

June 20, 2015

Watershed leaders say local lawmakers helped to get flood relief bill passed

Heavy damage to the Prior Lake outlet channel will get much-needed repair as a result of the Minnesota Legislature's special session on June 13.

After getting lost in the shuffle during the regular session as part of the state's bonding bill for capital projects, the disaster legislation was approved in the wee hours of the special session called by Gov. Mark Dayton.

The bill provides flood relief for more than 30 counties, including Scott. Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District leaders gave some credit to local legislators, including

Sen. Eric Pratt (R-Prior Lake) and Rep. Tony Albright (R-Spring Lake Township) for getting the \$23 million state-wide bill passed.

The Prior Lake Outlet Channel, built in 1983, suffered major damage in last summer's flooding, including erosion, culvert destruction and downed trees.

The watershed district estimates that without the outlet channel, Prior Lake would have been 7 feet higher than it was at its peak last summer.

Other parts of Scott County also had extensive damage from the flooding.

"We are indebted to Senator Pratt and Representative Albright who worked tirelessly to get disaster relief passed. Thanks to their persistence, repairs from the extensive damages to the Prior Lake outlet channel can begin," said Fred Corrigan, watershed district manager, in a prepared statement on Monday.

The bill, signed into law by Dayton, requires the state to bond for repairs to the channel, which will be reimbursed by Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) funds after the repairs.

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