



Joint Press Release
For immediate release
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[See attached map](#)

City & Irrigation District will begin joint maintenance project on Wilson Drain

The city of Nampa and the Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District will begin a joint maintenance project along Wilson Drain between Lake Lowell and Iowa avenues July 6. The work will start at about midpoint of the Wilson Pathway and will finish up at Lake Lowell Avenue and could take several weeks.

Large rocks will be placed along the drain's channel to reduce erosion which is threatening at least one section of the pathway that could be washed out, Nampa Parks and Recreation Director Darrin Johnson said.

But before the rocks can be placed, many of the trees – primarily voluntary elms – that have grown in and fallen into the channel of Wilson Drain in that stretch will be removed so large equipment can access the channel, District Water Superintendent Greg Curtis said.

Although the maintenance is not popular with people who see the trees come down, it is required by a 1915 agreement with the federal government, Curtis said. The drains, including Wilson, near Augusta subdivision, and Elijah at Roosevelt and Canyon, are a necessary function of the area's irrigation system. Without the drains, Curtis said, property owners would be living in a very swampy environment and flooding would be a problem.

Drains, unlike creeks, are not natural waterways, Curtis said. The Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District maintains 80 different drains within its district and a large percentage of those drains are in the Nampa City area. The maintenance is necessary to keep the drains open and to avoid erosion. The work usually starts in mid-to-late June after the nesting season ends, Curtis said.

The city pathways, built in most cases on the right-of-ways of the drains, are a result of a long-standing agreement between the city and Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District, Johnson said.

Both the irrigation district and city parks division have held meetings with residents in the Augusta subdivision and neighboring residents on the east side of the drain to explain what will occur, Johnson added. Once maintenance work is completed, the Parks Department may need to repair some of the pathway.

Trees can be replanted along the bank of the drain, but they should not be planted in the right-of-way, which extends 50 feet on each side from the center of the drain, Curtis said.

Wherever possible, some trees are left, and that's the hope for the maintenance work slated on Wilson between Iowa and Lake Lowell avenues, Curtis said. But access to the drain will be the priority.

Crews are wrapping up a small project along Roosevelt Avenue near the intersection of Canyon Street, Curtis said. Several volunteer elms were removed as part of the road widening project the city initiated a few years ago. The irrigation district needed access to the drain.

In some cases, the local irrigation drains also provide water for some of the city's pressurized irrigation system that residents enjoy, Curtis said.

ELM SEED BUGS

Hopefully the removal of elm trees will help reduce habitat for the pesky elm seed bugs first found in the Treasure Valley in 2012. The bugs, which typically live up to five years, originated in Europe before making their way in Idaho. They lay their eggs in elm trees.

ABOUT THE NAMPA & MERIDIAN IRRIGATION DISTRICT

The Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District (NMID) is a water storage, conveyance, and distribution system founded in 1904 that supplies irrigation water to some 69,000 acres of farms, lawns, and gardens in Canyon and Ada counties.

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Contacts:

Darrin Johnson
City of Nampa
Parks and Recreation Director
468-5875
johnsond@cityofnampa.us

Greg Curtis
Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District
Irrigation Superintendent
466-0663
nmid@nmid.org

Vickie Holbrook
City of Nampa
Communications Director
468-5411
holbrookv@cityofnampa.us

Wilson Pathway Maintenance Area

