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## 10 grants awarded in Delaware County

*By Patricia Breakey*

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Several Delaware County municipalities and not-for-profit agencies will share \$500,000 in grants. The funds will come from the Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District Stream Corridor Management Program.

A total of 10 grants were awarded for East and West Branch Delaware River stream management plans in the first round of a new grants program.

Shelley Johnson, Delaware County Planning Department spokeswoman, said the funding will improve the local infrastructure and protect stream banks.

Hamden will remediate 160 feet of stream bank erosion along Chambers Hollow and improve a culvert on Back River Road; Harpersfield will address storm water drainage along Odell Lake Road. Stamford will improve culverts on Roxbury Mountain Road, and Tompkins will use the funding to manage woody debris along Pine Swamp Road.

A grant to the town of Walton will address two stream bank failures along Beers Brook and stream bed erosion at a culvert in Pines Brook.

A grant will also be used to fund the purchase of a hydroseeder by the town of Walton to be shared among participating communities.

Johnson said the hydroseeder uses water pressure to place seeds on stream banks so the plant root systems will hold the soil in place.

The Water Discovery Center grant will support the development of a plan for improving recreational opportunities along the East Branch Delaware River.

Johnson said one of the important aspects of the program is to teach people who own property along the stream the best ways to manage the land.

"You don't protect streams without educating the people who own the land along them," Johnson said.

The stream program is a partnership between the Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection and the Delaware County Planning Department.

Program funding is made available through a contract with the NYC Department of Environmental Protection.

The program is designed to follow the recommendations of the East and West Branch Delaware River Stream Management Plans, which were created by the Stream Program Project Advisory Committee composed of municipal officials, representatives from county agencies, nonprofit organizations and other stakeholders.

Johnson said more grants will be offered for the next five years in January and June of each year, based on contract agreements with the DEP.

For information, including announcements about how to apply for the next round, contact the Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District Streams Program at 865-5223, the Delaware County Planning Department at 746-2944 or [www.catskillstreams.org/Delawaregrant.html](http://www.catskillstreams.org/Delawaregrant.html).

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