

SWCD Partners with Trout Unlimited to Restore Stream Banks

Project Background: Trout Unlimited was selected by the NYS DEC to oversee and administer selected projects throughout the southern tier region under the "Millennium Stream Improvement Fund" the funding was provided by Millennium pipeline company where an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) was signed between the NY State DEC, Millennium Pipeline Company and Trout Unlimited.

The goals of the fund are to "Remove impediments to or enhance trout spawning, trout habitat and the quality of water bodies supporting trout and their habitat"

The SWCD was contacted by TU to apply for projects that meet the above criteria and two projects in Tioga County were selected for funding: Owego Creek/Park Settlement Rd stream bank restoration project and the East Branch Owego Creek stream bank restoration project.

The "Rosgen Toe Wood" Method was used in both locations to stabilize the banks, create cover, deeper pool habitat, and eventually shade as the vegetation becomes established. 740 feet of stream bank was stabilized on the Park Settlement site and 240 feet of bank was addressed on the East Branch

site. The "Toe Wood" method consists of excavating to below the low flow elevation of the stream and installing large wood in the form of 20 ft logs attached to the root balls. This forms both the stable toe of the bank and the cover and habitat for the fish. Above the root ball layer, a layer of brush is placed and shallow back fill. On the Park Settlement site, Coir fabric was then installed to create stable soil lifts up to the average high flow elevation to create a flood plain bench. Live willow stems were planted throughout the installation to promote long-term stability and shade. On the East Branch site, live sod mats were harvested nearby to create the flood bench, these live sod mats were planted with live willow poles and staked down for stability.



Park Settlement site, before and after construction.



East Branch Site before and after construction.