

## **The Martins Jacoby Watershed Association Plays “Let’s Make a Deal” to Get Two Stream Restoration Projects Done!**

By Tali MacArthur, Program Manager, POWR

Martins-Jacoby Watershed Association’s (MJWA) project manager John Mauser admits that implementing stream and riparian buffer habitat restoration projects can feel a lot like the old game show, “Let’s Make a Deal!” They require partnerships, negotiations, multiple funding sources, in-kind contributions, outreach, and a whole lot of perseverance. But the rewards are well worth the effort!

One of John’s “deals” is the project at The Meadows at Martin’s Creek, a property that has been acquired by Lower Mount Bethel Township in Northampton County and draws visitors looking for passive recreational opportunities such as birding, hiking, and fishing. The objective of the project was to stabilize eroding banks and improve fish habitat in the stream. The other partners in on the deal included the Township, MJWA, PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) and the H&K Group. PFBC completed the in-stream and streambank restoration design, the Township supplied the root wads and sill logs and construction crew, and H&K Group donated the stone for the streambank stabilization. Over two and a half days in July 2019, root wads and sill logs were placed in and along the bank and into the water to stabilize the banks and create complex structures for fish habitat and the stone was placed on the banks also to stabilize it and limit erosion and undercutting of the bank by the flow of the water in the creek. With the help and support of all partners, this successful restoration project was a very cost efficient one.

A second deal “brokered” by MJWA was a much larger and longer term effort along the Oughoughton Creek that flows 7.2 miles through Upper Mount Bethel and Washington Township farmland before entering the Delaware River in Bangor in Lower Mount Bethel Township. The soil in this area is composed of highly erodible cobble and loose boulders called “glacial till” and some of streambanks had been highly eroded over time and landowners were losing land to the creek. The erosion was causing enormous sediment pollution to the creek as well as to the Delaware River.

In addition to the four landowners, the major partner in this 14-year effort to restore six segments (over 3600 linear feet) of stream was the Wildlands Conservancy. The Watershed Association and the Conservancy worked together to raise over \$500,000 necessary for the projects and implemented several different restoration techniques to regrade the streambanks, reconnect the stream to its natural floodplain, restore riparian buffers, and reestablish wildlife habitat. Staff and volunteer effort were critical to the success of this project, with volunteers planting trees along the banks to help protect water quality in the creek.

MJWA and Wildlands Conservancy acknowledge the support of their giving community and funding from Northampton County, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Niagara Bottling, as well as the support of PPL Electric Utilities’ Community Roots tree donation program, for making the Oughoughton Creek stream restoration project possible.

Project Photos:

Before and After Pictures from The Meadows at Martin's Creek Project



Before and After Photos from Two Sites along Oughoughton Creek

