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# \$m river plan streams along

By KENNETH KO

A massive \$170 million project to stop the stench from the Tuen Mun river, which runs through the centre of the new town, is well under way.

When all stages of the "river training scheme" are completed, Tuen Mun will be rid of the decades-old eyesore and will have a modern sewage system capable of handling industrial and human waste from its projected population of 540,000.

The project was launched in late 1977 after a feasibility study by a firm of consulting engineers, Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick and Partners.

The target was to clean up the heavily-polluted river running southward from Hung Shui Kiu near Yuen Long to Pak Kok at Castle Peak Bay.

According to the chief engineer of the Public Works Department's New Territories Development Office, Mr K. K. Tang, the river had been a constant source of complaints from residents.

Because most of the area around it was agricultural land, farm waste as well as animal carcasses were washed down the river by rains over the years.

And because the agricultural land was above high-tide level, farm waste was left to rot under the sun before it polluted the river.

Mr Tang said that the first stage of the "river training" stretched from Pui To Road, the only motor crossing between the eastern and western sides of Tuen Mun, to Lam Tei in the north.

The \$60 million contract involved extensive land formation near Lam Tei and the building of river walls as the river had no definite stream.

It also involved concrete-paving of the riverbed in that section, which was carried out after diverting the flow of the stream to one side of the river, separated by sheet-piling.

"The western half of the river has been paved and work on the other half has

begun," Mr Tang said.

He also said that vehicular access to the river would be provided to clear deposits in future.

From Pui To Road southward, paving of the river would not be necessary for the riverbed in that section is deeper.

"We will dredge it even deeper to stop the stench during low tide," he said.

The second stage of the scheme, he continued, involved the building of two branches of the river at Fu Tei and Lam Tei at a cost of \$6 million.

A \$16 million sewage system alongside the river is also under way.

It includes a pumping station near Lam Tei at the northern extremity where a small dam will also be constructed to prevent concentrated waste from pig and poultry farms being washed down the river.

"The pumping station will be used to divert dirty water southward to another pumping station at Pak Kok where it will be pumped further south to the Pillar Point treatment plant at Castle Peak Bay," Mr Tang said.

The waste will undergo a "screening" process at the end of the line before being shot out to deeper parts of the sea through a submarine outfall where they will be swept away by tidal currents.

He said that both the Pak Kok pumping station and the submarine outfall were scheduled for completion at the end of the year.

The first stage of the treatment plant, costing \$4 million and due for completion by the end of next year, will cater for the needs of half of Tuen Mun's total projected population of 540,000 people, he said.

"Stage two will take care of the entire population," he added.