

Marks Farm NRD Restoration

Black River Martinsburg, Lewis County

Marks Dairy Farm Inc. owns and operates a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation in the town of Martinsburg, Lewis County, NY. A major fish kill on the Black River began August 10, 2005 as a result from a collapsed manure lagoon at the farm. Several million gallons of manure slurry were released, which caused lethal levels of ammonia and very low dissolved oxygen along 24 miles of the Black River in Lewis and Jefferson Counties. The resulting fish-kill continued for about four days as the toxic water gradually moved downstream.

Restoration Efforts

The restoration involves the improvement of seven existing fishing access sites, and the creation of an additional eight. The fishing access sites include small parking lots, wooden pedestrian bridges and fishing docks, and several picnic areas, which are maintained by local municipalities. The fishing sites are all along the Black River in Lewis County, and part of the remediation included restocking the river to expedite population recovery. The increased fishing access compensates the public for the lost fishing use of the Black River during the spill and the natural remediation of it. These upgraded spots also directly benefit the communities affected by the fish-kill that resulted from the event.



Contaminants of Concern

Manure slurry (Ammonia & Anoxic Conditions)

Restoration Project

- New, and upgraded fishing access sites
- Project Includes:
 - A new fishing access site
 - Upgrades to seven fishing access sites
 - Conservation easements on affected waterfront
- The project was funded through monies obtained by the NYS DEC in a settlement reached with Marks Dairy Farm, Inc. over the release of manure into the Black River.

