

Subject: : Conservation

Topic: : Requesting advice/help from the TU guys on the site

Re: Requesting advice/help from the TU guys on the site

Author: : JeffK

Date: : 2013/2/9 19:31:05

URL:

The first thing I will say is improving a watershed is a lot of work and takes cooperation with a whole lot of interests. I've become of the belief that only a small part of a streams issues are in the stream alone and that in-stream projects are only the start. You have to get the whole hydrological cycle going more naturally.

A lot of it seems to be wrapped up in mundane things like storm water management and sewage treatment. Finding the point source polluters is the first step, and getting them to change can be easy or hard depending on the situation. Getting the non-point source pollution ironed out is even harder. In my area, phosphorus is a problem. Better sewage treatment helped, but it takes political will and money - which is hard to come by in some areas. Now the problem is phosphorus in lawn fertilizer. But how do you get people to stop fertilizing 5 times a year to get the perfect lawn? If one town outlaws high phosphorus fertilizer people can buy it in the next town. All of this means an endless round of planning board and sewage commission meetings - that is why you need a group to keep at it.

I don't think clean-ups per se help that much - but they are invaluable to getting local people to become attached to their local streams and have the long range commitment to improving them. All of us fishermen see the importance of streams, but you would be surprised at how many people aren't even aware of the streams in their neighborhood. Over the years I have seen kids who did a clean up with the Boy Scouts or a church group be much more active years later.

Then you need partnerships - the land owners, conservancies, misc state and federal organizations, canoe clubs, church groups (some highlight environmental justice and stewardship), and local governments need to be on board. It takes a lot of will to make something as big as stream restoration to happen. But if the people in an area start to value the stream only a fraction of what us fishermen do things can change.