

PAW dredges silt inadvertently released amid dam work

Sediment removal was part of state DEP-required corrective action plan



The muddied Roaring Brook in Scranton in the area of Richter Avenue and Myrtle Street is seen Feb. 21. Times-tribune file

BY JIM LOCKWOOD

JLOCKWOOD@SCRANTONTIMES.COM

Pennsylvania American Water has completed dredging Roaring Brook of silt and sediment inadvertently released into the waterway in February from a dam rehabilitation in Dunmore, the company announced Monday.

The sediment removal was part of a corrective action plan required by the state Department of Environmental Protection after a mishap at the No. 7 Reservoir dam in Dunmore accidentally released large quantities of silt and sediment that muddied Roaring Brook downstream through the borough and Scranton and through its confluence with the Lackawanna River in South Side.

Dredging began in early September along Cedar Avenue in Scranton to remove sediment from the stream channel and its banks. The work also included dredging along Richter Avenue and Myrtle Street near Darcy Park. Monitoring for additional sediment will continue at the sites while work progresses at the No. 7 Reservoir Dam and twice a year after the remediation measures are completed, according to the water company.

“The completion of dredging at Roaring Brook is a key step in our corrective action plan. This effort and ongoing monitoring helps protect our waterways and communities,” PAW’s Director of Water Quality and Environmental Compliance Brandy Braun said in the announcement. “We appreciate the cooperation of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection as we continue work on the No. 7 Reservoir Dam rehabilitation project.”

The \$17 million rehabilitation of the 152-year-old dam, which began in October 2023 to upgrade the structure for stability and help ensure its compliance with DEP dam safety regulations, should be completed in June, the water company said.

PAW also will carry out a community enhancement project as part of a settlement of the DEP enforcement action. This project, which will get completed next summer, will involve rehabilitating and improving a section of Roaring Brook, including habitat enhancement features, at Darcy Park. This small park is situated between the waterway and Richter Avenue, across from the East Scranton Little League fields.

The Lackawanna River Conservation Association, which early on expressed concerns about the silt from the dam project polluting Roaring Brook and the downstream Lackawanna and Susquehanna rivers and harming aquatic macroinvertebrates and fish, said PAW has been accountable and the corrective active plan has been effective, according to the water company’s announcement of the completion of dredging.

“The Lackawanna River Conservation Association recognizes Pennsylvania American Water’s accountability in addressing the sediment release incident and appreciates the effective measures implemented, as well as their ongoing commitment to monitoring and rehabilitation of the waterway,” LRCA Executive Director Tara Jones said in the statement.