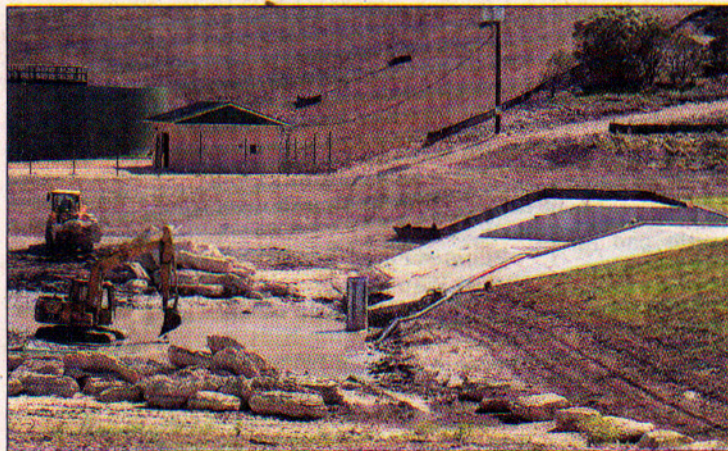


# METRO & STATE

Wednesday, July 7, 2004

Austin American-Statesman statesman.com

Section B



Larry Kolvoord AMERICAN-STATESMAN

Muddy stormwater in a detention pond, left, was being pumped past a dam, right, into Lick Creek at the West Cypress Hills subdivision.

## Lick Creek tainted once more

### Dam work halted over stormwater dumping at west Travis project

By Kevin Carmody

AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

County and state inspectors ordered a new work stoppage at the West Cypress Hills subdivision on Tuesday after discovering, among other problems, workers dumping polluted stormwater over the project's controversial dam and into once-pristine Lick Creek,

Acting chief of state's main environmental agency retires, **B6.**

Map of subdivision area, **B3.**

officials said.

In a setback for developer Rusty Parker on Tuesday, the Travis County inspectors who arrived first, apparently in response to citizen complaints,

shut down all work on the dam and detention pond that had been intended to solve the site's ongoing pollution problems.

"What was going on there was just not acceptable," said Tom Hegemeir, a Lower Colorado River Authority engineer and inspector. "It could be assumed to be a violation of our stop-work order, possibly."

Hegemeir said he arrived

after the county inspectors and backed their decision to issue an expanded stop-work order.

On Friday, one of Hegemeir's colleagues had reported that water from the dam and pond was finally running clear after several days of drier weather and the replacement of a filter drain that had been damaged by

See **CREEK, B3**

# CREEK: Work stoppage expanded at project

Continued from B1

floodwaters in early June.

That damage prompted the LCRA to expand a March stop-work order, which covered only the dam and parts of the pond. The expansion of the order, in early June, prevented more home starts at the 800-home project off Texas 71.

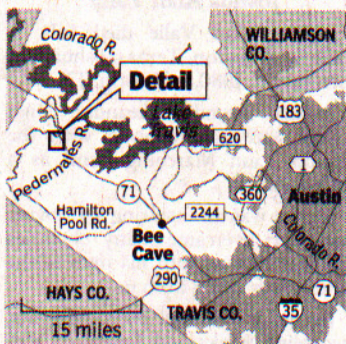
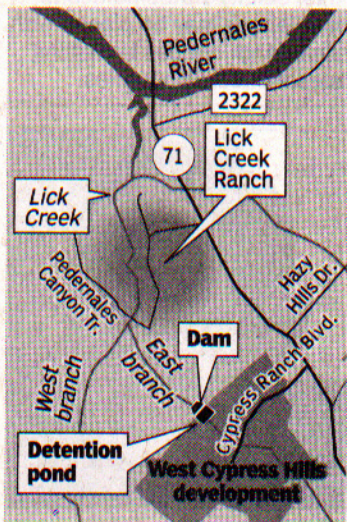
The June order allowed workers under the direction of Parker's engineer to continue trying to build a pipe to reroute clean water, flowing into the pond from the east branch of Lick Creek, around the malfunctioning stormwater pond and dam and then back into the creek below the dam.

However, Hegemeir said, workers had rigged a pump and hose to lift the murky water remaining in the pond over the dam and into the creek. The pump equipment contained a filter called a "dirt bag," which is intended to capture the silt and discharge clean water, he said. The water in the pond was so laden with silt and sediment that the filter bag "was not doing its job," Hegemeir said.

Tests will determine how polluted the discharge was.

Parker's engineer, Ed Moore, said he had been instructed by the developer to defer all questions to Parker. Parker could not be reached Tuesday. Parker said on Friday that he was committed to fixing any problems identified by the LCRA and other regulatory agencies and believed he was turning a corner on the problems that have plagued the project for months.

Downstream residents became concerned on Saturday, when bulldozers and other equipment started moving soil and rock in the pond. That process further muddied the remaining water in the pond, and when discharged from the dam, the briefly clear creek became silt-choked again, said Pepper



AMERICAN-STATESMAN

Morris, an officer in the Guardian Of Lick Creek, a group of residents of the Lick Creek Ranch community.

Hegemeir said Moore will now have to design a procedure for building the bypass without significantly polluting the creek, which flows to the Pedernales River. No new home starts will be allowed until the pond work is complete enough to prevent pollution of the creek.

The project could be subject to fines of up to \$10,000 a day for violation of the stop-work order or the LCRA's water pollution ordinance. However, the LCRA has decided to forgo fines for now, believing that the halt to new starts is costing Parker far more money.

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