11. Advantages and Disadvantages

In concluding the EA, the overall advantages and disadvantages of the DMNP need to be articulated and assessed. Advantages are positive net effects to the natural and human environment, and disadvantages are negative net effects. The purpose of this section is to provide an overall conclusion as to whether the negative net effects of the DMNP are acceptable, based on a balanced assessment against the positive benefits.

Table 11-1 summarizes the key advantages and disadvantages of the DMNP.

Table 11-1 Advantages and Disadvantages of the DMNP

Project Objective	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Naturalization	• **Naturalization of the mouth of the Don River creates aquatic, wetland and terrestrial habitat and significant improvement in connections with other natural areas (ESAs, Cherry Beach, Tommy Thompson Park).** • **Increase in migratory bird refuge function and bird biodiversity.** • **Creation of 12 ha of permanent aquatic habitat, 8 ha of terrestrial habitat, 13 ha of wetlands and 13 ha of open space for recreation.** • **Improved water quality within the lake-connected wetlands compared to the Keating Channel.**	• Permanent alteration, disruption or destruction of 10 ha of low quality aquatic habitat and permanent removal of 12 ha of low quality terrestrial habitat.
2. Flood Protection	• **Removal of over 290 ha of land and 850 buildings from flood risk, without exacerbating flood risk elsewhere. The removal of flood risk will allow the redevelopment of new communities as planned in the amended Central Waterfront Secondary Plan. It will also remove the potential for damages that are estimated to exceed $305 million associated with existing development in the event of a Regulatory Flood.** • **Increased assessment values within the Lower Don Lands as a result of removal of flood risk and increase in amenity value created by new river channel, floodplain and park system. The value of these lands is estimated to increase 25-fold once Construction is complete.**	
3. Operational Management and Constructability	• **Capacity to adapt the DMNP with respect to naturalization and flood protection against the possible effects of climate change.** • **Greater flexibility in dredging operations due to changes in dredging technology.**	• Additional traffic during construction (temporary). • Permanent loss of mooring revenue along quays and space available for shipping activities in the Inner Harbour.
4. Integration with Infrastructure	• **Revitalization of a derelict section of the waterfront through a novel method of community-planning: integrating the form and function of the river with the surrounding development and infrastructure, leading to communities that are built in harmony with natural processes.**	• Permanent removal of existing land uses and disturbance to some private properties. • Costs of construction and operation/ maintenance.

Project Objective	Advantages	Disadvantages
5. Recreational and Cultural Opportunities	• **Creation of an exciting destination along Toronto's waterfront for both residents and local and regional visitors. This new, revitalized destination in the heart of the City will introduce new generations of visitors to one of the rivers that marked the original boundaries of Toronto.** • **A new series of pedestrian and biking trails with connectivity to existing recreational trails, and increased length of river for recreational boating.**	• Decrease in heritage value of some properties within the Project Study Area due to displacement during construction. • Nuisance effects from changes in noise levels due to Construction and sediment/dredging equipment.
6. Coordination with other Planning Efforts	• **Planning for the naturalization of the new valley system and river mouth has been co-ordinated with relevant planning documents and policies throughout the environmental assessment process.** • **Planning is consistent with the intent of the Provincial Policy Statement.** • **Infrastructure investment resulting in 3,900 full-time job years in direct employment and 4,900 full-time job years in indirect and induced employment.**	
7. Consistency with WT Sustainability Framework	• **Excavation and treatment / disposal of up to 2.3 million cubic metres of soil and isolation of contaminated groundwater from the new naturalized area.**	• Nuisance effects from hauling of soil (dust, traffic)

A review of **Table 11-1** clearly illustrates that the outcomes of the DMNP are strongly beneficial for all aspects of the environment, resulting in a redesigned river mouth that will properly convey floodwaters, act as a habitat for wildlife, and be a destination for residents and visitors alike.

The DMNP is a ground-breaking project, using a novel method of community planning that integrates the form and function of the river with the surrounding development and infrastructure. The DMNP will achieve the objectives set out in the ToR and reaffirmed in the EA by creating a functioning river mouth that will remove over 290 hectares of land and 850 buildings from flood risk. This removal of flood risk will allow development within the Port Lands to occur as planned in the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan. The value of these lands is estimated to increase 25-fold, from $20 million presently to $470 million once Construction is complete.

Naturalization of the river mouth will create higher-quality aquatic, terrestrial and wetland habitat, which will lead to increased biodiversity and significantly-improved habitat connections, a more resilient river system, and a number of new recreational opportunities. The mouth of the Don River will become a destination for residents and visitors both locally and regionally.

In addition, changes in dredging technology (hydraulic dredge, slurry pipe, and hydrocyclone) are expected to provide for greater flexibility during operations, since the dredge can be easily moved to different locations and the hydrocyclone allows for the potential reuse of clean sediment for beneficial purposes.

The disadvantages of the DMNP will primarily occur during Construction. Temporary negative effects include minimal nuisance effects (i.e., air, noise and traffic) to recreational users and businesses, all of which will be minimized by best management practices. The permanent loss of low-quality habitat will be offset by large gains in higher-quality and higher-functioning habitat, as described above. The majority of heritage buildings are being avoided by the river, and the two that are not will be relocated/commemorated in an appropriate manner. Where

Construction of the DMNP displaces or disrupts the use of property that is privately held, is subject to longer-term leases, or is owned by the Federal government, arrangements will be made for loss of property and/or activity (i.e., negotiations for potential relocation and/or compensation).

Conversely, Construction of the DMNP will have the benefit of improving local economic conditions by creating a significant number of construction-related jobs. The costs of the DMNP (maintenance, loss of mooring revenue and removal of existing land uses) will be more than offset by the billions of dollars of investment in the Lower Don Lands and Port Lands that becomes possible after construction of the DMNP, and the additional economic and quality of life values that the DMNP will provide. Without the DMNP, development as envisioned by the City cannot proceed.

In conclusion, the negative net effects of the DMNP, most of which occur during Construction and are considered to be temporary or negligible, are more than offset by the much greater positive contributions of the DMNP, including flood protection, naturalization, revitalization, employment and recreational opportunities, broad economic benefits and improved operation of the river system. The DMNP will transform a degraded area with limited potential for use into a spectacular public greenspace in the heart of downtown Toronto, surrounded by a progressive and sustainable urban fabric. The DMNP epitomizes excellence in landscape and urban design, and incorporates state-of-the-art technologies and science, combined with progressive ecological management principles. The final outcome of the DMNP is an environment far superior to existing conditions.