

**TO:** The University of Pittsburgh

**DATE:** February 2, 2023

**FROM:** Mark Bosco

**SUBJECT: Proposal for the Renewal of Panther Hollow Lake**

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## **Abstract**

This proposal requests that the University of Pittsburgh funds the renovation of Panther Hollow Lake. The lake has deteriorated for almost 50 years and requires major repairs. The restoration of this beautiful landmark provides the public with fun outdoor activities while granting the university extra income. Upon approval of this proposal, the university may contact a surveyor to estimate the cost of the lake overhaul.

## **Introduction**

Panther Hollow Lake was constructed just outside the University of Pittsburgh's campus in 1892. For over 75 years, the lake stood as a beloved community gathering place. The lake featured a boathouse for rowing, ice skating during winter months, and picturesque views all year round. After decades of neglect, the lake now appears forgotten. The boathouse was demolished, the water level rose, and weeds spread. However, the University of Pittsburgh can fund the necessary renovations to resurrect the lake.

## **Rationale**

Panther Hollow Lake has continually declined since the demolition of the famous boathouse in 1979. Each year the water level lowers as the amount of sediment grows. This buildup of silt harms the ecosystem and prevents leisure activities. Dense vegetation has also overrun shallow sections of the lake which further damages the ecosystem.

This restoration would create a unique public attraction enjoyable all year long. Students could swim, row, fish, or relax in a peaceful spot away from the bustling urban campus. The university can monetize these leisure activities to generate income. For instance, the boathouse could serve as both a rental service and a convenience shop. The university could also charge anglers a fee after the lake blossoms into a quality fishing spot. During winter months the university should

host paid ice skating on the lake. Although many students leave for winter break, the annual holiday show run by Phipps Conservatory will continue to draw large crowds toward the Schenley Park area.

### **Plan of Work**

The renewal of Panther Hollow Lake requires lake repairs as well as the construction of a boathouse and an accessible entrance. The University of Pittsburgh should initiate a bidding process to select a suitable construction service for the project. The university could aim to reopen the lake in summer to surprise returning students with fun new activities.

To begin the renovations, workers must drain the lake, avoiding any harm to the local ecosystem. Next, they will dredge sediment to increase the lake's depth. Afterwards, workers may begin foundational repairs on the concrete lakebed and shoreline. Construction on the boathouse will start once work on the lake ends. After all construction has finished, workers may refill the lake with water, fish, and plants. The university should also build a safe, alternative entrance to the lake since the main pathway fails to meet accessibility standards.

### **Budget**

The University of Pittsburgh must hire a surveyor to estimate the renovation's total cost. This surveyor will produce a hydrographic scan of the lake to determine the necessary amount of work. While lake repairs would likely cost less than 20 thousand dollars, construction of the boathouse could total anywhere from 30 to 80 thousand dollars. Thus, the renovation requires a budget of 50 to 100 thousand dollars (dependent upon the boathouse's design). Eventually, Panther Hollow Lake's new streams of income would offset this cost.

### **Conclusion**

The restoration of Panther Hollow Lake offers many benefits without any significant downsides. Students receive a special gathering spot near campus with plenty of fun activities. The University of Pittsburgh acquires another picturesque landmark that generates income. The renovation will also improve Pittsburgh's environment by providing a clean ecosystem for Schenley Park's wildlife. The renewal of Panther Hollow Lake presents a practical and valuable opportunity for the University of Pittsburgh.