



Locally led Conservation



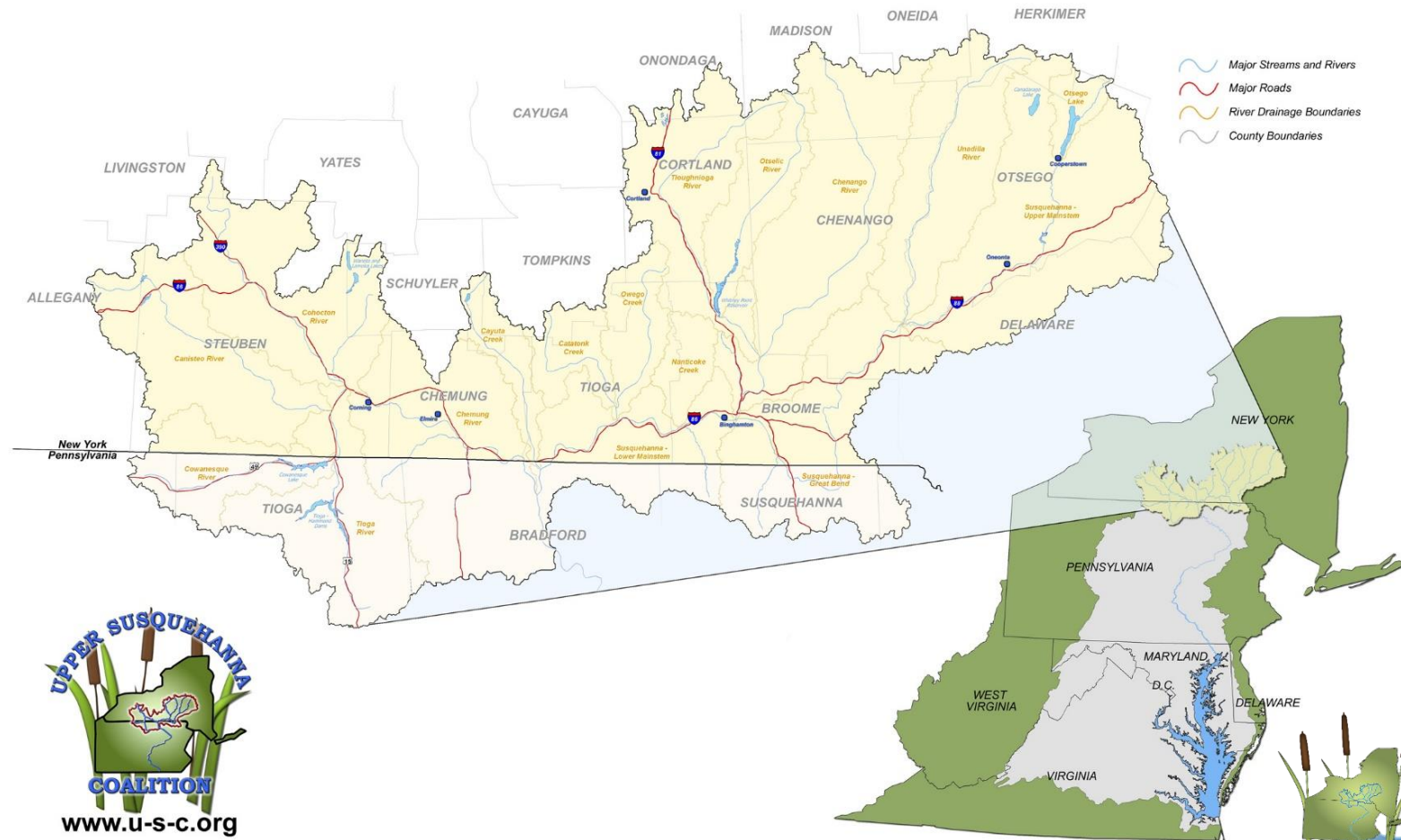
in the Upper Susquehanna River Watershed





THE UPPER SUSQUEHANNA COALITION

HEADWATERS OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY



Locally led Conservation in the Upper Susquehanna River Watershed

Upper Susquehanna Coalition Mission

- To protect and **improve water quality** and **natural resources** in the Upper Susquehanna River Basin through collaboration to **meet local needs** which ultimately translates into improved water quality at the regional level.

- 7,500 sq. mile watershed
- 13,000 mi of roads, 17,000 mi of stream
- ~69% forest, 23% ag



Upper Susquehanna Coalition

- A coalition of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) through District Law.
 - Stronger together to seek for and distribute funding, capacity, and expertise.
- Team approach- Agriculture, Buffer, Wetland, Stream.
 - Team coordinators with supporting staff
 - SWCD staff, NRCS, FSA, local land trusts and other interested partners



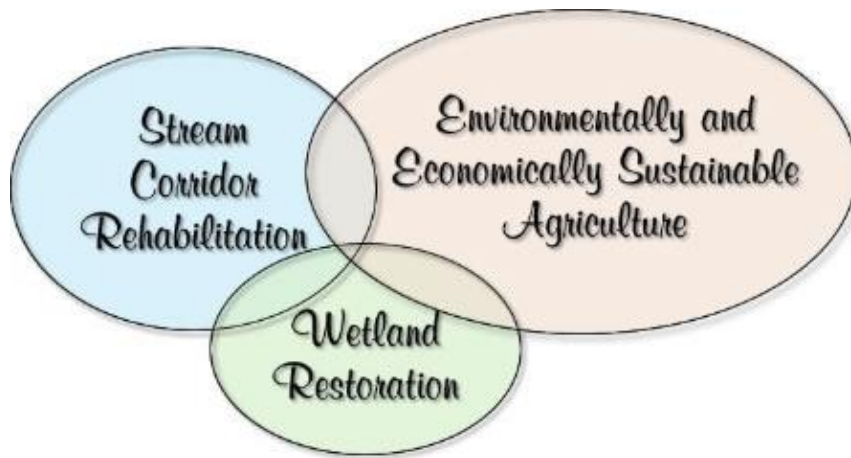
Practices we promote

Focus Areas:

Protect and build wetlands and riparian buffers for **habitat** and **water storage capacity**.

Corridor rehabilitation, focusing on “soft” practices to promote **streambank protection** and **habitat development** within both the **aquatic** and **riparian** areas. Working with landowners and municipalities.

Focus is **nutrient reduction in our waterways**; we promote riparian buffers, cover cropping, nutrient management, and prescribed grazing.



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Wetland Team

- Goal: Establish, Restore, Enhance and Conserve Wetlands
- Make up of Wetland Team
 - Wetland Team Leader
 - Wetland Coordinator
 - Wetland Biologist and Specialist
 - Field Team
- Approach: Design, Build, Restore and Fund

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Why Wetlands

- Capture runoff to desynchronize flood peaks - **resulting in less flooding**
- Decrease stream flows to reduce energy of flowing water - **less erosion**
- Remove sediment and impurities from surface water - **improving water quality**
- Provide wildlife habitat – **add diversity and more recreational opportunities**



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By building a low berm (at left of the wetland) a nice pool was formed that adds flood capacity, wildlife values, water quality improvements and visual aesthetics



Wetlands perched higher in the watershed are “out of the way” and provide exceptional value for capturing rainfall before it enters streams



Stream Team

- Goal: have a consistent, quality controlled process that builds USC and partners capacity to address stream issues.
- Make up of Stream Team
 - Stream Team Leader
 - Stream Staff from Member Co. SWCDs
- Approach: Background Reports, Watershed Assessments and Analysis (Including Triage Reports, culvert assessments), Design Reports, Implementation and Training

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USC Stream Corridor Rehabilitation

- Emergency Stream Intervention Program (ESI)
- Watershed Assessments
 - Community engagement
- Infrastructure Evaluations
 - Culvert Assessment and Replacements
- Floodplain Reconnection
 - Berm Removals
- Forested Buffers
- In-stream structures

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USC Stream Corridor Rehabilitation



Catatonk Creek Berm
Removal site
Before, during and
after construction
Tioga County





Berm Removal Site
Delaware County



USC
Stream Corridor Rehabilitation

USC Stream Corridor Rehabilitation



Otsego County Streambank Stabilization
Funding thru Empire State Development



USC Stream Team



Otsego
County
Streambank
Project

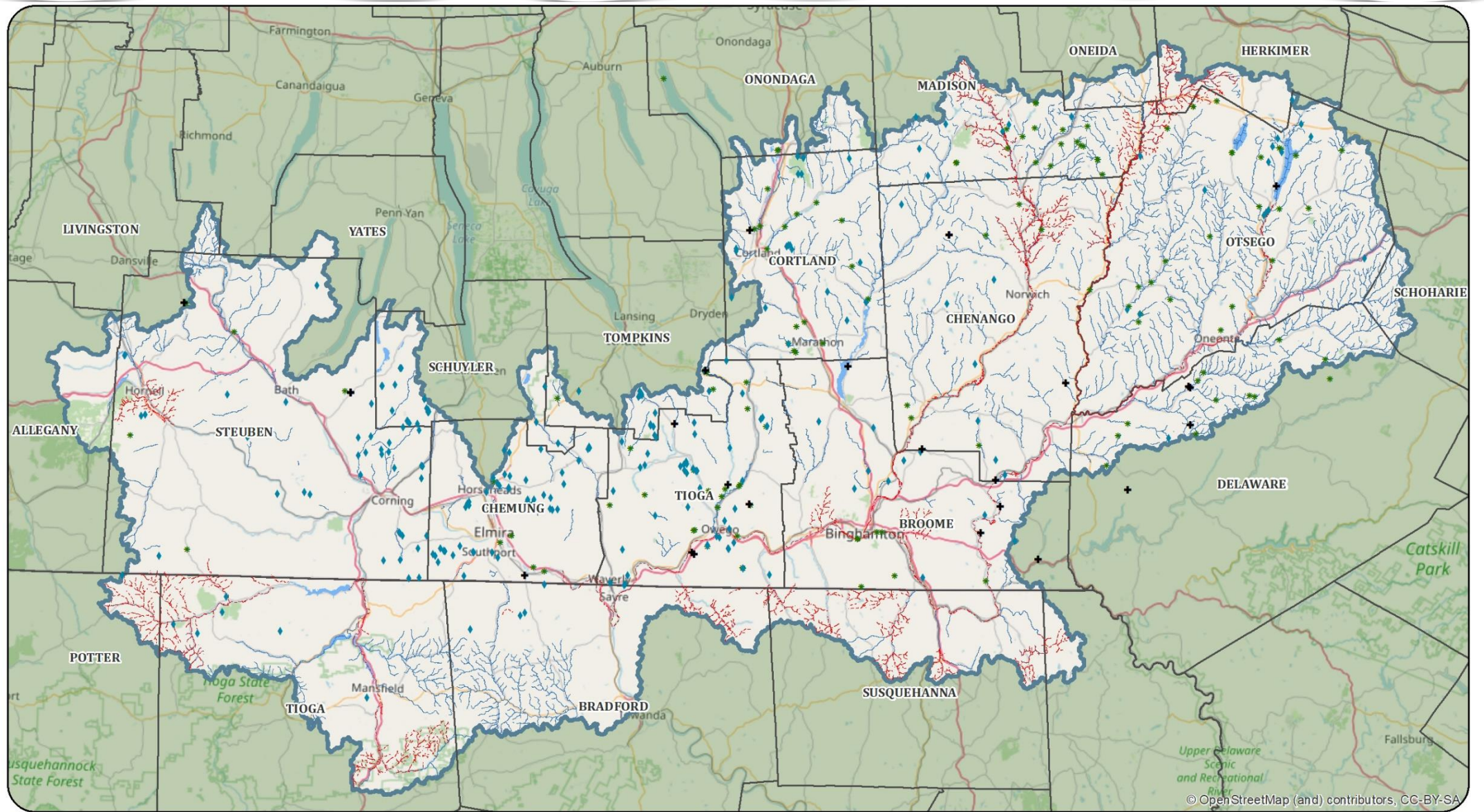
USC
Susquehanna Coalition
www.U-S-C.org



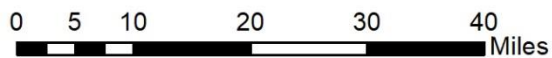
Buffer Team

- Goal: get buffers on the ground in the watershed
- Make up of Buffer Team
 - Buffer Coordinator
 - Buffer Technician
 - SWCD staff members
- Approach: Provide tools to districts for buffer implementation; fill programmatic gaps with funding opportunities; education and outreach and technical trainings.

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- Legend**
- + Berm Removal Locations
 - ◆ USC Wetland Sites
 - ★ USC Buffer Sites
 - Trout Streams
 - - - Impaired Streams
 - ⬮ USC Boundary






Keys to USC's Success

- Partnerships
- Coordination at a regional level
- SWCD's Relationships and reputations at the local level
- Flexible funding
- Prioritizing work based on local needs





Recommendations for Regional Collaborations

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- Plug into existing Collaborative
 - Identify if there are any existing collaborations to join with similar mission and goals as yours
 - Start fresh with focus on local needs
 - Build relationships with technical experts in the field
 - Stick to the science
 - Develop new and foster existing relationships
 - Focus on BMPs that can show results within the watershed
 - Multiple Barrier Approach
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