

6.0 Top Ten General Recommendations

6.3.9 Invasive Species: Early Detection & Rapid Response

Recommended: that an effective early detection & rapid response protocol to prevent the spread of all invasive species be implemented through collaboration among private landowners, recreational users and local, county and state agencies.

Notes While invasive species with the stream and riparian environments are first priority, the Project Team could remain active in efforts to universally address invasive species because devastation from infestations in the forests of the Panther Mountain (i.e., Emerald Ash Borer, Asian Longhorned Beetle, etc) would have dire consequences to overall stream health.

6.1.2 Selective Stream Gravel Management

Recommended: that an independent stream scientist be funded to create a guidance document with recommendation on how, when and where to scientifically manage problematic gravel deposits with the Rondout Creek watershed.

Notes Numerous concerns have been expressed regarding current policies and regulations restricting gravel removal. It is the Stream Management Program's role to investigate these issues by advancing discussion with the appropriate regulatory agencies.

6.2.1 Identify Locations of Potential Water Quality Impairments

Recommended: that a review existing water quality data take place to identify the most significant water quality impairments and the locations of potential water quality impairments including, sources of pollution from upland areas and within the stream channel (i.e., significant glacial lack clay exposures), and sources of contaminants from road runoff and households.

Notes Potential impairments to water quality can come from many non-point sources affecting both surface and ground water supplies.

6.2.6 Stream Stability Restoration

Recommended: Secure funding commitments for additional unfunded restoration projects on the Rondout Creek as discussed in individual management segments.

Notes In this Plan, the Project Team identified a number of reaches which are strongly recommended for restoration. Additional restoration sites should be prioritized, ranked and continuing funding sought.

6.2.4 Watershed Assessment of Major Rondout Creek Tributaries

Recommended: that a watershed assessment be conducted of those Rondout Creek tributaries that contribute a majority of the total Rondout Creek discharge and a significant portion of the total sediment load.

Notes A study of the tributaries can identify long-term chronic fine sediment sources, erosion hazards, dump sites and other potential water quality impairments and associated treatment opportunities, followed by recommendations for restoration practices.

6.1.3 Debris Management

Recommended: that a protocol be developed for the inventory of floodplain debris and assistance to municipalities and communities in debris management.

Notes Develop protocol to ensure responsible floodplain management, including annual clean-up efforts, prevention of illegal dumping, and flood event debris management. The Program Team may need to explore issues of landowner liability for managing large woody debris. Removal of large woody debris would focus on areas that pose a flood hazard to infrastructure and a threat to human welfare.

6.3.8 Knotweed-Free Areas & Spread Prevention

Recommended: that a knotweed-free area be established for educating the public, highway departments and general contractors about the threats of Japanese knotweed colonization and avoiding the spread of this invasive plant.

Notes The community can promote being “knotweed-free” and maintain this status. Outreach efforts can foster peer to peer influence on avoiding the spread of Japanese knotweed.

6.8.6 Flood Hazard Education Sessions

Recommended: that the Towns of Denning and Neversink, working with local and state agencies, support periodic training sessions on flood related issues; and that the audience include municipal leaders, code enforcement staff, planning boards, landowners, realtors, lending institutions and others.

Notes Knowing how to properly manage floodplains is crucial to continued safety and economic sustainability. NYSDEC and the New York State Department of State (NYSDOS) have established education programs geared to local municipalities. Better understanding of flood damage potential, stormwater implications, the NFIP, and use of Federal Insurance Rate Maps will empower local officials to make informed decisions.

6.4.2 Flood Response Technical Resources

Recommended: that trained professionals be identified to provide onsite guidance for stream modifications immediately following flooding. Guidelines that integrate stream form and function should be developed for use during post flood response.

Notes The existing approach to flood management of patching flood damage without stream process knowledge wastes limited funding, may leave localities more vulnerable to future floods and may create liability for already devastated communities. Guidelines for work on flood damaged with minimal stream disturbance would greatly reduce risk of further instability. Stream professionals can provide for rapid and coordinated expert review and guidance on a regional basis during planning, funding, permitting and construction phases of flood remediation.

6.6.2 Educational Workshops

Recommended: that the Sullivan and Ulster County Soil and Water Conservation Districts host workshops targeted to various audience groups to foster long-term stream stewardship ethic.

Notes Workshops can address topics such as basic stream processes and functions. Another area of potential interest indicated by the Streamside Landowner Survey includes the status of wetlands and fishery in the basin. Education can contribute to growing community awareness of threats posed to the watershed by invasive species.