

## *An Engineer on the Issue of Erosion*

"One of the most flawed arguments against natural surfaces that I have heard from the DPR presenters (Jan. 27) is that they cause abnormal amounts of erosion and somehow harm the wetland.

Erosion does happen everywhere, "stuff" from nature washes into water bodies. River sediment builds up that way. In an untouched natural setting, the cycle is kept in balance by moving water, which washes sediment along into larger water bodies. In the process, some of the particles are dissolved and are turned into the molecular and atomic "stuff" that feeds living things of all sizes, some of the particles get deposited back onto river and stream banks, and some get carried as far as the nearest ocean (the 'ultimate' watershed for any system). The problem with OUR setting here is we have a stream that was once freely moving, but has been forced into pipes for the most part and the part that drains out drains into a MAN-MADE lake. It's artificial, it doesn't have a proper natural spillway course (its spillway is the SEWER with an artificial weir). Also, it gets more sediment from the Deegan filtration basins and more pesticides and erosion from the golf courses than a natural lake can possibly process in a natural cycle. Therefore, it needs to be dredged and maintained like ALL man-made lakes that do not imitate nature effectively - which this lake does not.

So - the trail, no matter what surface it is, will NEVER be the main source of sediment build up in VCP - it's the highways and the golf course that present the greatest threat to the lake and the marshes. A natural trail (mineral soil, crushed stone, etc) simply plays its natural part in the erosion, absorption cycle - **it produces no more and no less loose sediment than a patch of dirt or rocky soil produces into the surroundings in any natural area.** " - M.E.