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Flooding forces RAGBRAI to re-route around popular state park

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MADRID, Iowa -- Recent high rainfall totals throughout central and northwest Iowa have led to flooding of the Des Moines River and high lake levels at Saylorville Reservoir. This flooding is having a significant impact on the lower areas of Ledges State Park, which is slated to host the Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI) on Tuesday, July 24th.

The situation has forced park staff, local public safety officials, and RAGBRAI organizers to re-route the popular bike ride to avoid the park and these flooded areas. The lowest areas along the route are currently under as much as 20 feet of water and levels are not expected to subside by the time the ride comes through.

With approval from the Department of Transportation, riders will now leave Boone eastbound on US Highway 30 and ride approximately 1 mile, turning south on Quill Avenue (R27), where after travelling 3 miles will meet up with the original route. The new route will decrease the day's distance by 3 miles.

"It's unfortunate cyclists will not get the opportunity to see the scenic beauty that Ledges has to offer," said Park Manager Andy Bartlett. "Riders will still get a chance to experience the state park atmosphere, though, when they pass through Wildcat Den State Park later in the week. Ledges is definitely a gem within our state parks system and I would encourage those interested in exploring what it has to offer to plan a visit in the future."

