Work along Plymouth Road railroad embankment wash-out nears final phase

By Amy Biolchini

Crews from the City of Ann Arbor are on schedule to wrap up work this week at the site where a steep railroad embankment along Plymouth Road east of Moore Street washed out last year.

A 45-foot-long section of embankment washed out from under a line of railroad tracks after 3 inches of rain fell in a 24-hour period May 25, 2011. About 2,000 cubic yards of soil as well as trees that washed out from the embankment blocked the five-lane roadway for two days.

City crews are in the last week of their four-week contract to remove debris and soil from the land at the base of the embankment adjacent to the roadway -- a bill of $52,000 to date.

The area is being restored to a wetland. As the soil is cleared away, city crews are performing rough
A $97,687.50 contract with Fonson Inc. for the final grading and construction of the wetland, including plant installation, should come before the Ann Arbor City Council July 16 for approval.

The final phase of work should begin in mid-August and be finished by the end of October, said city spokeswoman Lisa Wondrash.

Two new drainage pipes were also installed to replace old ones, said Andy Fischer, lead field operator for the project.

Drainage pipes that ran through the embankment before the washout had become clogged, Fischer said, and that likely contributed to the failure of the embankment.

Both pipes feed into a small creek.

Major repairs to the railroad embankment itself were previously completed by the Ann Arbor Railroad Company, which owns the tracks.

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Audion Man

Tue, Jun 26, 2012 : 2:44 p.m.

Any explanation as to why this sat around for a *year* without any work having been done on it. Not to mention the trashed park that has not been repaired...

A2comments

Mon, Jun 25, 2012 : 9:18 p.m.

How about clarifying the cost. In May of 2011 the road was covered in debris. How much money in 2011 did Ann Arbor spend on cleaning up the mess? Now, A2 is cleaning up the area. Is that $52,000 MORE, or are is the 2011 work and this work $52,000 in total? And then A2 is spending another $98,000 for grading and plants? Really? The city can't grade it? That seems very expensive.

SonnyDog09

Tue, Jun 26, 2012 : 11:21 a.m.

Don't forget the art. How much money from this project was siphoned off to the city's slush fund for art?

Homeland Conspiracy

Mon, Jun 25, 2012 : 10:26 p.m.

You left out the 10's of thousands spent on consultants

Dog Guy

Mon, Jun 25, 2012 : 8:26 p.m.

Is this the stretch where in the 1970's Ann Arbor cut into that embankment to widen Plymouth Road?

Ann English

Tue, Jun 26, 2012 : 12:19 a.m.

If the answer to your question is YES, that would explain why the pedestrian bridge over Plymouth from Leaird Road to the Barton Drive sidewalk in the 1960's was removed and Leaird was closed off from Plymouth altogether. It had been a route to Northside School for students living on Harbal,
One of the best pictures ever in AA.com was the picture after the washout with the railroad tracks suspended in mid air.

Ann English

Tue, Jun 26, 2012 : 10:48 p.m.

Another comment poster made that photo unforgettable, imagining it eventually used as a ROLLER COASTER track! Just a loose track, gently going up and down. A very unique photo indeed.

cornelius McDougenschniefferburgenstein jr. 3 esq.

Mon, Jun 25, 2012 : 7:45 p.m.

i hope the tadpoles return!