

Board Adopts Rules to Establish the Recreational Use Designations for the Chicago Area Waterway System

The Board, on August 18, 2011, adopted rules establishing recreational use designations for the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS) and the Lower Des Plaines River (LDPR). The proposal is docketed as In the Matter of: Water Quality Standards and Effluent Limitations for the Chicago Area Waterway System and Lower Des Plaines River Proposed Amendments to 35 Ill. Adm. Code 301, 302, 303, and 304 (R08-09A).

The rule created four categories of recreational use designation for the CAWS and the LDPR: Primary Contact Recreation, Incidental Contact Recreation, Non-contact Recreation, and Non Recreation.

Segments of the CAWS designated as Primary Contact Recreation are: 1) Lower North Shore Channel from North Side Water Reclamation Plant to confluence with North Branch Chicago River; 2) North Branch Chicago River from its confluence with North Shore Channel to its confluence with South Branch Chicago River and Chicago River; 3) Chicago River; 4) South Branch Chicago River; 5) Little Calumet River from its confluence with Calumet River and Grand Calumet River to its confluence with Calumet-Sag Channel; and 6) Calumet-Sag Channel.

Segments of the CAWS and LDPR designated as Incidental Contact Recreation are: 1) Upper North Shore Channel from Wilmette Pumping Station to North Side Water Reclamation Plant; 2) South Fork of the South Branch Chicago River; 3) Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal from its confluence with South Branch Chicago River to its confluence with Calumet-Sag Channel; 4) Calumet River from Torrence Avenue to its confluence with Grand Calumet River and Little Calumet River; 5) Lake Calumet and Lake Calumet Connecting Channel; 6) Grand Calumet River; and 7) Lower Des Plaines River from the Brandon Road Lock and Dam to the Interstate 55 bridge.

The Non-contact Recreation use designation applies to Calumet River from Lake Michigan to Torrence Avenue. The Non-recreation use designation is for: 1) Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal from its confluence with the Calumet-Sag Channel to its confluence with Des Plaines River; and 2) Lower Des Plaines River from its confluence with Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal to the Brandon Road Lock and Dam.

Opinions and orders of the Board, hearing transcripts, and other documents in rulemaking records are posted on the Board's Web site and may be downloaded from the Web without charge. Hard copies may be obtained from the Clerk's office upon payment of reproduction fees as prescribed by Section 6 of the Freedom of Information Act [5 ILCS 140/6].

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