Focus ON THE FISHAMERICA FOUNDATION

Dam Removals Vastly Improve Fish Passage in Michigan and Pennsylvania

Two recently completed steam restoration projects in Michigan and Pennsylvania will open more than five miles of fish habitat critical to spawning and rearing. The projects were funded through the FishAmerica Foundation's partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.

Charlotte Dam Removal Project, Charlotte, Michigan

In 2007 FishAmerica teamed with the USFWS's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in Region 3 to restore fish habitat and improve water quality in the Midwest.

In 2008 the FishAmerica Foundation and the USFWS awarded a $25,000 grant to the Eaton Conservation District in Eaton County, Mich., to remove the Charlotte Dam along the Battle Creek River. In the early 1900s, the Charlotte Dam was built to provide cooling water for a steam-generated water works facility. Eventually the water works facility was abandoned and torn down. The impoundment became shallow and filled with silt, and the area became undesirable for even its historical recreational uses.

The Charlotte Dam Removal Project, which included taking out two dams and installing a fish passage structure at a third, was an innovative approach to dam removal and stream restoration.

After sectioning the Charlotte Dam into four pieces for easier removal, the county recreated the meandering stream and eliminated a straight ditch—a new opportunity for improving fish habitat in Michigan. The removal of the Charlotte and the Elm Street Dams and the installation of a fish passage structure on the Narrow Lake Dam opened more than 25 miles of upstream habitat for trout.

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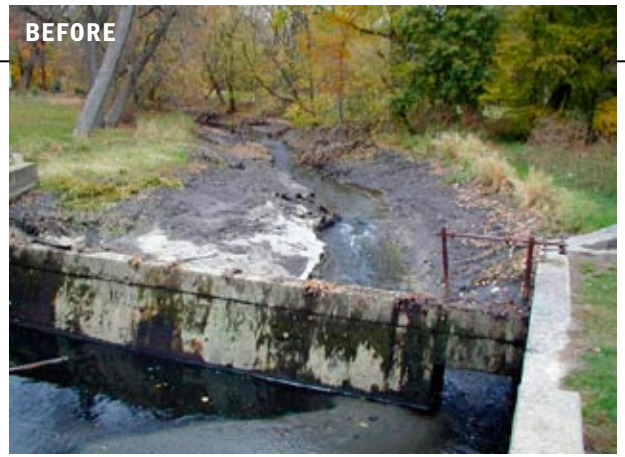
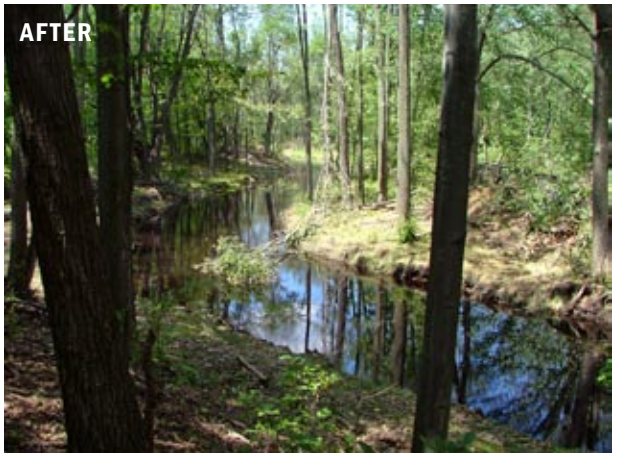


The Charlotte Dam was built to provide cooling water for a steam-generated water works facility. To remove the dam, the county sectioned it into four pieces.

Once the Charlotte Dam was removed, the county recreated the natural meander of the stream. It also installed 30 in-stream structures to create grade control and improve fisheries habitat.



Battle Creek River restored to its natural and historical state, improving fish habitat for several species of sportfish, including trout.

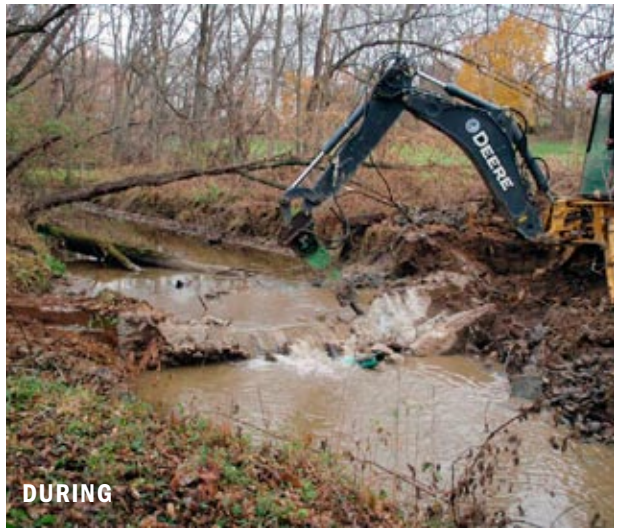
West Branch Little Conestoga Creek Dam Removals, Pennsylvania

In 2008, the FishAmerica Foundation and the USFWS's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, Region 5, located in the Northeast, awarded a grant to the California University of Pennsylvania to remove two low-head dams in the Conestoga Creek watershed in Lancaster County, Pa.

The two dams blocked fish passage to critical upstream habitat for several species of sportfish along the main stem of the West Branch of Little Conestoga Creek and along one of its unnamed tributaries. After they removed the dams, the partners stabilized the stream banks and installed in-stream structures to improve fish habitat in the creek.

This project ties closely with another project funded through the FishAmerica Foundation and USFWS partnership in Lancaster County. The second project will be completed by the end of 2009 and will restore more than a mile of in-stream habitat and nearly three miles of riparian buffers along Mill Creek, a tributary to the Conestoga River. Combined, the two projects will open more than five miles to unrestricted fish passage to populations of smallmouth bass and American shad within the Susquehanna watershed.

Dam 1 was a gabion rock dam located on the unnamed tributary to the West Branch of Little Conestoga Creek.



Construction crews carefully remove the dam on the West Branch of Little Conestoga Creek.

The FishAmerica Foundation and the USFWS in the Northeast have worked together for nearly nine years, investing nearly $1 million into projects to restore fish habitat and passage to critical spawning and rearing habitat from Maine to Virginia. These projects have opened more than 100 miles of stream and restored 450 acres of wetlands habitat.

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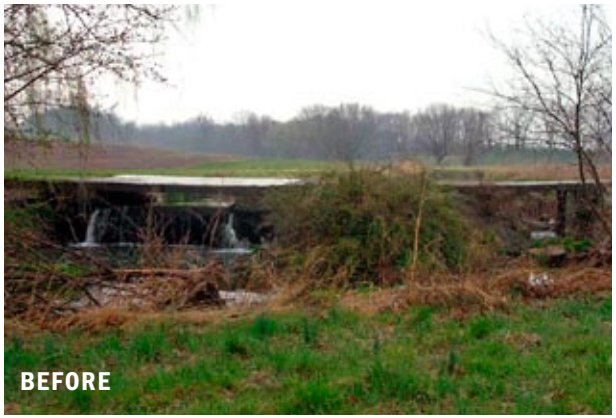
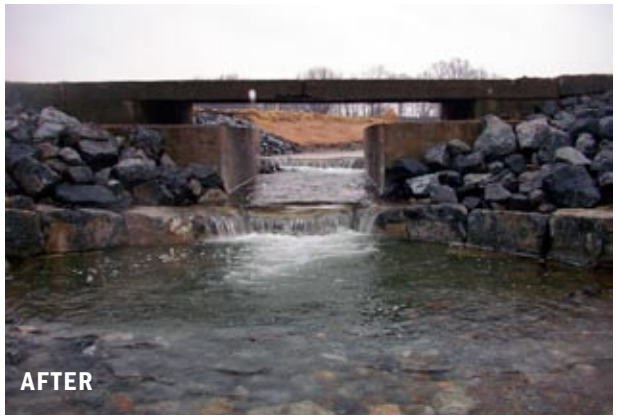
The West Branch Dam area shown following the removal of the dam.



Dam 2 was a concrete and masonry dam located on the West Branch of Little Conestoga Creek. The dam was located under a bridge crossing.



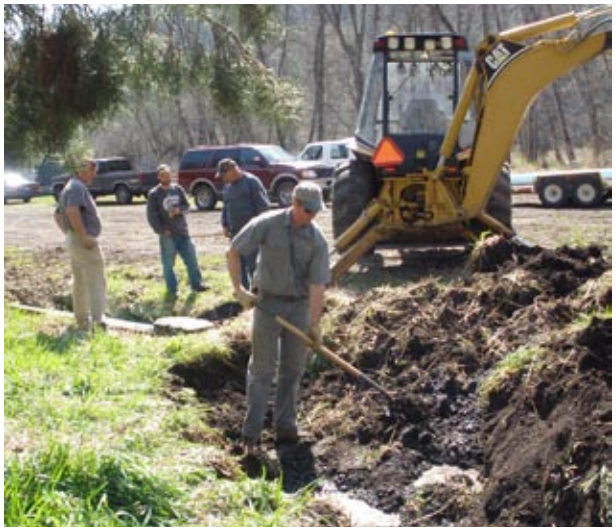
After the removal of the concrete and masonry dam, the stream banks were stabilized, creating plunge pools and making fish passage feasible along the West Branch of Little Conestoga Creek.

Idaho Family Fishing Pond Restored

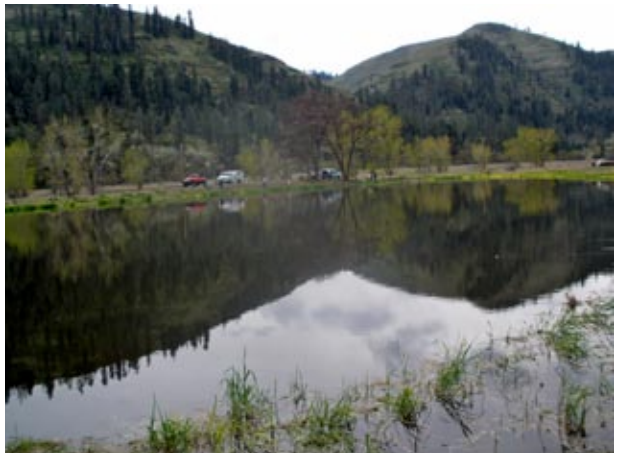
Local community revitalizes nearly 50-year-old pond

In 2008, through its partnership with Pro Line Manufacturing, the FishAmerica Foundation awarded a $7,500 grant to the Upper Clearwater Community Foundation in north central Idaho to restore the popular community Tommy Robison Pond. The pond was created nearly 50 years ago on the Flying B Ranch in Kamiah, Idaho.

Water seepage plagued the pond and lowered water levels four to six feet below full pool depth. To alleviate the problem, the Upper Clearwater Community Foundation and its partners excavated the pond's upper end and created a deeper pool area. They also installed a pond liner to seal the pond and prevent future seepage. Community volunteers planted shade trees along the shoreline to maintain lower water temperatures in the pond for the fish.



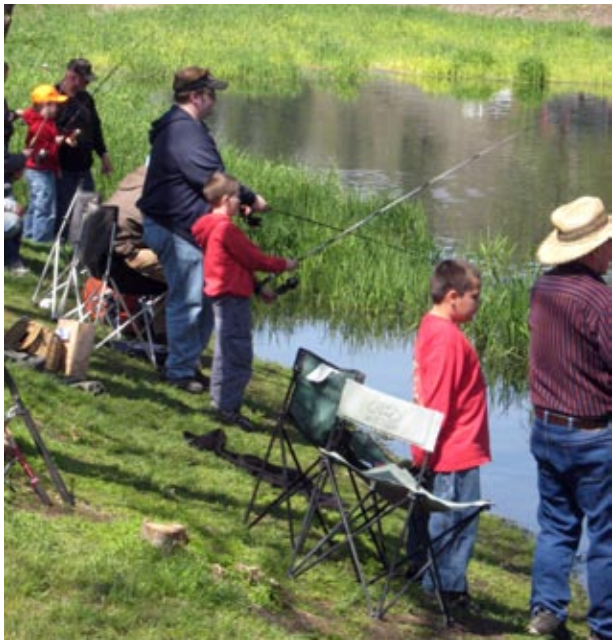
Robert Hand, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, along with volunteers from the community and the Flying B Ranch, replaces the broken pipe that feeds Tommy Robinson Pond.



The newly restored Tommy Robinson Pond boasts its highest water level in years. The elevated water level is attributed to replacing the broken and clogged pipe at the spring that feeds the pond.

With funding and other support from the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Flying B Ranch and the local community, the Upper Clearwater Community Foundation installed interpretive and informational signs; renovated a walkway and parking area; and installed new garbage receptacles. It also installed a picnic area, fishing docks and paved handicapped pathways.

This project has re-established Tommy Robinson Pond as a quality public fishery and wildlife habitat and enhanced the fishing experience for children and their families. ■



Families enjoy a day of fishing at the restored public fishing hole.