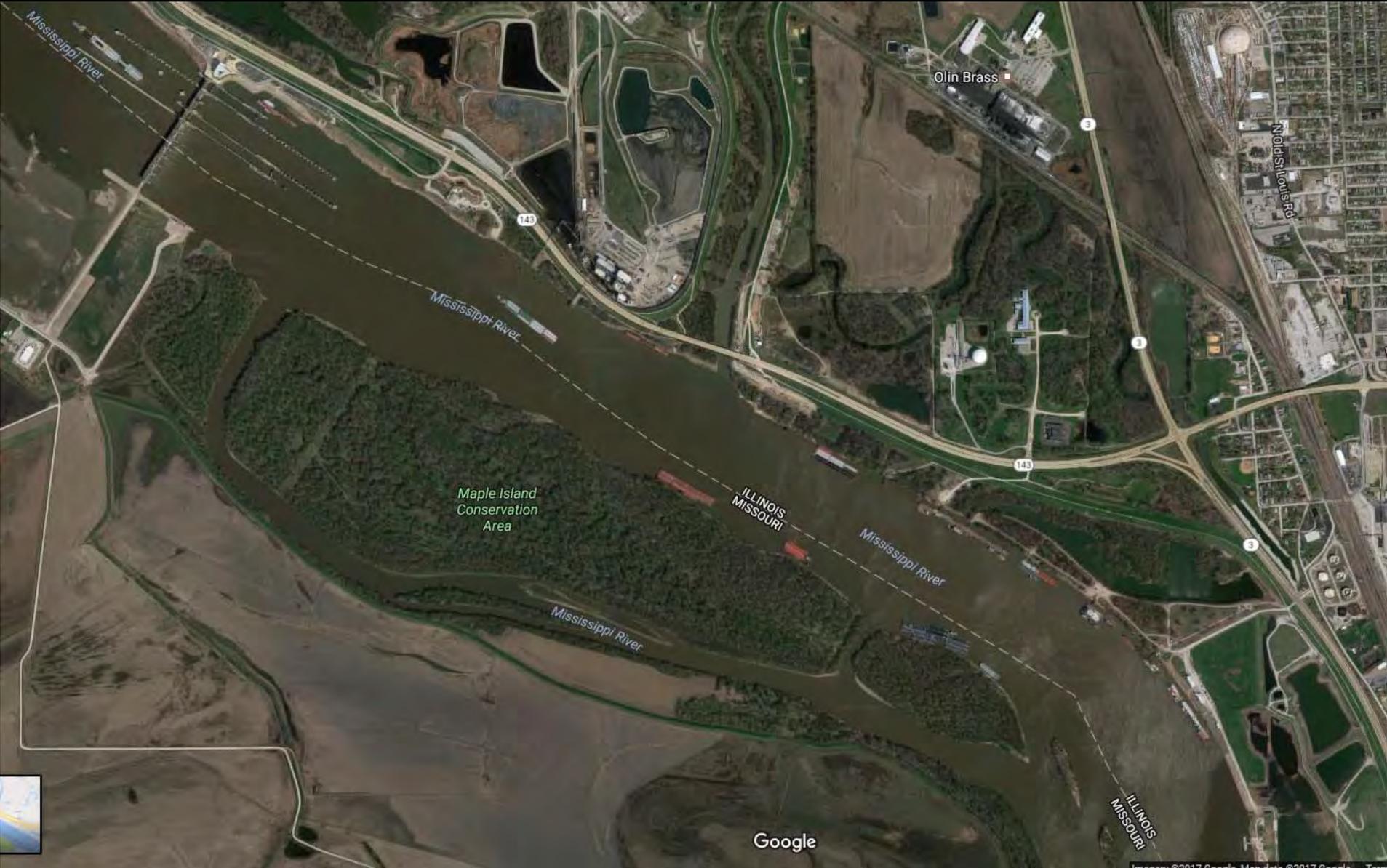


North Riverfront Park

Search Google Maps



Maple Island, Riverlands



Columbia Bottoms



Greater St. Louis Region

