

Waterfall Fixer-Upper

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The beautiful koi pond that came with the house lacked drainage in the pump box. The pump was set into a nondraining box that flooded when it rained, killing the pump. The filtration system didn't keep the water clear. This made keeping koi a challenge. Tom contacted Tolosa Water Gardens & Landscapes in San Luis Obispo to fix the mess.

Molly searched the World Wide Web to find a good sealer for the concrete pond. She skipped the installation of a typical rubber liner in the waterfall addition by installing Pond Shield-FSP Polyurea.

Contractors began their work in early spring and completed it in stages. The most stressful time was when the fish were in the quarantine tank while the main pond was cleaned and repaired.

The team used Pond Armor's Pond Shield epoxy to seal the pond cracks. The waterfall was excavated and geotextile fabric was cut to shape then sprayed with Pond Shield-FSP. Each piece was seamed with the coating.

The group's biggest challenge was installing the new liner system against the new deck's retaining wall. The contractor used a stainless steel strip to fasten the FSP liner to the wall, masked and coated.

Near the bottom, where the waterfall and pond meet, both coatings merged seamlessly. After the coatings were done, the contractor used flagstone to create the waterfall's natural look.

Tom and Molly wanted the final project to look as natural as possible. Molly used her artistic background to create natural rock grain patterns where the pond's coating remained visible.

With the addition of the new variable-speed pump, the homeowners can fine-tune the waterfall to supply the right amount of water flow needed as well as provide an aesthetic element. The new bead bio filter takes care of the needs of the fish.

The landscape includes a variety of grasses and herbaceous perennials that complement the native serpentine rocks used to terrace the back yard. The complete pond setting now looks like the surrounding area.

The pond is set into a patio and features a rock waterfall. More rocks were placed to create a series of waterfalls. The final effect looks like it originates from a natural stream out of the hill behind the property.

SPECIFICATIONS

Designer: Bill Coryell

Installer: Tolosa Gardens & Landscapes Inc.

Contact information: 1241 Johnson Ave., No. 353, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401;

805-541-3377, bill@tolosagardens.com

Location: San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Construction: Upper waterfall square footage, 124; pond's square footage, 350; three tons of Three River boulders/flagstone, Pond Shield FSP, Pond Shield Epoxy

Components: Pond Armor spray gun for the new waterfall liner. Replaced old pump with Whisper Flo-Intelli Flo 4-160 pump. Replaced old filter with Aquadyne 2.2 B filter

Equipment used: Paint rollers and brushes for applying Pond Shield epoxy in existing concrete pond

Cost of pond: \$17,000

Cost of materials: \$7,500

Total project cost: \$24,500

Time to complete: May to September 2007