



- + **RECOVERING** the June Sucker
- + **RESTORING** the Natural Ecosystem
- + **IMPROVING** Recreational Experiences



Fall 2019

PROVO RIVER DELTA BREAKS GROUND SPRING 2020

With project lands acquired, delta designs completed, and permit applications submitted, we're gearing up for groundbreaking next spring. First construction steps will focus on keying in imported road base material to build a construction access road along the southern boundary of the project where a berm and trail will ultimately be constructed.

Imported, coarser-grained material is needed for stability because of the soft lake-deposited soils in the project area that historically was a marshy bay of Utah Lake. Once a stable haul route for construction equipment is established, construction efforts in the latter half of 2020 will shift to excavation of pond and river channel features in the northwest portion of the project area. *(see more updates inside).*

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

This newsletter is to update you on project progress. For more information, visit: provoriverdelta.us



Project map showing channel and pond designs.

DESIGN UPDATE

Final designs for construction and revegetation of the new delta area are now complete. These designs represent the culmination of an in-depth process that tapped the expertise of river restoration professionals, June sucker biologists, revegetation specialists, and key stakeholders to develop a plan that maximizes June sucker habitat value while minimizing impacts to neighboring interests and accommodating project constraints. The reconnection of lake and river environments will create a unique natural delta habitat critical to survival of young June sucker that are hatched upstream and currently don't survive in the existing leveed, dredged river. The new delta area will receive the majority of Provo River flows, acting as a sponge to dissipate flood energy and take up nutrients. The project represents an investment in publicly-accessible and permanently protected open space.

We anticipate finalizing designs for the diversion structure and small downstream dam in early 2020. The

diversion will be constructed in late 2022 and will direct the river into the new delta and deliver water to the existing Provo River channel. The small dam will maintain a constant water level in the existing channel and will be constructed beginning in 2023. Other upcoming design work involves finalizing plans for project recreation features and designing the aeration system that will improve water quality in the existing channel.

LAKEVIEW PARKWAY

Provo City started construction on the portion of Lakeview Parkway between Center Street and 620 North in October. We continue to coordinate with Provo City on construction logistics since its road construction timeline overlaps with the delta construction schedule.

PREHISTORIC PROVO RIVER DELTA HOMES

Utah Lake is one of the largest freshwater lakes west of the Mississippi River. The historic Provo River delta, where the Provo River flowed into Utah Lake, provided a rich diversity of lake, stream, wetland and riparian habitat and an associated abundance of fish, game and fertile soils. The area also supported one of the heaviest concentrations of prehistoric people living anywhere in the Great Basin.

Early settlers and travelers recognized the region had been of significant importance because of the many prehistoric remains in the valley, most notable of which were mounds described in journals from the 1870s Wheeler Survey:

“West of the town [Provo], on its outskirts and within three or four miles of the lake, are many mounds, of various constructions and in different states of preservation...Those examined were on low grounds, almost on a level with the lake and with Provo River...”

The mounds were remnants of prehistoric structures that originally served as homes for the Fremont people nearly 1,000 years ago when the Provo River was a delta. Some of the earliest archaeological survey work conducted was by James and Robert Bee in the early 1930s; they noted the presence of 121 mounds in the delta area. Most of these mounds have long since been destroyed with settlement of the Utah Valley, or are under water.

We are working with the Utah Division of State History to ensure prehistoric resources such as these are protected during Provo River Delta project construction. The project area has been surveyed to identify prehistoric resource locations, and the project design is being adjusted as necessary to avoid these areas. Also, a cultural resource monitor will be on-site during all ground disturbing activities to ensure inadvertent discoveries are avoided or mitigated.



‘FROM DUSK TILL DAWN, PUT YOUR DEET ON’



Do you feel like there was an increase in mosquitoes around Utah Lake this year? If so, you're right. Mosquito trapping numbers east of Utah Lake were higher this year than last. According to Utah County Health Department Mosquito Abatement, mosquito numbers are location driven and their habitat fluctuates with the level of Utah Lake, which is up this year. Next year's numbers are expected to remain higher as we go into winter with higher lake levels. Trap data and mosquito locations may be viewed using the Weekly Mosquito Surveillance link on the County's website:

<http://www.utahcountyonline.com/Dept2/Health/Mosquito%20Abatement/home.asp>

The Provo River Delta project funds two mosquito monitoring sites within the delta project area. These are in addition to the 32 adult mosquito monitoring sites maintained by Utah County. This year, the County conducted mosquito control using Ultra low volume (ULV) fogging on the ground, and aerial spraying in the evenings, when mosquitoes are active. You can protect yourself from mosquito bites by covering up and using insect repellent containing DEET or other active ingredients recommended by the Centers for Disease Control:

<https://www.cdc.gov/features/stopmosquitoes/index.html>

FALL FIELD ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Site Preparations: You may have noticed some activity on the north side of Boat Harbor Drive recently. We've installed new fencing to define our project boundary and an entrance pad where construction equipment can pull in off the road. We also re-aligned part of an access road for a neighboring ranch property in preparation for building our construction access road next spring.

Invasive Tree Removal: Non-native Russian olive and Tamarisk were removed from the east and west sides of Skipper Bay Dike within the project area. The removal was completed October 9, in preparation for upcoming project construction. Control of these noxious trees is required under the Utah Noxious Weed Control Act; it also reduces the seed bank of these trees and supports success of future revegetation efforts.

Dominion Energy: In November and December, Dominion Energy will be relocating an existing natural gas pipeline deeper underground in the area east of the northern portion of Skipper Bay Dike. Funded by the Provo River Delta Project, this effort is needed to allow safe excavation of planned delta features.



Credit: Bryan Nielsen



Credit: Bryan Nielsen



IN THE COMMUNITY

You may have seen Provo River Delta project staff out and about in the local community over the past year. We've been involved in a variety of outreach and education efforts, including Utah Lake Commission's Utah Lake Festival and fourth grade field trips. If you'd like our staff to host a booth or make a presentation at your next event, let us know!

