

Frequently Asked Questions

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Marlette Lake Dam is a critical component of the Marlette Lake Water System, which supplies water to Storey County and Carson City. The Dam was constructed in 1873 and raised in 1959. Seepage within the Dam was first identified during an inspection in 2017 by the Nevada Division of Water Resources, and it was determined that this seepage could eventually lead to a catastrophic failure. The Marlette Lake Dam Rehabilitation is funded by the FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund and will improve the overall safety of the 150-year old earthen embankment dam and ensure the longevity of the water resource. Environmental and cultural resource surveys were completed in the four (4) year planning span of the project in coordination with FEMA. The project is planned to start in June 2025 and end in October 2026.

PROJECT-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- How long will this project take?
 - The project is planned to start in June 2025 and end in October 2026.
- I saw the news on the Marlette lake closure, which says “through 2026”. Does that mean the closures are anticipated to last until the start of 2026? Or for the 2026 calendar year as well?
 - Trail closures are anticipated until the end of construction in October 2026.
- Will Marlette Lake be completely drained?
 - No.
- How much will Marlette Lake be drawn down?
 - Marlette Lake will be drawn down to a target depth of approximately 20 feet for safe construction.
- What will happen to the fish in Marlette Lake?
 - Nevada Department of Wildlife moved many fish into nearby reservoirs for the duration of construction and will restock Marlette Lake after construction is completed.
- Was there public participation and involvement throughout the design and environmental permitting process?
 - Project stakeholders have been consulted throughout the design process. An Environmental Assessment was prepared in accordance with all requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and FEMA requirements. Public comments were solicited as a part of these efforts.

- When was the first time citizens were notified?
 - Several news articles have been published on the need for these projects to be completed. More recently, State Parks has issued press releases in October of 2024 and March 2025. Public comment on the project Environmental Assessment was solicited in July of 2024.
- How many seasons will it take for the Marlette Lake water surface to return to normal levels?
 - Recharging the water level in Marlette Lake is highly dependent on the snowpack it will receive over the winter months. High-level modeling conservatively estimates it will take six (6) seasons for the lake's water level to return to normal.
- How will Virginia City get its water?
 - Virginia City receives water from the Marlette Lake Water System, which is composed of multiple sources including Marlette Lake, Hobart Reservoir, and the East Slope Catchment System. The Marlette Dam Rehabilitation has been phased to ensure water from the system will be adequate to supply Virginia City throughout construction.
- Does Marlette Lake give Carson City water?
 - Carson City purchases a percentage of the water supplied from the Marlette Lake Water System.

TRAIL ACCESS AND CLOSURES

- Will closures put additional pressure on Ash Canyon and has this been evaluated?
 - Alternate routes have been reviewed by State Parks to provide access to open portions of the park while maintaining prudent closures for the safety of recreational users and construction staff.
- How do inholders access their property with trail closures?
 - Inholder access will be coordinated through State Parks.
- Was TAMBA notified of mountain bike closures? How will this affect the Rose to Toads ride?
 - The Division of State Parks manages permittees for access to the park and has notified permittees of the project. Permits for events are subject to approval by Nevada State Parks on an annual basis.
- Will there be water access for TRT hikers?
 - There will be no trail closures along the Tahoe Rim Trail but hikers will not be able to access Marlette Lake. The Marlette Peak Campground will be open during construction and has a potable water pump for trail users. The pump is typically operational from ~June through ~October, weather dependent. (Source: <https://tahoerimtrail.org/water-sources/>)

- Why do the trails need to be closed?
 - Rehabilitation of the Marlette Dam will require large trucks to bring in and move material. Trucks will access Marlette Lake via the forest service road from Spooner Lake. To ensure the safety of trail users and construction workers, trails will be closed. All trails that provide access to North Canyon Road will be closed.
- Who is in charge of determining decisions to close all bike access from Spooner to Hobart while the Marlette Dam is being worked on?
 - Recreational access to the park is managed by State Parks.
- Will the Lakeview Road (North Carson City) that leads to Hobart Reservoir and eventually to Marlette Lake also be closed?
 - Yes, the Lakeview Road will be closed from the Lakeview Gate up to Hobart Reservoir. The road will be closed from April to October, 2025. This road is closed due to construction traffic from a concurrent construction project called the East Slope Transmission Main Replacement. However, no construction traffic will use Lakeview Road for the Marlette Dam replacement project.
- As of now, Marlette Lake and the surrounding areas are under about 6 feet of snow. It is impossible for heavy equipment to move up North Canyon and Lakeview Roads until the snow has largely melted. Why close off so many trails and roads so far in advance of the work at Marlette Lake and East Slope?
 - Recreational access to backcountry is managed by State Parks, but the contractors have been given the notice to proceed with construction and are now clearing snow off the roads in preparation for the construction season.