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DATE: 3/7/2016 SUBJECT: Public invited to open house for St. Louis River Water Trail Plan BY: Pakou Ly, Public Information Coordinator

Public invited to open house for St. Louis River Water Trail Plan

[Duluth, MN] - The Parks and Recreation division invites the public to participate in the St. Louis River Water Trail Planning process. The Plan has inventoried existing amenities and access related infrastructure on the St. Louis River, along with compiling input from a variety of stakeholders from both Minnesota and Wisconsin including but not limited to outdoor user groups, regulatory agencies and environmental organizations. The information gathered identifies how the St. Louis River can become a destination for paddlers of all types and abilities.

The public open house is planned for: Tuesday, March 15, 2016 5:30 PM to 7 PM City Center West, 5830 Grand Ave

Once completed, the St. Louis River Water Trail Plan will be used a mechanism to apply for a National Water Trail Designation. This designation leaves control of the river to local units of government but also allows those communities to leverage this recognition for better funding for promotion, improvements and restorations efforts.

Public input is encouraged on this draft plan.

Anyone unable to attend this meeting, may email comments to Jim Shoberg, Project Coordinator, at <u>jshoberg@duluthmn.gov</u> or call Jim at (218)730-4316.

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The St. Louis River Water Trail Plan is part of the larger St. Louis River Corridor Initiative: Connecting People to the River. The St. Louis River Corridor Initiative invests in public park and trail improvements from Lincoln Park to the Fond du Lac neighborhood. The overall goals of the Initiative are to support the natural environment, enrich neighborhood quality of life, attract new home buyers, establish new visitor destinations and stimulate appropriate development. Initiative projects are funded in part by \$18 million in bonds, collected through the ½ and ½ tourism tax approved by the Minnesota Legislature in 2014. These funds will leverage additional dollars through community partnerships and grants.

