



Site repair work by three conservation districts involved the use of heavy equipment and large rocks. *(Photo provided)*

3 Soil and Water Conservation Districts join forces for implementation effort

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YATES COUNTY, Feb. 14, 2017 -- This past year New York State Senator Tom O'Mara assisted Yates County by providing a direct line item in the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) to the Yates County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The funding was utilized to repair and stabilize sections of the Keuka Lake outlet and the Outlet Trail that were damaged during previous floods.

A severe, nearly vertical bank failure occurred during one flood event, causing an extensive amount of erosion and sedimentation, and also posed a danger to walkers on the Outlet Trail. A second section of the outlet was also identified as needing immediate attention to repair flood damages before the conditions deteriorated further. Yates County SWCD took the lead on administering the grant and coordinating the restoration work.



Yates County Soil and Water worked with the Chemung and Schuyler County Soil and Water Conservation Districts on this joint effort. Chemung County SWCD provided the necessary engineering and design work to obtain the required permits for the two project locations. Chemung and Schuyler County SWCDs provided experienced equipment operators Todd Jansen and Jim Barrett as well as the equipment necessary to repair the flood damage. All three Soil & Water Districts provided significant additional staff labor to complete the projects.

The major project was to stabilize a 200-foot damaged section that included the vertical collapsed bank. The stabilization method utilized was a geo-grid rock revetment technique. This unique, state-of-the-art method has been implemented successfully several times over the last few years by the Chemung County SWCD. "Utilizing their expertise in this type of practice was a key to success of the project," said the Schuyler SWCD in a press release. The second project area stabilized 300 feet of flood-damaged stream bank. Large, dimensional rock now protects the once eroded banks, and Bendway Weirs were installed at the base of the rock to safely re-direct water flows.

As the projects were nearing completion, the Town of Milo and the Highway Department provided staff and equipment to restore the Outlet Trail walking paths in the project areas.

"Soil and Water Conservation Districts state-wide work together and with local municipalities on a regional basis to put the most cost-effective conservation efforts on the ground," said the press release. "This project is a great example of cooperation and shared services that benefit water quality and taxpayers. This initiative would not have been possible without the funding support of Senator Tom O'Mara."

Photo in text: Workers operate machinery during the project. *(Photo provided)*



The finished outlet trail, after the coordinated effort of three conservation districts, the Town of Milo and the Highway Department. (*Photo provided*)