

Fort Smith Regional Water Supply Project *Update*

Fall 2002

Highlights:

- Ground broken for expansion of Lake Fort Smith.
- Mayor: A great day for Fort Smith.
- Clearing and grubbing along base of existing dam is ongoing.
- Grouting of dam foundation 25 percent complete.
- Work on God's Ranch Road relocation proceeding.
- Detour around Warloop Creek Bridge in place.
- Preparations for stockpiling impervious fill nearing completion.

Ground Broken for Lake Expansion

On August 22, 2002, golden shovels turned the earth to symbolize the start of the largest civil works project in the history of Fort Smith, Arkansas. Performing the honors were Mayor Ray Baker and representatives of the Board of Directors, Utility Department, Chamber of Commerce, prime contractor, and project engineer. In remarks made at this event, the mayor said this was a great day for Fort Smith. Dave Malutich, area manager for Granite Construction, thanked Fort Smith for the opportunity to participate in the construction of the new lake. Joel Cerwick, president of the Infrastructure Group at Burns & McDonnell Engineering, congratulated Fort Smith's planners and decision makers for their foresight in undertaking a project

that would secure the city's water supply for the next 50 years.

Construction in Progress

Work is in full swing on the dam foundation, outlet works, road relocations, and acquisition of impervious fill. The removal of structures and vegetation ("clearing and grubbing") is continuing along the base of the existing dam and at the east abutment where God's Ranch Road will be relocated. Grout is being injected into the bedrock under the dam to seal any fissures through which water could seep. This task is approximately 25 percent complete.

Clearing and grubbing for the outlet tunnel has been completed and excavation of the rock and



Groundbreaking for the new Lake Fort Smith



Clearing along the base of the existing dam

dirt (overburden) from over the tunnel location is approximately 25 percent complete. Clearing and grubbing has been completed and approximately 25 percent of the overburden has been removed for the relocation of God's Ranch Road. Excavation for the foundations of the retaining walls and installation of the storm drains needed for this road have begun. For Lake Fort Smith Road, the East Lake water line has been relocated, a detour has been put in place around the Warloop Creek Bridge, and excavation for the raw water pipeline crossing is nearly complete.



Grout injector

Impervious fill material will be excavated from the basin of the new lake and transported to a stockpile area south of the dam site. Clearing and grubbing of the stockpile area is nearly complete and some erosion control measures have been installed. Construction of a temporary sediment trapping pond is approximately 50 percent complete. For

the haul road to the stockpile site, clearing and grubbing is 75 percent complete and road construction is 25 percent complete. Clearing, grubbing and the installation of erosion control measures at the borrow areas (sources of the impervious fill) have begun.

Work Continues on Cultural Resources

Seven cultural resource sites in the project area that would be lost to construction of the new lake were determined to be of sufficient quality to warrant excavation. To date, excavation has begun at four of these sites. The first site to be uncovered was a Depression-era farmstead. Major remains at this site included the foundation for the house, a stone smokehouse, and a well.

The second site was a schoolhouse built in the mid-1800s. This log structure burned down in the early 1900s and all that remained were old nails and burned wood fragments. The third site was the replacement schoolhouse. This school, about one mile from the first, was built in 1911 and was a larger frame structure. In the 1930s the second schoolhouse was damaged by a flood and was subsequently torn down during construction of the existing Lake Fort Smith.

The fourth site had a longer period of use. Evidence of pre-his-



Remains of a smokehouse

toric occupation of the site by Native Americans consisted of broken stone projectile points and flakes of stone that were produced in the manufacturing and maintenance of stone points and other tools. In the 1860s, the site was a farmstead. The most recent use of the site was as a Depression-era recreation area.



Excavation of second schoolhouse

The order in which sites are excavated has been determined by the construction schedule. "We are just trying to stay one step ahead of the bulldozers," said Kris Bohon, the principal investigator for the archaeological investigations. Field work at the seven sites is expected to continue through 2003.



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