

Mooney, Meredith

From: Mooney, Meredith
Sent: Friday, June 14, 2019 9:52 AM
To: Kallivoka, Liana [PARD]
Cc: Labriola, Vera; Thedford, April; Jay, Jodi; Vaclavik, Charles; Personett, Mike; Johns, David; Shunk, Kevin; Herrington, Chris; Champlin, Kaela; Segura, Anthony; Piper, Suzanne; Massie, Lucas (Lucas.Massie@austintexas.gov); Kim.McKnight@austintexas.gov
Subject: Staff Update on Dam above Barton Springs Pool

Good Morning Parks and Recreation Board Members,

I would like to provide you with the following update from staff regarding the dam about Barton Springs Pool (the item that Mr. Riddell brought up in citizen communication during the May meeting):

Thank you for bringing safety concerns to our attention. Recently, Jodi Jay, Aquatic Division Manager, met with David Johns with Watershed Protection Department (WPD) regarding the upstream dam above Barton Springs Pool. WPD is currently working on one of the long-term projects identified in the master plan to reopen the inlets in the upstream dam to allow water from the Barton Creek during low-flow conditions into the pool. Additionally, WPD is considering the possibility of removing the gravel trap upstream of the pool and stabilizing the erosion area on the north side of the creek bank which could include a formal take-out point. PARC and WPD will work closely to ensure that there will be no adverse effects to the ecosystem and protected species.

After further coordination with WPD, PARC has determined the following course of action:

1. Design and install two warning signs that could be safely hung from cables above the creek and above most flood flows
 - a. Timing – Install signage before the end of September 2019
 - b. Location – Consider sign visibility and equipment access
 - c. Content – Discuss wording and bilingual communication
 - d. Visibility – Consider reflective signs
 - e. Lighting – Study additional lighting on the upstream dam and/or creek take-out point
 - f. Responsibility – PARC will lead the design and installation of signs with input from WPD
2. WPD is preparing a Preliminary Engineering Report due by the end of June 2019:
 - a. Remove the gravel trap dam and stabilize the north bank and construct a hardened exit point for creek users upstream of Barton Springs Pool. Construction proposed for low creek flow conditions.
 - b. Re-open three portals with adjustable gates in the upstream dam of Barton Springs Pool. These will allow creek water to flow into the pool under certain low creek flow conditions.
 - c. Propose design in FY20 and construction in FY21.
3. Leave iron gate near the greenbelt access unlocked but closed. PARC prefers not to leave this gate open, so that the road is not blocked during high use periods and for emergency access.

Please know that significant improvements were made to the bypass inlet during the repairs of the bypass in 2012. This work was led by WPD. The priorities for the inlet design included less clogging with debris during floods and not increasing flooding frequency of Barton Springs Pool. During high flow events in Barton Creek, as in any creek, there are inherent dangers that include drowning, similar to water moving across low water crossings, and not all dangers can be eliminated in an aquatic environment. The bypass inlet and the upstream dam of Barton Springs Pool present additional risks on the creek. During flood events, it is not safe for people to be in the water.

Thank you,

Meredith Mooney

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