



FINAL REPORT

2020 COLDWATER HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP GRANT FOR FALLING SPRING BRANCH

The Meadows Project

FRANKLIN COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA

Abstract

Final Report and Final Expense Form
2020 Coldwater Heritage Partnership Grant.
Falling Spring Branch – The Meadows Section

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction.....	1
2.0	Public Meetings	1
3.0	Project Summary.....	1
4.0	Project Outcomes	3
5.0	Project Sustainability – next steps	7
6.0	List of Partners and Volunteers.....	8
7.0	Other Accomplishments and outputs	9

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1	List of Trees planted on April 24 th and 25 th 2021	2
Figure 1	Trees planted near Edwards Road on Private Property	3
Figure 2	Trees planted near Edwards Road on Private Property	3
Figure 3	Trees planted near Edwards Road on Private Property	4
Figure 4	Trees planted near Quarry Road on New Enterprise Property	4
Figure 5	Trees planted near Quarry Road on New Enterprise Property	5
Figure 6	Trees planted near Quarry Road on New Enterprise Property	5
Figure 7	Trees planted near Quarry Road on New Enterprise Property	6
Figure 8	Trees planted near Quarry Road on New Enterprise Property	6
Figure 9	Rachel Kester and John Fry at Edwards Road	7

1.0 Introduction

This is the final report for the 2020 Coldwater Heritage Partnership (CHP) Grant for Falling Spring Branch. Using the grant, Falling Spring TU #234 (FSTU) with the help of the Alliance of the Chesapeake Bay, was able to plant 2,650 trees along The Meadows Sections of Falling Spring Branch to provide erosion control and to improve water quality. This far exceeded our estimate of 500 trees in the grant application. Additionally, we improved public access by clearing obstructions and providing general cleanup of The Meadows Section parking lots. These efforts have enhanced the beauty, provided access, and will improve the water quality and habitat of Falling Spring Branch.

2.0 Public Meetings

FSTU holds public meetings on the first Monday of every month. Meetings are held at Norlo Park Farmhouse at 3050 Lincoln Way E, Fayetteville, PA 17222. Executives meet 30 minutes prior to the public meeting which starts at 6:30 PM. Typically, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat conservation officers attend the meetings along with chapter officers and members. Occasionally landowners and local media are present. This project was discussed at many of the meetings over the last year.

3.0 Project Summary

In summary, FSTU managed the plantings of over 2,600 trees along the Meadows Section of Falling Spring Branch. The planting area was approximately 10.24 acres. The bank length of the stream is 2725 linear feet. Table 1 provides a complete list of the trees planted. Falling Spring Branch is a cold water stream in South Central Pennsylvania, Franklin County which is fed by approximately 31 active limestone springs. This stream was a premier cold water trout fishery several years ago. It is still a good cold water stream, but due to several factors the quality of this stream has declined over the years.

After the grant was awarded, management of this project took an unexpected turn with the Covid-19 pandemic. Chapter meetings were downsized and members were not able to fully participate in chapter activities. The local boy scouts were not able to provide support and manpower that was initially anticipated. A fundamental shift in managing how and when this project could be completed had to be made. The schedule slipped as support dwindled. What was needed and desired to accomplish never changed – specifically planting trees and cleanup remained. After several months of attempting to get the resources necessary to complete the project, a search for help was conducted. This search led to Mr. Ryan Davis, a forest project manager working for The Alliance of Chesapeake Bay (ACB). With the 2020 CHP grant and help from the ACB, the original goal of planting 500 trees was exceeded. ACB was able to provide us the man-power and support that was desperately needed to complete this project. In December 2020 it was determined that it was in the best interest of the stream and FSTU to use their help. The project implementation date was set for April or May 2021. Public and Private

Meetings were held. Several meetings, telephone calls and e-mails were exchanged with stakeholders. Liability insurance was found. Landowner land use indemnification agreements, approvals, and waiver forms were signed. The project was completed using several ACB workers that specialize in planting trees on April 24th and 25th, 2021. A total of 2,650 trees were planted, shelter tubes were staked, and nylon bird nets were placed on top of each shelter. Two weeks later, three FSTU members were trained on how to maintain the tree plantings.

Table 1 List of Trees planted on April 24th and 25th 2021

Common Name	Species	Count
Boxelder	<i>Acer negundo</i>	100
Silver Maple	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	100
Speckled Alder	<i>Alnus incana</i>	200
River Birch	<i>Betula nigra</i>	200
Hackberry	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	25
Redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	25
Honey Locust	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>	100
Sweetgum	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	200
Tulip-poplar	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	50
Blackgum	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	50
American Sycamore	<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	275
Black Cherry	<i>Prunus serotina</i>	25
White Oak	<i>Quercus alba</i>	50
Swamp White Oak	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	100
Pin Oak	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	100
Black Locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	100
Black Willow	<i>Salix nigra</i>	200
Buttonbush	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	100
Silky Dogwood	<i>Cornus amomum</i>	100
Red Osier Dogwood	<i>Cornus sericea</i>	100
Winterberry Holly	<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	100
Spicebush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	50
Ninebark	<i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i>	50
Sandbar Willow	<i>Salix exigua</i>	100
Elderberry	<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	100
Arrowwood Viburnum	<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	50
	Total:	2,650

4.0 Project Outcomes

The goal of improving the buffer around the Falling Spring Branch by planting over 2,600 trees along the Meadows section was achieved. Figures 1 and 2 below show the tree plantings at the Edwards Road private access point. Figures 3 thru 8 below show the tree plantings at New Enterprise Stone and Lime private property.



Figure 1 Trees planted near Edwards Road on Private Property



Figure 2 Trees planted near Edwards Road on Private Property



Figure 3 Trees planted near Edwards Road on Private Property



Figure 4 Trees planted near Quarry Road on New Enterprise Property



Figure 5 Trees planted near Quarry Road on New Enterprise Property



Figure 6 Trees planted near Quarry Road on New Enterprise Property



Figure 7 Trees planted near Quarry Road on New Enterprise Property



Figure 8 Trees planted near Quarry Road on New Enterprise Private Property

Other unexpected outcomes included building a relationship with Coldwater Heritage Partnership. Figure 9 below shows Rachel Kester of CHP and John Fry of FSTU at Edwards Road during her site visit on May 17, 2021.



Figure 9 – Rachel Kester and John Fry at Edwards Road

Additionally, FSTU was able to clean up parking lots and the stream of debris which has improved the appearance and public access. However, several large items were not removed including a large sign, barn roof and picnic table.

FSTU was able to build landowner relationships, trust and commitment to restoring this once fabled stream.

Three FSTU members received training on May 18, 2021 which covered maintenance of the new trees by Ryan Davis of ACB.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, FSTU was not able to build our relationship with local organizations, such as Boy Scout Troop 514.

5.0 Project Sustainability – next steps

Although the project is considered complete, maintaining the trees will need to be undertaken for the next several years. Downed tree shelters will need to be fixed; bird nets will need to be removed when the trees reach the top of the shelter; hand weeding within the shelters may be necessary; and tallying the trees which failed to sprout will need to be done for replanting in

autumn. The following provides a timeline of the activities to sustain the plantings. Funding for these activities has not been determined at this time.

Summer (2021-2024)

- Two times each summer, a contractor will mow between trees and spray rings of herbicide 3 ft. in radius around each shelter to reduce mortality from voles
- Removal and/or spraying of invasive plants should be performed

Autumn 2021

- In late summer/early autumn, invasive trees and shrubs in the existing forest patch (near the parking lot) will be treated with herbicide. A few weeks later, the dead material will be removed, either as a volunteer workday or by professionals if necessary.
- In October/November, a volunteer planting will replace the trees which failed to sprout.

Autumn 2022-2024

- In October/November, a volunteer planting will replant mortality from previous growing season

In general, the future looks brighter for Falling Spring Branch. Hopefully a good percentage of the trees will sprout and grow into full size trees. These trees will hold back the sediment and provide root structures for trout.

Because of this grant, FSTU is revisiting our plans for the stream. In our May meeting, FSTU members approved a grand plan to use Biohabitats to conduct a complete watershed plan from the headwaters to the mouth of Falling Spring Branch. This plan will allow us to focus on sections of the stream which need further help.

6.0 List of Partners and Volunteers

Mr. Harold (Took) Coder – FSTU President - Took spent several hours leading and managing this project. He was responsible for finding the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay which helped to complete this project. He organized and set up public and private meetings. He met several times with New Enterprise and other landowners. He maintained communications with other FSTU members. Took spent several hours cleaning up the parking lot and stream of all sorts of debris.

Ms. Rachel Kester – Program Director for the Coldwater Heritage Partnership. Provided the funding, understanding and support for this project and was instrumental in helping us whenever needed.

Mr. Ryan Davis – Forest Project Manager for The Alliance of Chesapeake Bay. Ryan provided the necessary manpower and experience to complete this project. Without his help and support this project would still be on hold. He will continue to provide guidance, training and support to FSTU members.

Mr. Greg Willi – New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co, Inc. representative. Mr. Willi was vital to getting landowner agreements signed. He provided critical commitment and support when needed to help convince landowners to proceed with the project.

Mr. Andy Boryan – Landowner on Edwards Road. Mr. Boryan is an advocate and supporter for Falling Spring. He granted truck access to the stream. He also will change his mowing habits to allow our trees to and provide a buffer to the stream. Under his guidance and permission we planted several trees on his property.

Mr. John Fry – FSTU Member - Applied for CHP grant, supported project and wrote final report.

7.0 Other Accomplishments and outputs

The overall condition of the Falling Spring Branch should start to show improvements within the next few years.

Several bags of debris and trash were hauled away.

The total cost of the project was \$23,620 and is detailed in the CHP Final Budget Report. The total cost was much higher than we originally projected. The project would not have started without the CHP grant for which we are thankful.