

Bridge update

The following is the City of Folsom's American River Bridge at Lake Natoma Project update for this week.

When is a river a lake?

By **LINDA HOLDERNESS**
Bridge Information Office

The question has been asked: Why do we say Rainbow Bridge is over the American River while the new Lake Natoma Crossing, not far downstream, is over Lake Natoma? Where does the lake begin and the river end?

According to Kathy Hill, a salmon biologist at the Department of Fish and Game, calling Rainbow Bridge an American River crossing may have been accurate in 1917, when it was built, but it is no longer technically correct.

Since Folsom and Nimbus dams became operational in the 1950s, the entire reservoir between them is considered to be Lake Natoma, Hill said. The American River doesn't become a true river again until west of Hazel Avenue, past the fish hatchery, at which point it begins flowing again to the ocean.

It isn't possible to determine a lake from a river just by looking, Hill said. Although the water is usually calm and lake-like under the bridges, changing dam releases can quickly turn it into a churning flow that looks like a raging river — but it still isn't.

The waterway under Rainbow bridge is very narrow, but it widens quickly as it flows toward the Lake Natoma Crossing. This explains why

the water is about 40 feet deep under Rainbow but as low as 4 feet deep after it has spread out under the new bridge.

More about the bridge opening

The schedule for the opening ceremonies for the new Lake Natoma Crossing begins Friday night, Aug. 13, with a fireworks display from the bridge. The fireworks, sponsored by the contractor, C.C. Myers Inc., and the Sutter Street Merchants, will begin about 9:15 a.m., following the Friday Night Market.

On Saturday morning, the festivities begin with a breakfast on the Leidesdorff Lid at 7:30. About 9:30, local dignitaries, including Mayor Steve Miklos, will speak, and a special fireworks presentation will substitute for the traditional ribbon-cutting.

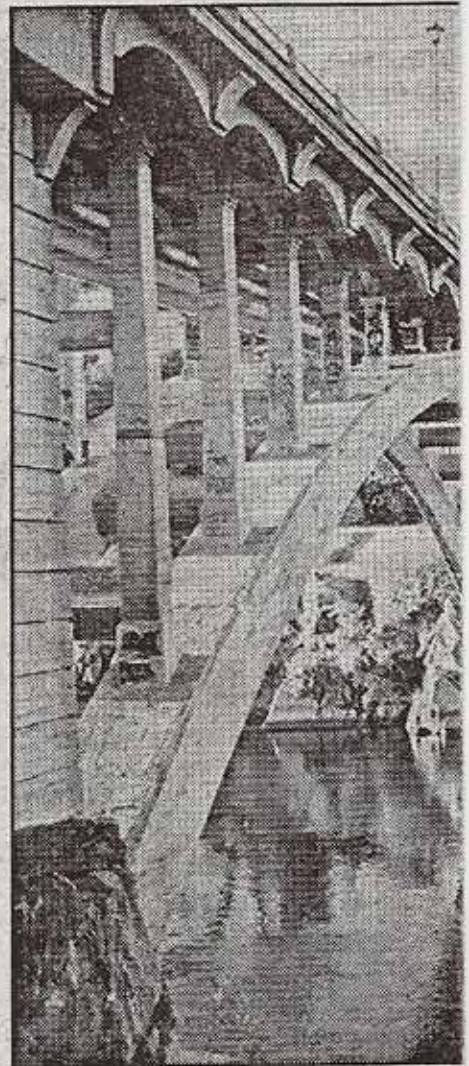
The mayor and other local officials will lead a public procession from the lid, down the future light rail onramp onto the bridge. The public is free to explore the new bridge until noon.

The bridge and approach routes will then be closed to prepare for the opening to traffic, which is set for later that afternoon.

Beginning about 11:30 a.m., Chevy's Restaurant and the Lakes Shopping Center will hold a Bridge Fiesta in the parking lot on Gold Lake Drive. The planned activities include booths, food, music and entertainment.

Bridge Progress

At the south frame of the bridge, workers this week expect to finish lowering the falsework, which supported the concrete as the bridge was being constructed. Crews can now begin to construct the falsework for the arches, which are scheduled to be completed before the end of the year.



William Childres
Does Rainbow Bridge really span...

Crews also are installing barrier railing on the bridge, to protect pedestrians on the sidewalk from traffic, and at the retaining walls on Folsom Boulevard.

Also on the bridge, crews continue

Feature / Fun story.

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The following is the City of Folsom's American River Bridge at Lake Natoma Project update for this week.

Here's mud in your life

Lots of people grumble about the rain in winter, but some complain even more when the rain stops. What it leaves behind is something hardly anybody likes: mud.

Mud splatters your cars and your shoes and gets tracked on your clean carpets. It makes your decks slippery and your driveways mucky and your lawns squishy.

It also slows progress on construction sites. Roadwork not only must stop when it rains; it must stay idle until the construction area dries out — up to four or five days. The construction and city crews appreciate the patience of the people who have been inconvenienced because of the vagaries of the weather at the bridge site.

Not everyone finds mud so troublesome, however. Scientists, artists and most kids actually like the stuff. Beth Suter, a volunteer biologist with the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, is one scientist who has good things to say about mud.

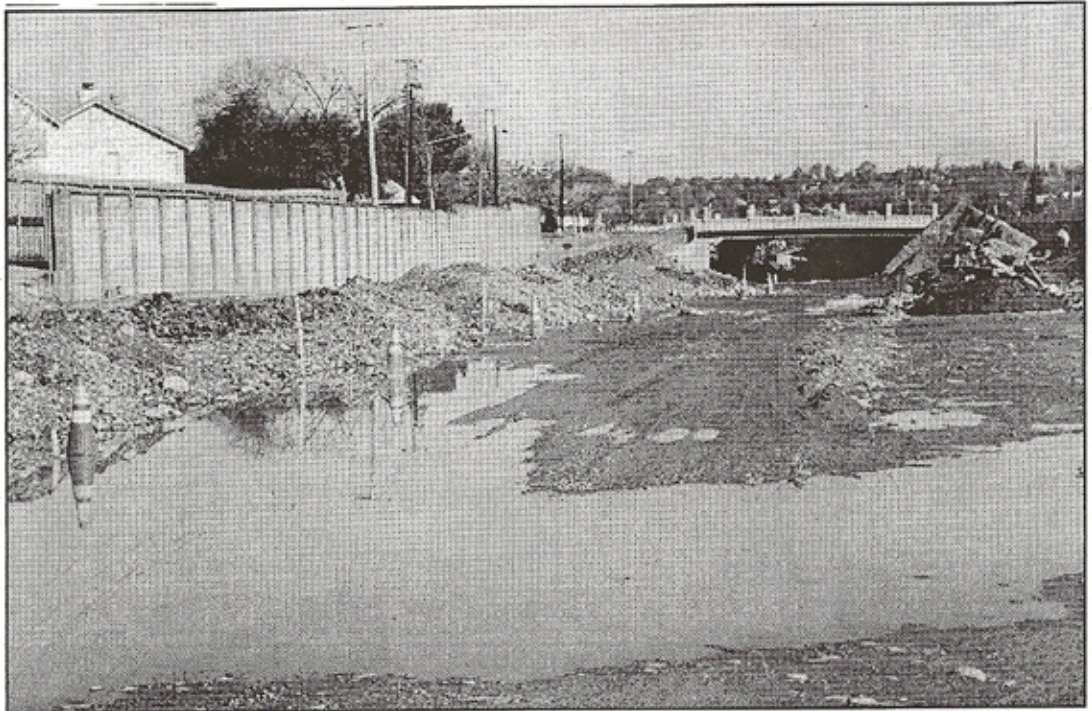
It is "full of life," she says, and it, in turn, gives us life, too. Without the mud created by regular flooding from the rivers, the Central California Valley wouldn't be the rich source of food it is.

According to Sy Montgomery in "Nature's Everyday Mysteries," one cubic inch of the mud in estuaries can contain more than a million nematodes — microscopic worms — as well as similar quantities of bacteria and fungi. It is the ecosystem these organisms create, along with elements like carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen and minerals, that gives mud its nutritional richness.

"Soil that doesn't have all those critters can't grow any plants," Suter says.

Not all types of dirt make mud. The kind of dirt that becomes mud in the rain, says Deborah Grubb, a volunteer geologist for Effie Yeaw, is shale, or clay. Of the three major soil types — shale, silt and sand — shale has the finest particles and is the least permeable. When water's added, the tiny particles stick together and form the familiar muck.

This is where the artists come in. The clay that forms when shale and water are mixed together is the same kind of clay that artists often use to create sculptures, pottery and some tiles.



Submitted to The Folsom Telegraph

Mud can stall construction and generally make life a mess, but, on balance, life is definitely better because of it.

The natural colors can vary from browns to reds.

No one has to wonder why kids like mud: It's so much fun to slosh around in or make pies out of. You might not want your child to know this, but in some parts of the world, pellets of fine clay are a culinary delicacy.

So next time you're cleaning up the mud after a rainstorm, go easy on the complaints. The mud in Folsom is a sign that all is right with the world. Besides, it doesn't stick around very long.

Bridge Progress

At the south frame of the bridge this week, crews will begin post-tensioning the transverse steel strands, starting at the south abutment and continuing northward across the lake working on every other strand. The contractor will maintain a boat in the lake, for safety reasons, to keep recreational boaters away from the site.

At the north frame, crews continue to prepare the approach to the bridge and complete the aesthetic design work. As weather permits, workers will install underground utilities at the Greenback/Folsom-Auburn intersection.

This work will take place at night and will not affect commuter or daytime traffic. Traffic at night may be reduced to one lane.

At the Leidesdorff Lid, workers have finished placing the concrete deck

for the light rail drop structure and will begin excavating for the retaining walls for the structure. The retaining walls will extend from the north end of the drop structure on Folsom Boulevard to the south bridge abutment.

Crews have started veneering the retaining wall along the Leidesdorff Lid onramp with brick to match the walls at The Preserve neighborhood. Staining of the other retaining wall surfaces will begin March 22. The individual shapes on the concrete wall will be stained varying shades to resemble stacked rocks.

Weather permitting, road crews on the south side continue to install underground electrical conduits, storm drain pipes and sewer lines. They also are grading roadbed areas and forming and placing concrete for curbs, gutters and sidewalks around Forrest Street and for curbs and gutters along the future Leidesdorff Street onramp.

Underground utilities are being installed at the detour intersection at Gold Lake Drive and Folsom Boulevard. One-way traffic controls will be in effect during non-peak hours.

Crews also are preparing the intersections at Greenback/Folsom-Auburn Road and Folsom Boulevard/Natoma Street for permanent traffic signals.

Project notes

The construction zone remains off-limits to everyone not authorized to be there. The trestle is particularly haz-

ardous because the water under it is only about 10 feet deep and anyone who jumps or falls from it will be severely injured.

You can see an informative display on the American River Bridge at Lake Natoma Project at the bridge construction office of Harris and Associates, 705 Gold Lake Drive, Suite 100, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The speed limit in the construction zone — along Folsom Boulevard from Natoma Street to Wool Street — is 25 mph.

You can read about the American River Bridge at Lake Natoma Project on our web site at <http://www.folsom.ca.us>. Press "bridge construction updates."

To hear information on bridge construction, or leave a message, call the bridge hotline at 355-8383.

The Bridge Information Office is at 705 Gold Lake Drive, Suite 100. Office hours are Tuesday and Thursday, 4 to 6 p.m., or by appointment.

The bridge office phone number is 355-1742; the fax number is 985-0668.