

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 started in June 2025 and is planned to end in October 2026.

PROJECT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- How long will this project take?
 - The project started in June 2025 and is planned to 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. During the 2026 construction season, trail closures will be in effect from 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. Trails will be open on the weekends, but scheduling is subject to change without notice depending on construction needs.
- Will Marlette Lake be completely drained?
 - Marlette Lake was not completely drained. As of the end of the 2025 construction season, Marlette Lake has begun the natural recharge process.
- How much will Marlette Lake be drawn down?
 - Marlette Lake was drawn down approximately 20 feet and approximately 20 feet of water remained in the lake during construction. As of the end of the 2025 construction season, Marlette Lake has begun the natural recharge process.

- What will happen to the fish in Marlette Lake?
 - Nevada Department of Wildlife moved 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 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 2025 and May 2026. 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 four (4) to six (6) seasons for the lake's water level to return to normal. As of the end of the 2025 construction season, Marlette Lake has begun the natural recharge process.
- How will Virginia City get its water?
 - Virginia City receives water from the Marlette Lake Water System, which is composed of Marlette Lake, Hobart Reservoir, and the East Slope Catchment System. The Marlette Dam Rehabilitation has been phased to ensure water from the other components of the system will be adequate to supply Virginia City with water during 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?
 - Inholders 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 during active construction.
- 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 during construction hours, 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. The road will be closed from May to October, 2026. This road is closed due to construction traffic from a concurrent construction project called the Hobart Dam Rehabilitation. However, no construction traffic will use Lakeview Road for the Marlette Dam replacement project.
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