

Permit to proceed Lake Helen renovation on wish list

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Friday, 20 December 2013 15:05 -

City officials ready to renovate Lake Helen

City officials and the council are still waiting for a permit from the U.S. Corps of Engineers to start excavation of Lake Helen.

“Until then, we have no timeline to proceed,” said city administrator Bruce Clymer on Tuesday.

About a year ago, an outlet gate was opened and lake water started to drain into a tail race to eventually rehabilitate the lake. Aside from pumping rainwater and water in low spots last summer, the project is at a standstill.

Initial plans were to start excavation of the lake last August with construction completed and the lake refilled in March of 2014.

At a council meeting, city engineer Travis Mason of Miller & Associates Consulting Engineers of Kearney said he hopes the permit is issued by February 2014.

Getting the proper documentation for the corps takes time and isn't easy, he said.

Mason added that allowing the lake to dry out for a longer period of time may mean that heavier equipment could be brought in to scoop out parts of the lake faster.

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