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Chagrin River Watershed Partners

## East Branch Chagrin River Restoration

Willoughby, Ohio



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*A 1,500-linear-foot stream and river restoration brings a confluence of ecological benefits to the Chagrin River and Lake Erie.*

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### **SERVICES**

Design-Build  
Ecological Restoration

**T**he East Branch of the Chagrin River, a state designated Scenic River, joins the mainstem of the Chagrin in Willoughby before flowing to Lake Erie. Although the Chagrin has attained its “warmwater habitat aquatic life use” designation further downstream of the confluence, this status was threatened by water quality issues upstream. Several factors, including lack of riparian vegetation and aging water infrastructure, caused severe erosion in both the East Branch and the main stem just upstream of the confluence.

With funding from the State's H2Ohio program, Chagrin River Watershed Partners (CRWP) and its project partners sought a restoration solution. Biohabitats developed and implemented a design to restore stability, function, and habitat to 530 LF of the Chagrin mainstem, 1,050 LF of the East Branch Chagrin.

The restoration stabilized the eroding streambank on the Chagrin with bendway weirs and engineered log complexes and created a bankfull bench. The East Branch was realigned and stabilized with an engineered log complex and a new riffle. The old channel was restored as an oxbow wetland and the remnants of an old dam were removed to improve fish passage for steelhead and other species.

The restoration filters nutrients and improves downstream water quality and steelhead habitat. With its reputation as one of Ohio's best rivers for steelhead, and its location near a community park, the restoration site also provides unique opportunities for recreation.