

RACCOON CREEK BANK & BUFFER PROJECT – Phase II

PA Department of Environmental Protection
PA Growing Greener Watershed Protection Program Grant
Grant Document Number: C990000685; Grant Award: \$94,800



Raccoon Creek before bank stabilization-2021



After project completion-2022

In 2019, Independence Conservancy (grantee) and Stream Restoration Incorporated (sponsor) were awarded a PA Growing Greener Watershed Protection Program Grant. The grant provided funding to stabilize 500 feet of bank on the main stem of Raccoon Creek. The project sought to implement key recommendations of the 2014 *Raccoon Creek Region Conservation Plan*: to reduce erosion, halt riparian habitat loss, lessen sediment loading, and re-establish a streamside buffer of native vegetation. Bioengineering and traditional techniques were used to reinforce the eroding streambank, including grading, stone toe protection, rootwad deflectors, live stakes, brush layering, rock vanes, and erosion control blankets. 500 feet of streambank was graded, while an additional 300 feet was stabilized with riparian buffer plantings. Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) was treated multiple times and replaced with native vegetation. With the completion of this project, an estimated 500 tons per year of sediment no longer enters Raccoon Creek. This high-profile project generated interest among local residents, adjacent landowners, and municipal officials. About a dozen enthusiastic volunteers planted 1200 live stakes and 1000 native tree and shrub seedlings within the 800-foot riparian buffer. Neighboring landowner Shell Pennsylvania Chemicals donated 800 tons of native sandstone boulders to build three rock vanes, and visitor-friendly features. With in-kind contributions and donations, the original scope of work, and more, was finished in April 2022, within the grant budget.

Partners: BioMost, Inc.; Independence Conservancy, Inc.; PA DEP; Shell Pennsylvania Chemicals; Allegheny Mineral Corp.; Beaver County Conservation District; Stream Restoration Incorporated.

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