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PRESS RELEASE



ONE OF A KIND WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT PROJECT SHOWCASED ON SKANEATELES LAKE

Skaneateles Lake Association in cooperation with the Skaneateles Country Club, The Nature Conservancy, US Fish & Wildlife Service, SUNY-ESF, and Anchor QEA Engineers celebrate stream enhancement project

October 19, 2021 – SKANEATELES, NY – The Skaneateles Lake Association (SLA) co-hosted a ceremonial planting event today with the Skaneateles Country Club (SCC) and project partners involved in making improvements to Dowling Creek, a tributary to Skaneateles Lake. The planting event was a celebration in supporting lake protection through the stream project that included The Nature Conservancy, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, Anchor QEA Engineers, and SUNY-ESF.

“At a time when Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) are at the forefront of concern for lake communities, the SLA established the Legacy Fund to support the Skaneateles Watershed Improvement Project program to help reduce nutrients entering Skaneateles Lake,” said SLA Executive Director Frank Moses “Nutrients found in upland lake soils have been identified as a contributing factor in adding to the frequency and toxicity of HABs throughout freshwater lakes.”

Dowling Creek is one of over 150 identified streams that enter into Skaneateles Lake.

Zach Maslyn, General Manager for SCC, said, “We are happy to be working with the SLA and project partners on helping create a demonstration project like this that can be a model for future watershed improvements. Already, prior to the planting stage, we have noticed great results from the construction that helped stabilize the creek”

The Nature Conservancy provided expertise with staffing that brought in the US Fish & Wildlife Service to help initiate the overall designs for the project that allowed for Anchor QEA engineers to secure final Town of Skaneateles Planning Board approvals.

“Efforts like the Dowling Creek Improvement Project are an important step to showcase locally what can be done to protect critical natural resources like Skaneateles Lake,” said Jim Howe, The Nature Conservancy’s Central and Western New York Chapter Director, “The Nature Conservancy is proud to have been on the ground floor with the development of this initiative.”

Along with the construction phase that helped take energy out of the stream flow that can contribute to erosion, the planting phase of the project has been noted to be just as critical in helping take up nutrients before entering the lake. SUNY-ESF and its Restoration Science Center was brought into the project to help with the planting design.

“Skaneateles Lake provides both quality of life and drinking water to much of CNY, including the City of Syracuse and is a true gem to our community” said SUNY-ESF President Joanie Mahoney, “Today’s event will enhance both habitat for wildlife and the integrity of Skaneateles Lake streams and ESF is proud to participate.”

Plants selected for the project will help support more diversity in wildlife and provide root structure that will help retain soil and prevent additional sedimentation in the lake.

“The improvement project on Dowling Creek at the Skaneateles Country Club is the first of its kind for Skaneateles Lake as a stream stabilization project,” Moses said. “We are confident that by convening some of the region’s top environmental experts, we have executed a project that will help inspire and leverage more necessary and much needed work with the community in the future.”

SLA project partners include The Nature Conservancy, who provided staff to develop initial designs with the US Fish & Wildlife; Anchor QEA Engineers, who helped finalize designs; SUNY-ESF, who provided expertise and plants to enhance the stream habitat; and the Skaneateles Country Club who, along with SLA, provided staff and financial support and is the host site for the project.

For more information, visit skaneateleslake.org.

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