



WEST MULTNOMAH
Soil & Water Conservation District

Sturgeon Lake Restoration Project FAQ

1. When will the restoration project begin?

Construction activity began July 2, 2018, with mobilization of materials and equipment the week prior.

2. When will the project be completed?

The project is expected to be complete in late fall, 2018.

3. What is the cost of the total project?

Construction costs during the summer of 2018 are expected to run \$3.0 million. Total project costs will be \$6.9 million. The prior \$3.9 million includes the project's feasibility study, all design work, plans and specifications for the construction contract and payments (and associated due diligence) to participating landowners for temporary construction and work area easements as well as permanent easements for ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the project.

4. What is the scope of the project?

The restoration project will involve removing two failed culverts in Dairy Creek under Reeder Road and replacing them with a 96 foot full-spanning bridge. This will increase tidal flow to and from upper Sturgeon Lake and the Columbia River. This hydrological connectivity will also allow unconstrained high water runoff flow (i.e., spring "freshets") from the Columbia River into upper Sturgeon Lake. These high spring flows will help prevent further accumulation of silt and sediment in Sturgeon Lake and further degradation to important wetland fringe habitat for waterfowl and juvenile salmon. The project also calls for the creation of a low flow channel for Dairy Creek that will provide for fish passage in and out of Sturgeon Lake to the Columbia River throughout most of the summer. Included in the project is the removal of invasive vegetation along the banks of Dairy Creek and subsequent installation of native plants.

5. How will the project affect landowners?

The project includes property easements with 4 private property owners and 2 public land owners who have voluntarily agreed, with compensation provided, to host the construction activity and allow the District permanent access to the project area for monitoring and maintenance activity. The project also covers the cost of reconfiguring the irrigation system of one of the private landowners so that the system can accommodate the needs of the project.

Sauvie Island farmers will see some traffic delays due to the temporary by-pass road but the by-pass will still be wide enough for farm equipment. Nearby landowners will hear construction activity including the driving of piles for the project's debris boom located at the confluence of Dairy Creek and the Columbia River.

6. Why is the project needed?

We have learned a lot since the Sauvie Island levee system was installed in 1940. The levees and upstream dams have altered hydrology and the lake is slowly filling with sediment. Critical open water habitat for fish, birds and waterfowl has since been reduced by 45%. A prior (1989) constructed Dairy Creek channel connecting Sturgeon Lake with the Columbia River no longer receives any significant flow due to the 1996 floods, which blocked the confluence of Dairy Creek and the Columbia River with sediment and debris. Prior to the 1996 flood, the original constructed channel was helping prevent further sediment build-up in Sturgeon Lake. This demonstrates that even restoring a small fraction of the Columbia River's hydrologic influence on upper Sturgeon Lake helps maintain existing wetland fringe habitats from further degradation.

7. Will restoring a channel between Sturgeon Lake and the Columbia River affect the island's flood risk?

No. The entire project area is outside the island's levee system. Sturgeon Lake is already connected to the Multnomah Channel through the Gilbert River. The project will likely improve high water flows from the Columbia River through Sturgeon Lake and the Gilbert River into Multnomah Channel.

8. Will the project remove invasive species in the lake, such as carp?

The project's scope does not include addressing invasive fish species such as carp. In general, the project will be monitored with respect to its effect, positive or negative, on invasive species including fish, other invasive aquatic invertebrates and plant species.

9. What other organizations are involved in this project?

The public agencies include the Bonneville Power Administration, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Department of State Lands and Multnomah County. Metro Parks and Nature and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board also contributed funding for the project. The Oregon Wildlife Foundation spearheaded project funding by private donors, including both individuals and organizations.

10. Will there be a monitoring program after construction and who is responsible?

Yes. A monitoring plan will be developed by the Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce and West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District. The plan includes monitoring for sediment build-up, unwanted debris accumulation, water flow, water temperature and invasive species for decades to come. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) has agreed to day-to-day monitoring and maintenance of the Dairy Creek channel for fish passage as part of its normal operations for the Sauvie Island Wildlife Area. Multnomah County will take ownership of and inspect and maintain the new Reeder Road bridge for transportation purposes. West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District will take ownership and maintenance responsibility of an irrigation pipe that passes through the Multnomah County road right-of-way. The District will also take ownership of the project's debris boom at Dairy Creek's confluence with the Columbia River, though ODFW agrees to monitor and clear debris accumulation along the debris boom. The District is also responsible for maintaining a project Stewardship Fund, first established for the 1989 project, for the purpose of funding any specialized maintenance activity including repair and replacement of the debris boom.



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11. Where can I find more information about the project?

Maps, reports and other information can be found at the West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District website, <http://www.wmswcd.org/sturgeonlake>. Questions and comments are welcome at sturgeonlake@wmswcd.org.