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Walleye Club Pays To Clean Up Silt Mess at Landing

NewsTribune photo/Brett Herrmann, News Tribune Reporter



A crane dumps a load of muck on the shore of the Illinois River near Barto Landing in Spring Valley on Monday morning. River Docks Inc. a Mertel Gravel associate, dredged the lagoon after a summer of flooding caused heavy sediment buildup. The service was paid for by the Spring Valley Walleye.

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Boaters in Spring Valley might have noticed their vessels dragging in the mud as they pulled into Barto Landing in recent weeks. While some might like to think that a big haul of fish was the reason their boat was being slowed down, it had more to do with low water levels.

Thom Matejewski hosted a fishing tournament recently and noticed that people were taking off with caution.

“It (the water level) was low. People scraped bottom but no one got stuck,” he said.

It really isn’t so much the water level being low, but the sediment level being too high, a problem that has left the floating dock in the lagoon sitting up on a bank of mud. After the June flooding, Barto Landing has been building up sediment at the mouth of the lagoon, a problem which required the Spring Valley Walleye Club to hire out a contractor to dredge the launch point.

“When the Corps of Engineers lowers it to where it is, it becomes a problem,” said Spring Valley Walleye Club director Bill Guerrini.

The Walleye Club maintains the landing for Hall Township throughout the year. The group of volunteers raises funds throughout the year for maintenance fees and dredging the lagoon is a big cost.

“They don’t really realize it’s all volunteers doing that,” Guerrini said.

The Walleye Club hires River Docks Inc. out of Peru to do the sediment work. River Docks has been busy all around the area after the wet weeks in June.

Although the dredging is coming at the end of boating season, Guerrini said it was still a necessity to get it done. The timing also works out well for the Walleye Club because in few weeks they will be hosting their annual “Take a Vet Fishing” event, which sees around 50 boats taking off from the landing, Guerrini said.

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