

1. Who are leading the Tenmile Creek Restoration Project effort?

The Tenmile Creek Restoration Project is a effort led by the Tenmile Lakes Association (TLA). The Mission of the TLA is to Preserve, Protect, and Promote Tenmile Lakes and its Waters and Watershed. The TLA is working to be an Active Advocate for the Improvement in the Quantity and Quality of Tenmile Lakes and its Waters/Watershed with All Public Agencies: Including Local Governments, Coos and Douglas Counties, State of Oregon, USA and Native Americans, and any Other Groups of Interested Parties and Public Policy Making/Political Bodies.

Learn more about the TLA at: www.tenmilelakes.com

2. What problem(s) are you trying to solve?

Our primary goal is to restore and minimize the summer and winter water levels of Tenmile Creek and Tenmile Lakes. Over the past 5 years, the summer water levels have been extremely low. The low water levels impact water quality, fishing, and recreational use of Tenmile Lakes. The low water levels have caused economic impact to the community of Lakeside which is dependent on summer recreation for its economic vitality. Low water has caused damage to watercraft in the form of broken props and trailer axles upon launch and pull out, limited watercraft access to the Tenmile canal joining the north and south lakes, as well as access to upper Tenmile creek.

See attachment “Tenmile Lakes Mean Daily Elevations” which shows historical data as well as a view of what our efforts hope to achieve.

3. What has changed in the last 5 years to cause the lake level problems?

The short answer is we cannot point to one specific proven cause. However, we have narrowed down the following issues:

- Sea Wall removal at the mouth of Tenmile Creek by the U.S. Dept of Forestry (~2016)
- Removal of sunken logs from Tenmile Creek (2016-17) –For profit log removal. If logs were removed, this would directly increase the flow of the creek at its lowest levels.
- Dune grass- Dune grass was introduced to stop dune drifts/sand from encroaching onto railways and roadways. Dune grass along the banks of the creek hold up dune structure, scouring the creek bottom.
- Natural scouring based on the soil composition of the area
- Climate Change –but compared to the other issues is the least impactful issue at this time.

4. Describe your proposed solution?

Our solution would be to engineer the creek bottom to restore the creek and lake levels that will support all the beneficial uses using natural material sufficiently anchored in place to achieve optimum seasonal elevation levels and fish passage.

In other words, using Logs, large rocks, and earthen materials take a section of the creek and buildup natural material and create a constantly flowing fish ladder (and prime habitat) for fish.

5. Where will the creek restoration be located? Why?

The location for the restoration is just a few yards northwest of Lakeside's current wastewater treatment plant at the end of Park street in Lakeside. The site is surrounded by land owned by the City of Lakeside and just downstream of the high-water spillway ditch. The site was chosen for the proximity to the spillway ditch as whatever elevation we raise the creek bottom must be accounted for during high water periods. The solution will include improvements and expansion of the high-water spillway ditch. Having the site be 100% on city land simplifies the approval process and site access.

6. What is the current timeline for completion of this project?

Given the long lead times for the 404-permit process and grant writing the earliest we could hope for completion of the project would be in the Fall of 2020. Restoration Grant submissions are usually by the end of June each year. The 404 permit approvals could take up to 90 days assuming there are no issues that need to be addressed. If we fail to get the necessary approvals and funding, the next earliest would be Fall 2021. The project would need to be completed in the fall when the waters are at their lowest.

Update 12/11/19 – According to our grant writers and TLBP it is best to consider Fall 2021 as the goal date. The fall 2020 would be only if we had all the money to go forward with the project which is not likely at this time.

7. What other solutions have been attempted? Why did they fail?

Dams. Since the early 1990's there have been numerous efforts to retain water in the lake. The first and most ambitious attempt was led by the Coos Bay/North Bend Water District as they looked to the lake as a source for water for their growing communities. This effort precipitated the formation of the Tenmile Lakefront Owners Association (now the TLA) in 1995. The effort was opposed by the lakefront owners as they feared their lake would be emptied to support Coos Bay and North Bend communities. The project failed to be implemented and shortly thereafter environmental regulations changed that would have severely limited when they could have pulled water from the lake. Ironically, all subsequent efforts were dam designs (traditional, gated weir, inflatable bag designs) in attempts to solve the low water levels that the original dam would have stabilized. Most all the efforts failed due to water rights issues and exorbitant costs associated with building a modern dam.

8. Has there been any opposition to the project? What's their objections?

In the year since the original restoration project was brought to the public (originally a beaver habitat restoration) there has been very little opposition. All centered around the introduction of beavers into the city limits. There have been no formal issues brought to our attention since we changed the project to a creek restoration. What has been voiced both by the public and the Lakeside City Council are: the risk of winter flooding in Lakeside and the outflow of treated water from the wastewater plant. Satisfying both concerns are absolute requirements for this project to be approved. They are referred to as a "no-rise" study and a "mixing" study.

9. Who supports this effort?

The support the project is wide ranging. The Mayor and City Council of Lakeside support the project in general as they recognize the economic prosperity of the community is directly tied to the lake. They are landowner signature approvers and require the favorable no-rise and mixing study outcomes. The Tenmile Lakes Association and members support the project as well as Lakeside business owners. The Tenmile Lakes Basin Partnership (TLBP) also support this effort and provides resources to the project. This organization is a partnership between all the key stakeholder groups for the watershed, so all stakeholders from County Board of Commissioners, to Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, and state agencies are regularly updated on this project.

Learn more about the Tenmile Lakes Basin Partnership at www.tenmilewatershed.com

10. What are the legal challenges to this project?

We are hoping the community sees this project as a 100% positive for the community. Where previous efforts have had substantial opposition and legal concerns, primarily around water rights, environmental restoration projects are not contingent on water rights. From an environmental perspective we see this project as a positive for fish species and will provide excellent habitat for fish with constant water flowing throughout the year.

11. How much will the restoration cost? Where is the money coming from?

Our estimate for this project is about \$200,000. Our direct fundraising goal is \$60,000 in community donations and we hope to fund the remaining for this project through a environmental restoration grant. The direct donations are expected to go to the No-rise and mixing studies and to cover any cost to the city of Lakeside associated with this restoration effort. The TLA is committed to ensuring this project has no fiscal impact on the city of Lakeside.

To date we have raised \$47,460 toward our goal of \$60k. If you would like to donate, go to <https://www.tenmilelakes.com/creekrestoration>.

Update 12/11/19 - Gut feeling says we could be closer to \$300,000. It really depends on if we can get material donated. Once the engineering has been completed, we will have a better estimate.

12. Contact information:

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TENMILE LAKE DAILY MEAN ELEVATIONS (Lake Height)

