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Lake improvements still under way

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

In a continuing effort to improve the campus infrastructure and implement water quality control measures, Oakland University is rehabilitating the lake located between the Oakland Center and Vandenberg Hall.

The lake's water level was lowered last summer so structural repairs could be made to the bridge. As the repairs were under way, it became apparent that a significant amount of shoreline erosion had taken place, necessitating a site stabilization plan. Repairs were completed for the lake's inlet and outlet storm water pipes last October. Further stabilization currently is being completed with the installation of structural rock on the bank slopes.

"The soil around both the inlet and outlet pipes was scoured out by erosion," said Rusty Postlewate, associate vice president for facilities management. "The force of the water had eroded the soil over time. We finished installing stabilizing rock to protect the pipes. Now we're performing restoration to the lake itself where natural water action had eroded the shoreline. We had to regrade it to create safer slope conditions and are installing stabilizing rock in the steepest areas."

The rock installation and regrading should be finished by the end of January, Postlewate said. Next spring, 20 to 30 smaller trees of various varieties will be planted to supplement the existing trees as will native prairie grasses and forbs to discourage geese from accessing the lake. The water level also will be kept about two-and-a-half feet lower than it was previously. The lake measured about 13-15 feet deep prior to the bridge repairs.

"With a lower water level, we'll be able to let the water flow through the outlet pipe at a slower rate, which will cause less damage in the ravine where the lake empties," Postlewate said. "We also think the lake itself will be safer with the rock wall because the slopes won't be so steep."

The improvements will help support plant communities and emergent vegetation, which will improve infiltration and slow down the flow of water, thereby decreasing erosion.

SUMMARY

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