

lake pumping that seepage water back into the lake,” Menes said. “Those pumps also serve another purpose, which is whenever it rains, we’ve created a barrier that prevents the storm water from going into the lake, which can create it’s own set of problems with flooding. So the pumps also take that storm water and pump that into the lake, too. These pumps have to be maintained. We’ve got to keep diesel in them. We’re constantly adjusting them and tweaking them. We have a vendor that helps us with that. And we spend a lot of money doing that—between \$100,000 and upward of \$250,000 a month in maintaining this pump system—to protect the residents of Lemmon Valley ... to keep the lake in the lake.”

The bentonite cost the county \$4,090. For now county engineers plan to keep an eye on the barriers—which are monitored daily—and see how the bentonite clay they’ve added to them performs as they continue work on other flood management projects.

“There’s a lot of work going on regionally with our partners, the City of Reno and RTC,” Menes said. “And one of the things the county is working on with the engineering community is the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is countywide. But there’s obviously a

huge focus on the North Valleys now, where there hadn’t been in the past. We’re focusing most of our regional mitigation planning on Swan Lake. What that consists of is—we have a number of stakeholders from the engineering community and other agencies. We’re sort of evaluating the nuts and bolts of a series of alternatives for hazard mitigation for Swan Lake.”

They’re looking for long-term solutions to flooding hazards at the lake. While effective for the time being, the HESCO barriers and pumps aren’t intended to be permanent fixtures of the lake.

“We don’t want them to be there forever—definitely not,” Menes said.

But as to what long-term solutions might look like, he said, that’s still unclear.

“We’re just looking at them right now—we’re not even into feasibility—but there’s levees, pumping out of the hydro-basin,” Menes said.

For now, though, long-term solutions and the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan that will contain them are still a ways off.

**“We don’t want them to be there forever—definitely not.”**

**Dylan Menes**  
Washoe County Senior Engineer



A HESCO barrier after bentonite was applied to it.

Learn more about flood mitigation in Lemmon Valley here:  
[www.washoecounty.us/lemmon-valley](http://www.washoecounty.us/lemmon-valley).

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