

Canonsburg Lake dredging project.

Over 72 years, sedimentation and debris have made Canonsburg Lake shallower and its shoreline recede.

Work on a multimillion dollar dredging project is likely to start this year, after 20 months of waiting for permits, said Deborah Valentino, founder and director of the Canonsburg Lake Restoration and Improvement Committee. Bids will be accepted within 10 weeks, and the project will take about six months to complete, Valentino said. The project is being overseen by the Washington County Redevelopment Authority.

The lake restoration association has helped raise \$1.7 million, short of the \$2.1 million needed to stop sediment from filling the 70-year-old impoundment and to remove accumulated silt. Plans are to remove 17,000 cubic yards of silt from the lake and install a sediment forebay and weir, a type of filter, at the upper portion of the lake.

Grants for lake restoration include \$60,000 in private donations along with grants from the Department of Community and Economic Development and the Richard K. Mellon Foundation and contributions from both Peters and North Strabane townships

Yet the lake will revert to being a stream, and then a swamp, if work on it is not done.

A tenth of a foot of silt fills the lake annually, raising its deepest point from nearly 43 feet to less than 12 feet and reducing the once 76-acre lake to about 63 acres, according to the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association. The Washington County lake is more than a local destination, as Walter and others from Allegheny County know.

Many lakes in Southwestern Pennsylvania were built as part of state park projects from the 1950s to 1970s and for flood control after rising rivers devastated Pittsburgh in 1936.

What is happening at Canonsburg Lake is similar to what was happening at North Park Lake several years ago. Allegheny County officials in 2009 paid to drain, dredge and rehab that lake. The restoration cost \$21 million

In beaver county Hereford Manor Lakes is another PA Fish & Boat commission owned lake that was drain and dam breached in 2012 because the dame structure was classified as hazardous by the Dept of

Environmental Protection. Many other commission owned lakes are in need of depart repair and or maintenance.

<http://triblive.com/news/washington/9105014-74/lake-canonsburg-county>

Evangel Heights Christian Academy students send message about water quality

Three groups of Evangel Heights Christian Academy students helped Buffalo Township engineer “NO DUMPING, DRAINS TO RIVER” messages near the plan's storm drains.

The stenciling event was one of more than a dozen community service projects scheduled for Evangel Heights students this week

The volunteer event fulfills part of Buffalo Township's public education and outreach and public participation/involvement requirements in complying with the state Department of Environmental Protection's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems program. The program, which involves annual reports to the DEP, requires sewer system operators like Buffalo Township to create a stormwater management plan to reduce runoff and pollution.

The Buffalo Township school has 220 students in grades kindergarten through 12th grade. The projects are part of the school's “Legacy Giving Back” event, in which the students are expected to perform more than 1,000 hours of volunteer work by Saturday evening.

“It also helps the kids to learn that they can implement practices to not pollute when they're adults.”

The event is the second of its kind at Evangel Heights — it debuted in 2014 — and is expected to serve as the school's primary fundraiser this year. Students participating in the event send support letters to family and friends who, in turn, make donations to help the school meet its budget and lower tuition costs.

The school listed a fundraising goal of \$150,000 on its website.

Evangel Heights for a few years raised money through a walkathon but decided to shift to a fundraising project focused on community involvement

<http://triblive.com/local/valleynewsdispatch/11397058-74/students-evangel-heights>

Exxon agrees to pay millions for Yellowstone River spill

BILLINGS, Mont. — Exxon Mobil Corp. has agreed to pay \$12 million for environmental damages caused by a pipeline break that spilled 63,000 gallons of oil into Montana's Yellowstone River and prompted a national debate over lax pipeline safety rules, officials said Wednesday.

The payment is meant to settle claims from the U.S. and state governments that the crude oil killed fish and wildlife and damaged thousands of acres along an 85-mile stretch of the famous river that flows through southern Montana.

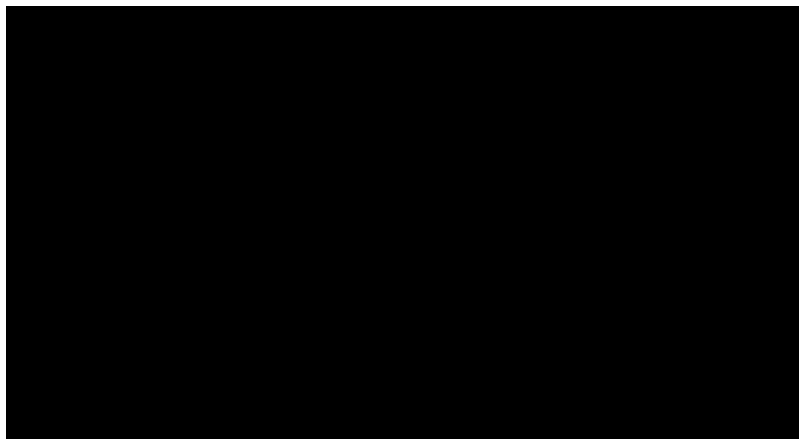
The pipeline break upstream of Billings, Montana's largest city, required a monthslong cleanup.

A U.S. Transportation Department investigation found Exxon workers failed to adequately heed warnings that the 20-year-old pipeline was at risk from flooding.

Gov. Steve Bullock, Attorney General Tim Fox and representatives of the U.S. Justice Department announced the \$12 million settlement at the site of the pipeline break in Laurel. The Associated Press obtained details in advance.

“All of us as Montanans lost something when that spill occurred,” Bullock said. “This money is to make sure not just that we're compensated but the pelicans are where they should be, the fish are where they should be.”

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