River cleanup progressing well

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The project to clear the Walker River of sediment is progressing well and probably will take a couple more weeks, officials said this week.

Speaking at the Nov. 5 meeting of the Lyon County Commission, road superintendent Dustin Homan said the project was 30 to 40 percent done.

Mason Valley Conservation District manager Ed Ryan Monday estimated the project would take about two more weeks to complete.

Lyon County and city of Yerington crews cleared debris under the bridges on Mason Road, Bridge Street and Goldfield Avenue, Ryan and Homan said.

Meanwhile, crews from Desert Engineering are removing sediment from the river channel.

Ryan said they are taking out about 3 feet of sand, knocking down islands and building sand traps to catch sediment coming from upstream, starting at the Yerington Weir and working upstream.

“About every 700 feet, they’re building sand traps because, since we know we’re not going to be able to get all of the sediment and there’s a bunch more upstream, it’s an opportunity to catch more before it gets to the weir,” Ryan said.

The conservation district manager said the agencies are hoping they can get to the Goldfield bridge by the end of this week.

No water is in the river channel below Mason Road, Ryan said, because water is being diverted into ditches, although water is trickling into the channel from a ditch below Mason Road.

The Lyon County Commission at its Nov. 5 meeting approved the expenditure of $25,000 and the use of county personnel and equipment for the river project.

The city of Yerington has pledged between $150,000 and $160,000 of in-kind contributions along with a contribution of unspent money from a $1.2 million grant the city received from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for a sediment removal and dredging project. The Mason Valley Conservation District is the lead agency for the project, with help from the Walker River Irrigation District, Lyon County and Yerington, with Desert Engineering doing the work.
The agencies collaborated on the project because of concerns that sediment in the riverbed reduces the amount of water the river channel can hold and increases the possibility of flooding in the event of high flows.