

Dane County Yahara River Sediment Removal Project Update

Dane County's sediment removal project was initiated in May 2020 in response to extensive flooding that occurred along the Yahara River in fall 2018. That flood caused extensive damage and affected properties along the entire Yahara River and Yahara Lakes. The goal of the sediment removal project is to improve water flow, increase flood storage capacity, and improve fish and wildlife habitat in the Yahara Lakes. When completed, sediment removal will improve water flow so that the delivery of two inches of rain that currently takes about two weeks to travel through the Yahara Lakes system will take half as long – one week. This multimillion and multiyear project will take place in five phases (see included map), with each phase carried out as Dane County secures permitting. The benefit to reduce flooding for all lakes is realized when sediment accumulation has been removed along the Yahara chain, thus it is critical that the phases are planned as timely as possible.

Phase 1

The first phase is located between Lakes Monona and Waubesa. Sediment removal of approximately 40,000 cubic yards of sediment has been completed.

Phase 2

The second phase has two segments of work located between Lake Waubesa to Lower Mud Lake (Phase 2A) and Lake Kegonsa to Highway B (Phase 2B). The work between Lake Waubesa to Lower Mud Lake started in summer of 2021 and will be near completion in fall of 2022. Approximately 50,000 cubic yards of sediment will be removed. The work between Lake Kegonsa to Highway B started in summer of 2022. In the summer of 2022 a dewatering basin was built one mile south of LaFollette Dam on Williams Drive to store sediment that is pumped from the Yahara River by a hydraulic dredge. When work in the Yahara River starts, sediment and water will be pumped through pipes for as far as two miles from a hydraulic dredge to the dewatering pond. In the dewatering pond, water will filter out and sediment will be contained. It is expected that about 100,000 cubic yards (which is the equivalent of over 7,700 dump truck loads) will be removed from the river in Phase 2B. Sediment removal is expected to begin in spring of 2023 after fish spawning has ended.

Phase 3

The third phase is located between Lower Mud Lake and Lake Kegonsa. Planning and Engineering drawings have started. Permit submittal is anticipated to be complete in winter of 2022-2023 with construction starting in summer of 2023 and extend into 2024.

Phase 4 and 5

Future project to start after Phase 3 complete

Project Website with videos and more information can be found at:

<https://lwr.dane.gov/LwrProjects/Detail/Yahara-River-Sediment-Removal-Project>

Proposed Sediment Removal Sites on the Yahara River

