

## Webster City, Iowa River Town of the Year 2007

The Boone River is Iowa's first Protected Water Area. It was also selected as the pilot to revamp the program in 2006/2007.

The Boone River is a Designated Water Trail and three counties in this area received grant money to help with signage and boat ramp improvements. City staff helped with the grant application process.

The City of Webster City's "Planning and Zoning" and "Parks and Recreation" are developing a new comprehensive plan that focuses its main attention on the Boone River and its draw as a recreation destination and business location. The city views the Boone River as one of its main assets.

The City of Webster City owns Riverside Park – one of the areas campgrounds. Most of our numerous parks are located along the Boone River, a tributary of the Boone River, or are within a short walking distance.

The City of Webster City received grant money to construct a multi-use recreation trail that parallels much of the river and connects the city to Briggs Woods Park (Iowa's first County Park). The project is partially complete and should be done in 2007.

City staff are currently working with the DNR on the PWA program and helping them obtain conservation easements within city limits and further downstream.

Webster City has had a history of holding events that showcase the Boone River. The Boone Bash River Dash is a multi-sport event that has canoe and kayak events, foot races, and community entertainment along the river.

Webster City Area Development (Chamber of Commerce and Business and Industry) is also refocusing their efforts to attract new people and businesses to this area by promoting the river as one of our main assets.

A multi organization committee has formed to give the city a new look (city logo, signage, welcome to signs, etc.). The logo and slogan will both highlight the river in some way.

The City of Webster City, Hamilton County Conservation, and ISU Extension are putting together a river cleanup this summer. This event will take place every year. We received grant money to help with this project.

The City of Webster City and Hamilton County Conservation are putting together a family based outdoor education program that is focused upon activities surrounding the river (canoeing, fishing, river sampling, geology, etc.).

The Boone River receives a lot of recreation traffic at all times of the year. You will never find a day in which the river isn't used by people who are fishing, paddling, nature watching, hunting, snowmobiling, trail users, etc.

The City of Webster City has one major environmental site and has spent millions of dollars try to try to clean it up for the health of the river.

One project that idealizes the thoughts many community members have is the 7-B ranch. This is a private "ranch" that allows public access near the Boone River in Webster City. Much of the ranch has

water features (ponds, swamp, marsh, etc.) and the landowner allows the city's wastewater to flow through these areas for further cleaning/filtration before entering the Boone River.

The Boone River Watershed Association was created by the likes of the Nature Conservancy, Iowa Soybean Association, Prairie Rivers RC&D, and local citizens. The organization would not be what it is today without the support and cooperation of the local people who care about the river.

Throughout our 150 years as a city (this is our sesquicentennial) we have always been viewed as a "River City". Our partnership with the river, and its cultural/geological/historical assets are too vast to fully do justice in one letter, has been great and Webster City would not be what it is today without it.

The DNR has showed some interest in locating its paddling certification program to the Webster City area. Reasons for doing this may be: we have a wide variety of paddling waters within a short distance, we are centrally located, and the citizens/local agencies fully support these types of programs.

Our greenbelt; the city owns the majority of land along the Boone River.