

Rocks (840 tons) halt erosion

Park project sets river course

By Joanne Mallazewski
staff writer

Keeping a river on course might sound difficult. But with the help of 14 Michigan Youth Job Corps workers and 840 tons of stone, Farmington City Park's portion of the Upper Rouge River won't be taking any new turns.

Instead, the course of the river's upper branch will be maintained through the use of gabions — wire baskets filled with large stones — to form a new river bank that won't erode as easily as Mother Nature's.

The youths, who are paid by the state, began the project more than a week ago. If progress continues as well as it has, the gabions should be in place

and the project finished within the next six weeks, said Farmington city manager Robert Deadman.

"We're hoping that the project ends at the same time the kids leave," Deadman said, adding that some of the youths have already left, either to return to college or because they found another job.

"It is one of those projects we would have been hard pressed to do without that (youth corps) manpower," Deadman said.

Although the youths are now starting to put some of the gabions in place, shearing the river bank so the gabions could snugly fit against the bank was the first order of business last week.

Before the gabions are put in place, a

matting material is first put on the bank to deter erosion behind them.

The portion of the Upper Rouge flowing through the Farmington park is making several, almost 90-degree, jogs near the tennis courts, Deadman said. So the water actually flows backwards when it hits the jogs, he said.

"It absorbs a tremendous amount of energy and reduces the velocity of the (river's) flow," he said.

And that's the problem. Because the jogs in the river's path are causing the water to pick up energy, the water's velocity further south is reduced, Deadman said. If the river bank is allowed to further erode, the jogs will become more severe.

Although Farmington City Council

expected to spend about \$21,000 on the stone and wire baskets, Deadman said bids came in lower than expected on the stone. Thus, the city will spend about \$18,000.

City officials also want to install gabions along the bank under the Grand River-Rouge River bridge, east of Farmington Road. But because the Michigan Highway Department is responsible for the bridge's maintenance, city officials have asked the state to pay for \$12,000 in materials that could be used at that site. The state has yet to respond to the city's request for reimbursement.

"It's all on state right-of-way," Deadman said, referring to the proposed bridge project.



Michigan Youth Job Corps workers choose large rocks which will be inserted into the Upper Rouge River to stabilize the river bank.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer



Gabions — wire baskets filled with rocks — are placed in the river to help in erosion control. It is hoped that the project, which began last week, will keep the Upper Rouge River from changing course and causing problems farther downstream.

memory lane

Memories, memories... have we got the memories. And we'd like to share them with you. Using local newspaper files, we're dishing up generous slices of life in the Farmington area from 40, 30, 20 and 10 years ago.

AUG. 12, 1943

"AROUND THE BLOCK," a front-page newspaper column, noted that "More possible steaks and lamb chops have been in Farmington the past week, the only trouble being that they are still on the hoof. Barnyard noises seem to be almost as common on Farmington's main streets as they are in natural environs."

ANOTHER ITEM: "Seems as if almost everything is at a standstill waiting for fall to come. That is, everything except those Victory Gardens. Have you noticed that they're growing like everything these past weeks?"

SPECIALS AT Ross Bakery in Farmington included "enriched bread, tasty rolls and pastries for the war worker's lunch box."

CLASSIFIED ad stated: "Have about 50 rock and 50 leghorn pullets, \$1.50 each, good stock, will lay soon. Also rock broilers, \$1 each."

THE ADVERTISEMENT for the Travis Hi-Speed Service Station at Grand River and Grace road: "Your gas is rationed, but our service isn't. We give your car the attention it demands to carry you safely for the duration."

AUG. 13, 1953

ANOTHER ATTEMPT was made to form a civil defense organization in the Farmington area. Only 10 volunteers showed up for a recent meeting at the

Legion Memorial Home to hear director Charles Layton speak on the need for civil defense.

FARMINGTON'S NEW postmaster, Henry L. Trombley, had the distinction of being the first postmaster the Republican Party has appointed in Michigan in 20 years. Trombley replaced Charles Habermehl, who retired.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL values at Dancer's Department Store in Farmington included "Little girls' wool blend school skirts" at \$2.39 and "Boys' band-aids with zipper front" at \$1.89.

WILLIAM NUSE, Farmington High School's football coach for the past five years, announced his resignation in a letter to the Farmington Board of Education. Nuse, who served as the first director of the Farmington Area Recreation Commission, was to become superintendent of the Sumpter Township schools in Belleville.

AUG. 15, 1963

ARTHUR LAMB, a longtime Farmington resident, said he believed the old shoe shop building recently demolished at Farmington and Grand River was 80 years old, not 63 years old as indicated at the city assessor's office.

Lamb said he remembers going with his father to vote in a township spring election in the building in 1890. Lamb, 82, said they had a "fine dinner" in the same structure.

THE DOWNTOWN Center Ladies Softball Team edged Detroit, 4-3, in a recent game. Winning pitcher

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