

Green Innovation Grant Program

Project Title: Owasco Flats Wetland Restoration and Riparian Buffers Initiative

Grant Recipient: Cayuga County

Location: Moravia, NY

Green Infrastructure Practice: Construction and Restoration of Wetlands, Floodplains and Riparian Buffers

EFC Grant Amount: \$712,500

Total Project Amount: \$792,000

GIGP ROUND **2**

Project in Construction 08/2013

Project Description:

GIGP funding will help restore a portion of an approximately 1,500-acre floodplain known as Owasco Flats near the Village of Moravia in the Finger Lakes region of New York. By 1938, seventy percent of the floodplain had been converted to agricultural use, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers later channelized an inlet to the lake. These changes have resulted in increased weed growth and the proliferation of toxic algae, as well as elevated organic matter content, resulting in taste and odor concerns in the treated drinking water.

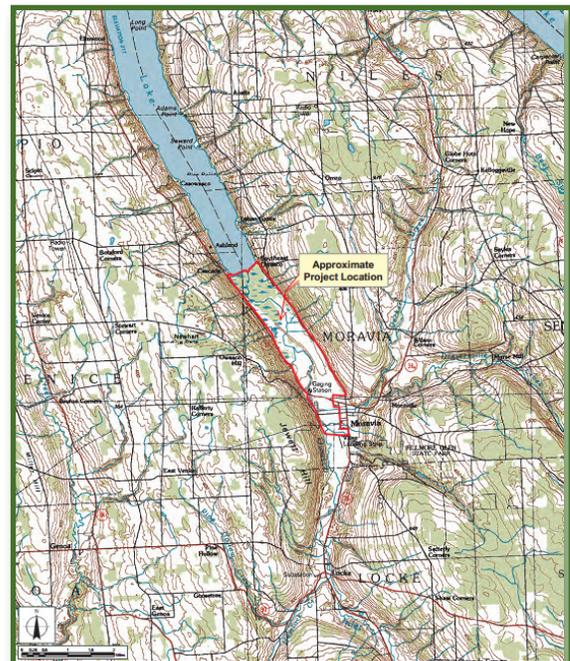
Restoring the Flats to a fully functioning wetland will improve water quality in Owasco Lake, ensuring that it remains a safe source of drinking water for Cayuga County residents. The project will restore riparian buffers and allow a local stream to flood its banks into the adjacent

floodplain, providing new habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds and other wildlife. Creating shallow depressions in the restored riparian zones and new vernal (seasonal) pools will enable amphibian breeding habitat crucial to the 15-20 amphibious species that reside in the Flats.

This large-scale project will demonstrate that it is possible to reverse man-made changes that have negatively impacted water quality, while improving drinking water quality for the region.



Aerial view shows the area known as the "Flats," at the foot of Owasco Lake.



Location map showing the project area outlined in red.

