

THE VILLAGE OF HUNTING VALLEY, OHIO

Marcourt Farms Chagrin River Restoration

Hunting Valley, Ohio



*from top: site visit;
placing the pit run on root wads*

Northeast Ohio's Chagrin River is a direct tributary to Lake Erie. Though it borders the urbanized Cleveland metropolitan region, the river has retained relatively high water quality and riparian forest cover. It also supports a diversity of terrestrial and aquatic plant communities and wildlife. Known for its beauty, it has been designated a State Scenic River. Over time, development in the watershed, combined with the removal of upstream dams, has caused the degradation of a portion of the Chagrin River that flows through the Marcourt Farms subdivision of the Village of Hunting Valley. Severely eroded, with

Stream and riparian restoration using an engineered log complex enhances the beauty, accessibility, and ecological function of a beloved State Scenic River and direct tributary to Lake Erie.

banks as high as 15 feet, the reach had become unstable, unsafe, and compromised in terms of water quality and habitat.

With grant funding from the Ohio EPA, and through partnerships with the Chagrin River Watershed Partners, Western Land Conservancy, and private landowners, the Village of Hunting Valley sought to restore the reach. For help in designing and constructing the restoration, they turned to the team of Meadville Land Service and Biohabitats.

Recognizing the specific concerns of the Village, the team considered aesthetics, safety, and maintenance alongside stream stability and health in developing an approach to restore 500 linear feet of river and over one acre of adjacent riparian area. The approach,

which emphasized the use of on-site material and alternatives to rock, included the installation of an engineered log complex to stabilize the toe of bank, slow near bank velocities, and direct flow away from the bank; soil lifts and live branch layering to stabilize the slopes and provide roughness, habitat, and shading to the stream; and the restoration of riparian habitat and floodplain connectivity through native plantings and grading. The first large scale engineered log complex stream restoration project ever built in northeast Ohio, the project demonstrates a promising alternative to traditional rip-rap and rock stabilization.

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