Project Description - This project was completed in one phase, with design and permitting in 2018 and construction and planting in 2019. The project scope involved restoration of 1/5 a mile of Lehigh River headwaters through the removal of a high hazard dam expanding 100 feet in length and close to 20 feet in height. The structure was creating stagnant, impaired conditions and ultimately degrading the Exceptional Value waters and habitat of the Lehigh River. The property was recently permanently protected through a partnership through the state and Wildlands Conservancy. We wanted to expand on the conservation efforts and address this high priority restoration need.

Project Timeframe – December 11, 2018 through December 31, 2021

Project Goals - Restoration of the headwaters of the Lehigh River through dam removal, stream restoration, and planting resulting in improved water quality, reduced erosion and sedimentation, increased habitat, and the restoration of migratory fish passage.

Pictures –

Project Results - The Lehigh River headwaters are now free-flowing and accessible to many native fish species. Wildlands and partners planted over The river now has a stable channel and established wetlands through the former impoundment with well-vegetated streambanks. The project decreased the amount of sediment loads in the river, lowered the stream temperatures, and created naturalized wetlands and floodplains to assist in groundwater recharge and alleviate flooding. Restoring the headwaters ultimately improves the health of the river and restores native aquatic and terrestrial habitat throughout the protected headwaters. As the vegetation continues to grow, there will be increased habitat for a variety of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife.

Project Costs - $103,613 Growing Greener plus an additional $153,613 in match funds.

Partners - PA Game Commission & Wildlands Conservancy; Flyway Excavating as the contractor

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PROTECTION