

Pedestrian walkway soon to be completed at Pittsfield's Silver Lake

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PITTSFIELD -- A setting in the William Stanley Business Park that became a symbol of industrial pollution will regain some of its former scenic beauty next month when a pedestrian walkway is completed along Silver Lake.

The pathway, which will circle the lake's north shore from East Street to Fourth Street, was included as part of the plan to remediate the site of General Electric's power transformer facility more than a decade ago.

Now, according to Corydon Thurston, executive director of the Pittsfield Economic Development Authority, work to remediate contamination in the lake area -- and preparation for paving of the walkway -- is in its final stages. PEDDA is charged with the 52-acre business park's development.

"This should be wrapped up by the end of October," Thurston said. "Things have been moving along."

PHOTO GALLERY | [Silver Lake remediation nears end in Pittsfield](#)

The stone and fabric base of the walkway has been laid down, he said, and that layer will be paved soon with an environmentally friendly material. That material will be firm enough to support walkers and provide wheelchair access, yet porous enough to allow water to pass through it.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the reclaimed site within the Stanley Business Park is expected to take place late next month or in early November, Thurston said.

In addition, he said, "hundreds of plantings" will be placed around the lake, including trees, shrubs and grasses to replant areas disturbed during the cleanup process. All of the work, including the walkway, is being funded by GE through the consent decree that requires the corporate giant to clean up PCB contamination in Pittsfield.

The park's 52 acres have been remediated and their ownership transferred from GE to PEDDA, which is now marketing the property for development. Amendments to the original agreement were approved recently by the city to transfer additional slices of property around the lake to PEDDA for the walkway and to provide the city easements to maintain the path.

Thurston said the Silver Lake pathway eventually will connect via city sidewalks and over PEDDA land to the Woodlawn Avenue railroad bridge, which is expected to be reconstructed next year in a state-funded project. The new rail bridge will include walkways on both sides, he said.

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