

May 2023

Flood Damage in BCLP

Over the past few weeks, the dam and reservoir have done what they are supposed to do: hold back flood waters. This is why some of the trails, facilities and roads have been underwater and why many people are concerned about reducing flood control capacity by storing more water in the reservoir.

The pool elevation reached 5,582 feet on May 19. In terms of volume, that's 5,478 acre feet. If you visited the park then, you know what that looked like. Imagine the site if 10,000 or 20,000 acre feet of water storage is approved. Here's a link to the USACE Bear Creek Dam page where you can learn more about the dam and how it is operated: <https://www.nwo.usace.army.mil/Missions/Dam-and-Lake-Projects/Tri-Lakes-Projects/Bear-Creek-Dam/>.

Bear Creek Reservoir's temporary storage of flood waters not only protected homes in Lakewood's greenbelt, but it also helped protect property and infrastructure along the South Platte. The so-called Tri-Lakes (Cherry Creek, Chatfield and Bear Creek Reservoirs) are managed in a coordinated manner to provide flood protection to Denver metro area.

Damages to BCLP's trails and facilities will require a significant clean-up effort. Save Bear Creek Lake Park is planning to partner with the Front Range Trails Conservancy to assist in that work. We'll be sending out volunteer opportunities later this summer or early fall.

Finally, the waiting continues for the long-expected public scoping meeting with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. We'll get at least 30 days advance notice, and I'll message the announcement through our website, email list, Facebook and Instagram.

Happy trails,

Katie Gill
Chair, Save Bear Creek Lake Park