

Final Report for the Montgomery Run Splash Dam Riparian Planting



Submitted on behalf of the
Allegheny Mountain Chapter of Trout Unlimited
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By

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PUBLIC MEETING

For the public meeting associated with this project we attended a DuBois City Council meeting on August 28, 2017 at the City Office located at 16 W. Scribner Ave. DuBois, PA 15801. In attendance were City Council members, the Mayor, and City employees including the Manager, Engineer, Solicitor, and Chief of Police. The rest of the audience was made up of residents from the City of DuBois as well as several local media outlets including the Courier Express and Gant Daily.

PHOTOS OF THE PROJECT SITE

These are just two of many pictures taken during the tree planting. More photos will be provided digitally.



Before Tree Planting (April 10, 2018)



After Tree Planting, taken from slightly further downstream (May 23, 2018)

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Allegheny Mountain Chapter of Trout Unlimited utilized Coldwater Heritage Partnership funding to plant a riparian forest buffer on 800 feet of Montgomery Run in the Anderson Creek watershed on April 21st and 23rd, 2018.

A Forester with the Pennsylvania DCNR, Moshannon State Forest office provided his guidance on what tree species would survive best on the site. Several foresters also assisted with tree planting on the 23rd. Based on this guidance we ordered white pines, black willow, sycamore, river birch, and American elderberry from Musser Nursery in Indiana County. Labor was provided by Chapter volunteers as well as students from the Wildlife Technology Program at Penn State DuBois. After the trees were planted, a smaller crew of Chapter volunteers returned to the site to put tree tubes on everything except the willows and white pines.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

Objectives

Our objectives for this project were:

- Get guidance from forestry professionals to choose the species most likely to survive on site
- Order and plant trees
- Utilize Chapter volunteers and students to assist with planting
- Install tree tubes to improve survival rate
- Monitor the growth of the trees

As you can see by our project summary, we have achieved all of these project objectives. The only activity we cannot check off as “completely finished” is monitoring the growth and success of the trees as this is something that we will continue to do for years to come.

While we did complete all of our deliverables, the trees we purchased for the April 2018 planting didn't cost us as much as we thought they would so we had a small amount of our tree purchasing budget left. In 2019, we determined it was in the best interest of the project to use this to purchase more trees. We discussed our options with Go Native Nursery and decided to purchase a few additional trees. The trees we are getting from Go Native Nursery are taller more mature trees. Due to hunting seasons and planting recommendations, we ordered the trees from the nursery and they are to be delivered for planting Spring 2020.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

Now that the trees are planted, for them to act as a successful riparian buffer they have to grow to mature trees. To improve the chances that this will successfully happen we will check on them a few times each year to monitor growth and identify any tree loss. The tree tubes will need maintained in order to continue to protect the trees from browsing pressure and if too many trees die, they may need replaced for a full buffer to establish.

Our biggest threats to sustaining this project are tree mortality and loss of volunteers. To combat this, we will monitor mortality and determine if we will need to purchase more trees to fill in any gaps. As far as volunteers, while we are in good shape now, it's impossible to predict what will come in 10 to 20 years. That being the case, we intend to stay connected with the Penn State DuBois Wildlife Technology program because they may be able to bring students to the site on at least an annual basis to check on the status of the buffer.

As mentioned, we intend to monitor/inspect the buffer several times a year. During these inspections we will be looking for the integrity of the tree tubes and tree mortality. If possible, we'll fix any tree tubes that get blown over or knocked down by wildlife. If we have to, we can replace broken tree tubes and potentially purchase and plant additional trees if necessary.

NEXT PHASE OR FUTURE PROJECTS

With the buffer growing, we do not believe that another phase of the project is necessary at this time. Should we properly maintain the buffer that is in place, eventually it should mature and shade the stream as desired. However, like many streams originating in the Moshannon State Forest, Montgomery Run is depressed due to acid deposition. Our Chapter is investigating additional work that can be done further upstream to add alkalinity to the watershed. Some potential projects could be encouraging DCNR to add Driving Surface Aggregate according to Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road recommendations to several roads passing through the watershed and adding limestone to all ditches feeding into Montgomery Run and its tributaries.

PARTNERS

Landowners: Korb Family and City of DuBois – allowed access to their land for buffer planting to occur

Clearfield County Conservation District Watershed Specialist – project oversight and coordination

DCNR Moshannon State Forest – helped determine what species to plant, helped instruct Penn State students on proper tree planting techniques; brought their UTV to move materials back to the site

Penn State DuBois Wildlife Technology Program – Sivicultural classes planted trees

ACCOMPLISHMENTS & OUTPUTS FOR RIPARIAN BUFFER PROJECT

Linear feet improved (both streambanks): 800 feet total

Number of trees planted: 1200