



# Partnership Opportunities with the Upper Susquehanna Coalition

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Upper Susquehanna Coalition

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# Upper Susquehanna Coalition Mission

- To protect and **improve water quality** and **natural resources** in the Upper Susquehanna River Basin through collaboration to **meet local needs** which ultimately translates into improved water quality at the regional level.

- 7,500 sq. mile watershed
- 13,000 mi of roads, 17,000 mi of stream
- ~69% forest, 23% ag



# Improving Water Quality through

## Our Programs

### Supporting Sustainable Agriculture



We support Ag practices that have important economic and environmental benefits including cover crops, prescribed grazing, nutrient management plans and many more.

### Promoting Forest Restoration



We promote innovative forest restoration, prioritizing the long-term functionality of riparian areas through advocacy, implementation and management.

### Restoring Stream Corridors



We support stream restoration and address stream corridor concerns through training, education, management and assistance with site design and planning.

### Delivering Wetland Conservation

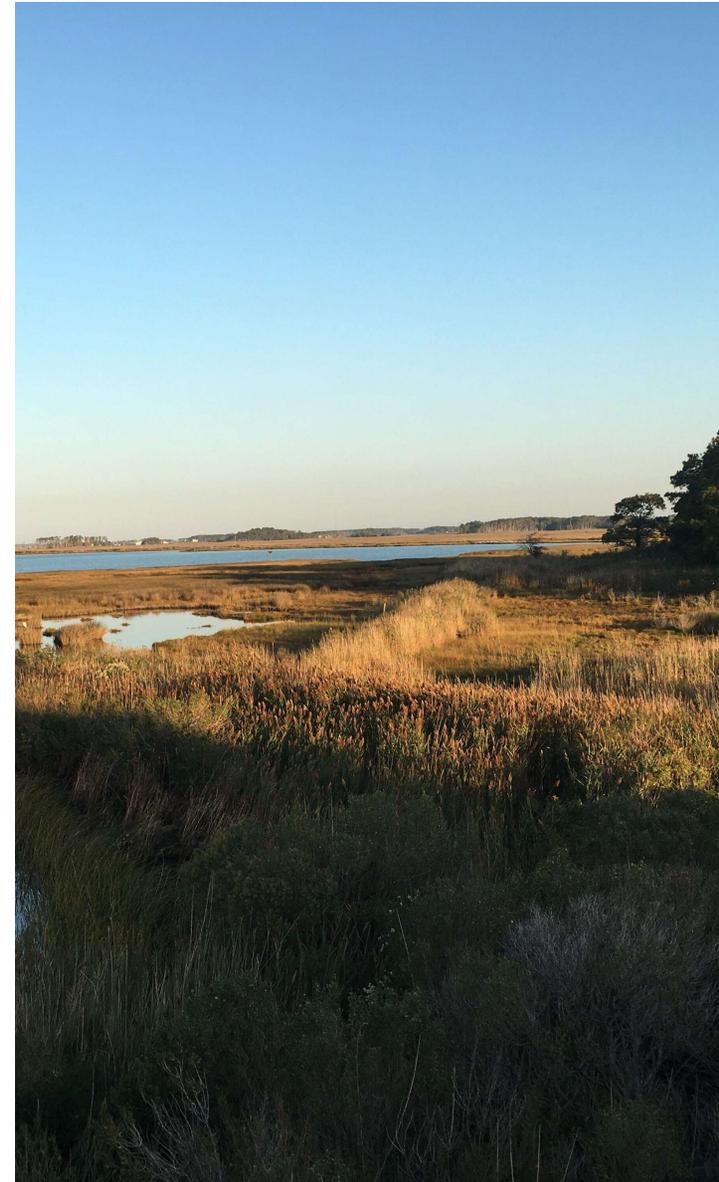


We promote existing wetland programs and partner to increase wetland restoration in the watershed through wetland design, planning and implementation.



# Work towards meeting Chesapeake Bay Goals

- [Brook Trout](#)
- [Climate Resiliancy](#)
- [Fish Habitat](#)
- [Forest Buffers](#)
- [Healthy Watersheds](#)
- [Protected Lands](#)
- [Public Access](#)
- [Submerged Aquatic Vegetation \(Underwater Grasses\)](#)
- [Stream Health](#)
- [Toxic Contaminants](#)
- [Tree Canopy](#)
- [Wetlands](#)





# Beyond 2025: Protected Lands and Forestry Workgroup

- Increase protected lands overall
- No net loss of forest
- Permanently protecting forests helps, especially in vulnerable areas.
- 11.3 Million acre goal.

# Opportunities for Partnership

- Land Trust Partnerships
- Chesapeake WILD
- USCA Working Groups
- Expanding Opportunities



# Natural Filter Restoration Program

- Permanently protect priority areas with restoration opportunity.
  - Natural filter restoration practices:
    - Riparian Forest Buffer (streamside revegetation)
    - Wetland Restoration (ditch plugs, vernal pools, shallow water habitat)
    - Stream Corridor Restoration (stream bank or in stream work)
    - Floodplain reconnection (remove those berms!)
    - Upland afforestation (historical ag tree planting)
  - Through ownership or conservation easement
  - Looking for substantial floodplain work, flood storage, and reducing peak flow opportunities.
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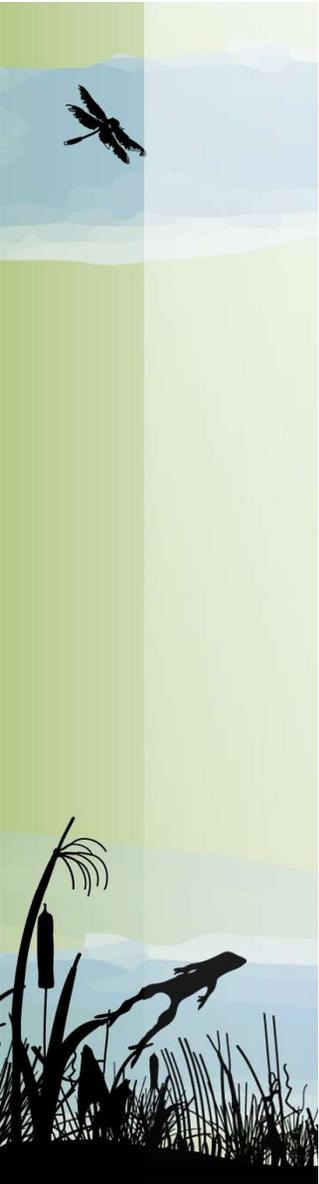




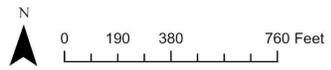
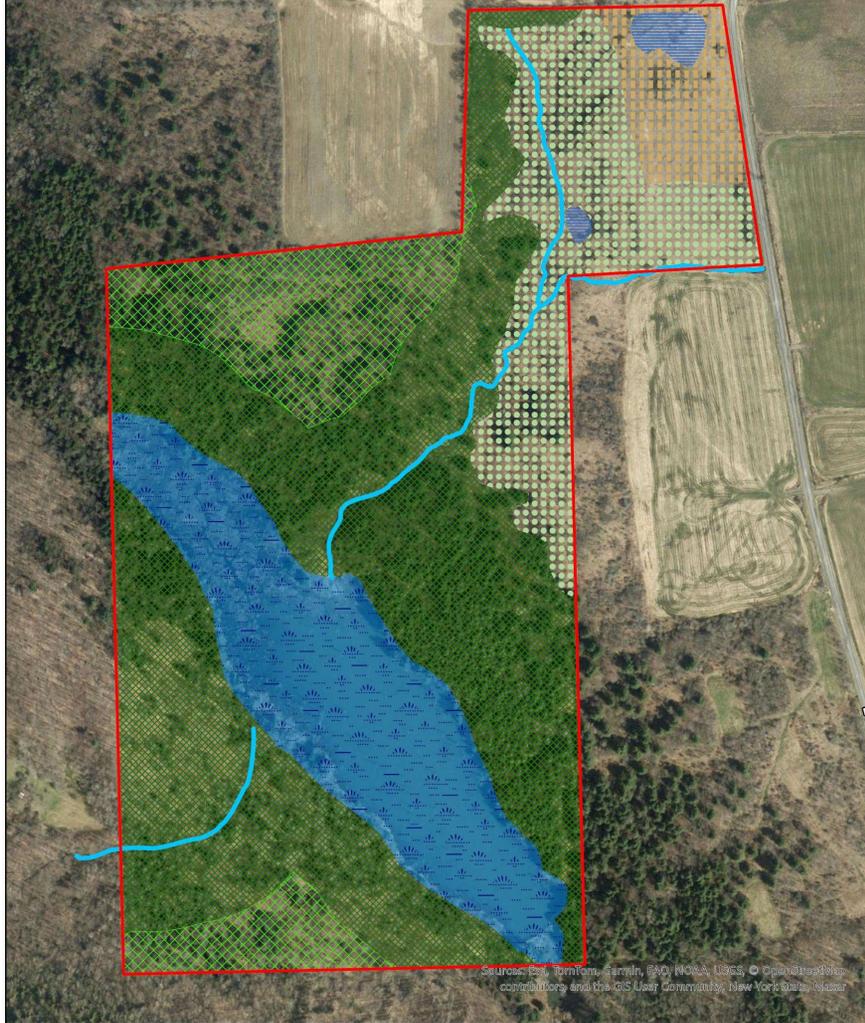
## Gaps filled: Who we're working with

- SWCDs have technical assistance to plan practices
  - Realtors/USC staff or land trust/Landowner- transfer ownership, site visits, negotiations (Sometimes the land trust/partner will take this one too).
  - SWCDs/USC/Contractors implement practices/restoration
  - Who protects the land?
    - Chenango Greenways
    - FLLT- Finger Lakes Land Trust
    - DEC- Department of Environmental Conservation
    - OLT- Otsego Land Trust
    - TWT- The Wetland Trust
    - STLC- Southern Tier Land Conservancy
    - SMHT- Southern Madison Heritage Trust
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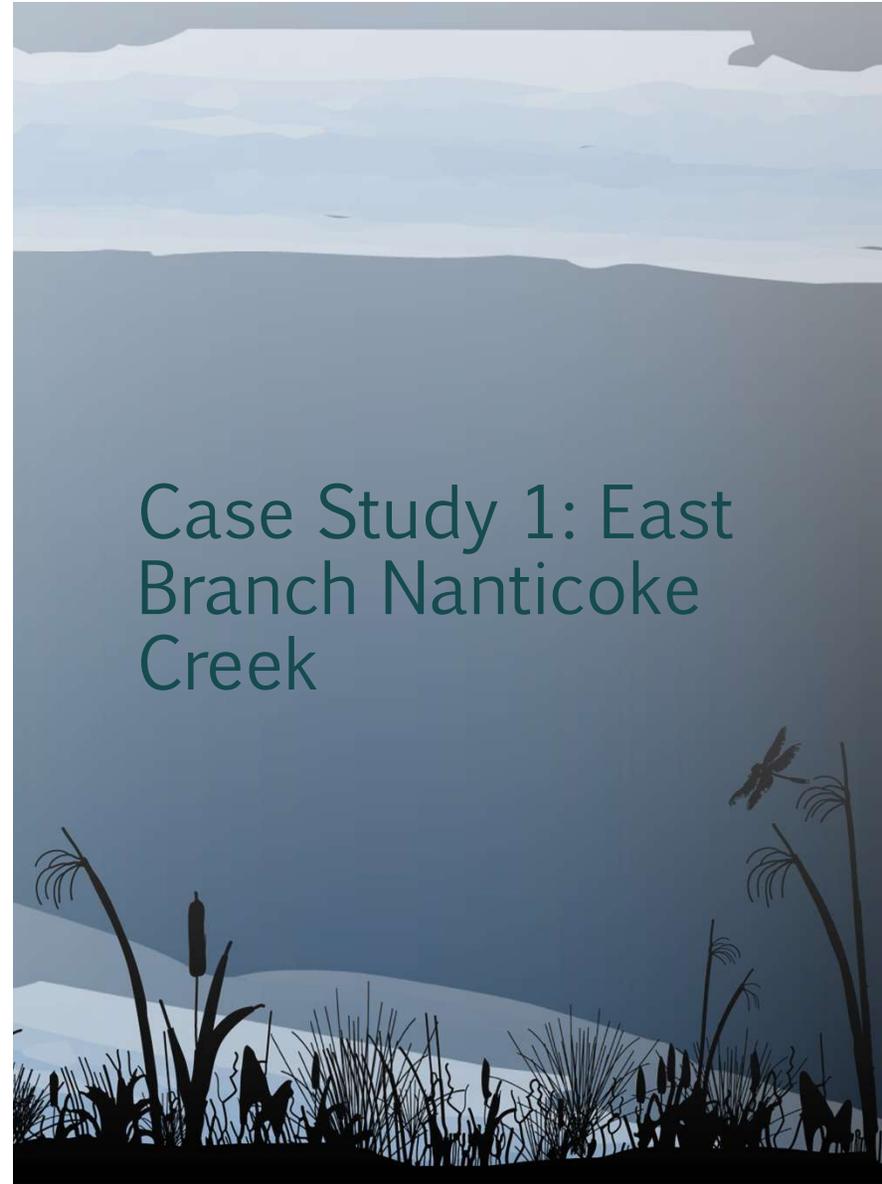
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- SWCD/USC/Land Trust- Stewardship and practice follow-up.
  - Where does the funding for protection and practices come from?
    - Purchase and easement
      - National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)
        - Transaction costs
      - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
        - Purchase and transaction costs
      - Susquehanna Basin River Commission (SRBC)
        - Purchase and transaction costs
      - Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) and DEC
        - FPIG- Farmland protection- pay landowner for easements.
        - Source Water Protection
    - Practices
      - AGM, DEC, NFWF, EPA, USFS, NRCS, SWCD



## East Branch Nanticoke Creek Climate Resiliency Project - Current Conditions



- Forest Preservation = 16.0 acres
- Riparian Preservation = 55.6 acres
- Riparian Restoration = 17.4 acres
- Upland Restoration = 5.0 acres
- Wetland Preservation = 22.6 acres
- Wetland Restoration = 1.1 acres



## Case Study 1: East Branch Nanticoke Creek

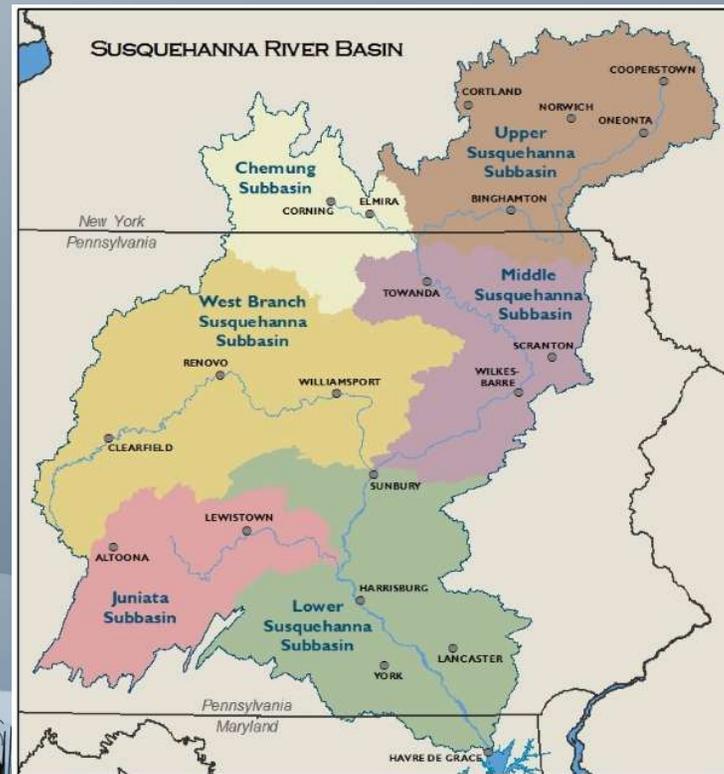


# Partners

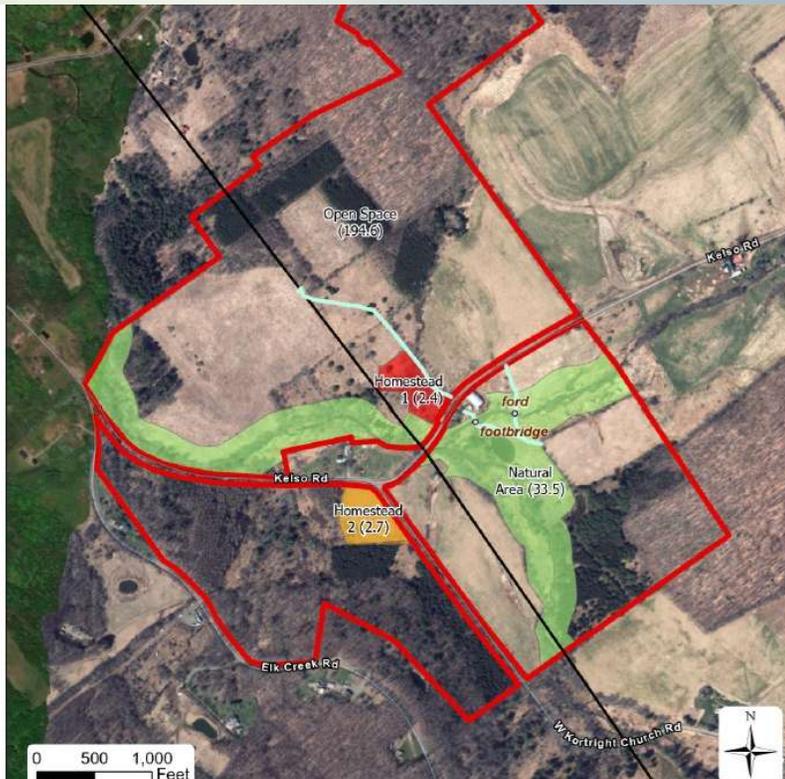
- USC/Realtor/Landowner/SRBC/STLC- purchasing the land, ownership to STLC.
  - \*One or two land transfers, how is it easiest to get restoration complete?
- USC/Broome SWCD- BMP design and implementation
- SRBC/Broome SWCD/USC- providing matching funds for BMP implementation.

# SRBC- Grant program expansion

- Federal-interstate coordinating agency.
- Pact provides “a mechanism to guide the water resource management of the Basin.”
- Mission: enhance public welfare through comprehensive planning, water supply allocation, and management of the water resources of the [Susquehanna River Basin](#).



# “Natural Area” – Property contains unique or special natural features (including...)



- Otsego Land Trust partnership
- Defined on the map.
- Only conduct operations with the approval of the land trust. No activities will affect soil integrity, natural hydrology, water quality, or structure and species composition.

# Chesapeake WILD- 2024

## Aligning Partnerships to Address Conservation Priorities

November 2024-October 2027

Contact@u-s-c.org



*Multiple partners identified, but room for more:*

- *Friends of the Chemung River*
- *Otsego Land Trust*
- *Finger Lakes Land Trust*
- *Butternut Valley Alliance*
- *Catskill Regional Invasive Species Partnership*
- *Susquehanna River Basin Commission*
- *SUNY Oneonta*
- *School districts*
- *22 SWCDs*

### • Deliverables:

- Riparian restoration: 13 acres
- Wetland restoration: 3 acres
- Conservation easement: 600 acres
- Land acquisition: 8 acres
- Removal of invasives: 0.5 miles
- Public access: 44 Chemung River miles
- Outreach!
- Planning!
- Stewardship: 140 acres



# Chesapeake WILD-2025

\*Not awarded\*

- Leading the way for Freshwater Mussel Conservation in the Unadilla River Watershed
  - Partners: Evidn., SUNY Cobleskill
  - Explore Yellow Lamp Mussel Restoration Success
  - Outreach to overcome barriers to move YLM conservation forward
  - Implement BMPs.
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# USCA Connection



- USC/SWCD workgroup participation:
  - Trout/migratory fish
  - Mussel
  - Hellbender
  - Flood



# On the horizon

- The Nature Conservancy
  - Reforestation
  - Planting with Purpose
- Trout Unlimited
  - Owego Creek
  - Schenevus Creek



# USC Partners

NYS FEDERATION OF LAKE ASSOCIATIONS  
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
BUTTERNUT VALLEY ASSOCIATION  
US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE  
SRBC  
UPPER SUSQUEHANNA CONSERVATION ALLIANCE  
COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENTS  
TROUT UNLIMITED  
NYS DOT  
CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  
SUNY ONEONTA  
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY  
ONTARIO COUNTY SWCD  
REGIONAL PLANNING BOARDS  
ESD  
COUNTY WQCCs  
YCC  
FSA  
ESF  
ALLIANCE FOR THE CHESAPEAKE BAY  
US FOREST SERVICE  
REGIONAL PLANNING BOARDS  
STROUD WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL  
EPA  
NYS DAM  
NYS DEC  
FRIENDS OF THE CHEMUNG RIVER  
CORNELL UNIVERSITY  
BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY  
CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM  
CHOOSE CLEAN WATER COALITION  
LAND TRUSTS: FINGER LAKES & OTSEGO LAND TRUST  
NRCS  
NYSWCC  
CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION  
NYS WETLANDS FORUM  
MORRISVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY  
CB COMMISSION  
PENNSYLVANIA STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
EFC  
OCCA  
THE WETLAND TRUST  
PA DEP



# Questions?

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