

# Cordes Lakes volunteers' efforts bring community lake back to life

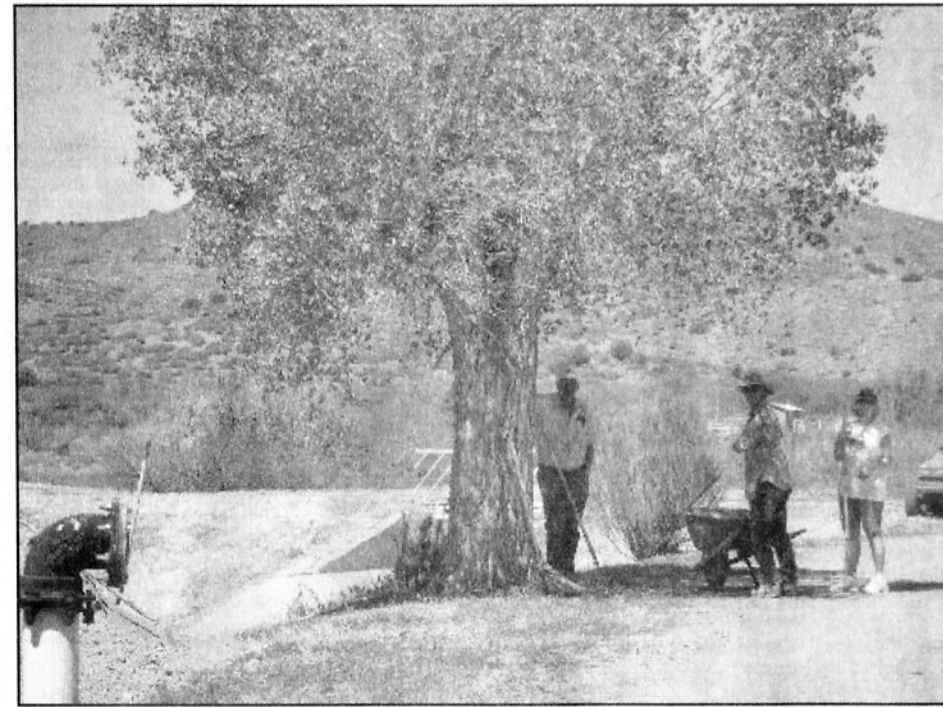
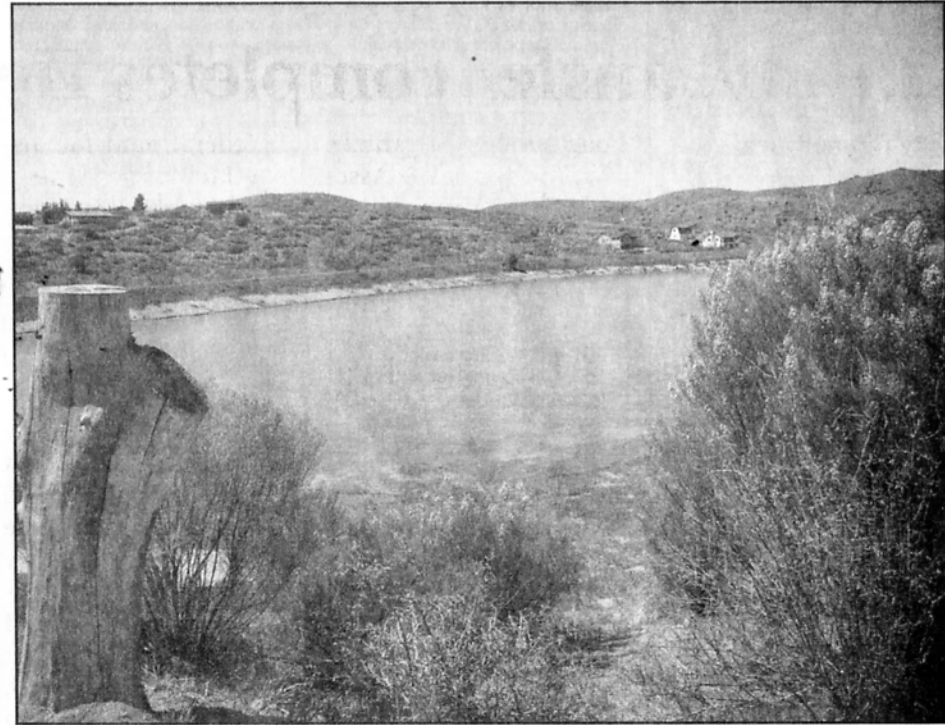


Photo courtesy Ed Krystenak



BigBugNews/Pat Williamson

The rejuvenated Crystal Lake is now about a third full. Volunteers want to replace trees lost to drought with more water conservative varieties.

Volunteers take a break Saturday under one of the few remaining trees at Crystal Lake. The past 10 or more years of drought killed most of the trees, but volunteers have relined the lake and repaired the pump, and it's now filling again.

**By Pat Williamson**  
Big Bug News

Community members gathered Saturday for a beautification day at Crystal Lake.

Crystal Lake is the larger of the two man-made lakes in Cordes Lakes. It has 140,000 square feet of surface area when full and is approximately 11 feet deep. It will hold

about 23 1/2 acre feet of water.

Through many years of drought, cattle, bicycles and ATVs damaged the dry lake bottom. Jack Bennetto was instrumental in getting the proper clay for repair, paid for by donations.

The clay liner was just the beginning. Volunteers cleared the lake

of debris, smoothed down the bottom and then reelayed. They cleaned the weir on the Big Bug Creek and backflushed the feeder pipes to remove any dirt and mud. This system cannot feed the lake during storms because of the muddy water. Mud settles in the feeder line and prevents the water from flowing through.

The pump was in need of repair, and Bennetto shared the cost for a new pump with the Cordes Lakes Community Association. After valve replacement, pipe cleaning and many other associated repairs and replacements, the pump now works properly.

The lake is more than a third full, although fill-

ing it further now that the weather is warming up will be a challenge. The large water surface is subject to evaporation during sunny days, but that doesn't stop people, birds and wildlife from enjoying the lake.

Ducks are in every night and Jim Kelly recently saw four white egrets. He said they

used to sit in dead cottonwood trees, but he observed them hunting at the edge of the water.

Canada geese flew over the lake, circled, then left. A raccoon comes up the creek bed at about dark and visits the lake.

Volunteers are also considering re-foresting the lake with drought-tolerant trees.