

PHOENIX LAKE PRESERVATION & RESTORATION PROJECT



Why didn't TUD deepen the entire lake?

The original cost estimate from 2012 to complete all elements of the Phoenix Lake Preservation and Restoration Plan was over \$12M. The District secured \$6.3M through a combination of two state grants and District contributions. Recognizing there was insufficient funding to complete all aspects of the project, the District focused on removing as much sediment as possible within the funding limitations. A competitive bidding process was used and the lake was divided into management areas to allow the construction contract to be scaled to match the project budget. The District awarded a contract to remove up to 237,000 cubic yards of sediment.

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What did the project accomplish?

The project objectives, funded by the grants, were to increase water storage capacity, improve water quality, and enhance aquatic habitat. The project added over 117 acre feet of emergency water storage. Average depth was increased to improve water circulation, promote cooler water temperatures, and inhibit growth of invasive aquatic vegetation all leading to better water quality. The sediment capture basin on the north side of the lake is now complete and operational. The basin will trap future sediment and protect the lake from filling with sediment again in the future.

Frequently Asked Questions

March 2021

Was the District able to remove all 237,000 cubic yards of material?

The south eastern portion of the lake, near Phoenix Lake Road, contains approximately 60,000 cubic yards of soil with a high clay content. Despite great effort, the wet soil conditions precluded the Contractor from accessing this area; otherwise known as the East Pool. Efforts included operating over 70 dewatering wells (24/7) for several months, building access roads on the lakebed, and loosening the clay material to promote drainage. All attempts to gain access failed. The District is required to fill the lake every October to supply water to the community during the annual PG&E water supply interruption. Unfortunately, there was no other feasible construction methods that could have been applied in time, even with unlimited funding. The remaining 60,000 cubic yards of material will need to be removed hydraulically during a future project.





Why didn't TUD remove more cattails and bullrush (weeds)?

While these plants are considered by some to be invasive weeds, the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) considers them to be a wetland habitat worthy of protecting. As part of the permitting process, the USACE was initially going to require TUD to pay over \$1 million in compensatory mitigation fees to remove the bullrush and cattails. This cost would have jeopardized the viability of the entire project. In lieu of paying this fee, the District successfully negotiated to set aside approximately 4.5 acres of land to be protected in a "wetland conservation easement". This action saved the project but required the District to preserve much of the cattails and bullrush in the lake.

Will any more sediment be removed in the future?

At this juncture, with grant funds nearly depleted, the majority of the sediment removal has been completed. Some incidental sediment removal will occur in Chicken Creek during Summer 2021. District Staff will continue searching for additional funding from various State and Federal programs to undertake future projects around the lake.

Is completion of the current project still expected in October 2021?

Yes, the majority of the work is complete, residents will see activity this summer occurring in Chicken Creek and some vegetation removal around the lake. Separate from this project, TUD will be rehabilitating the Phoenix Dam and Spillway in the spring/ early summer. Water levels will remain low until these projects can be completed.



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