

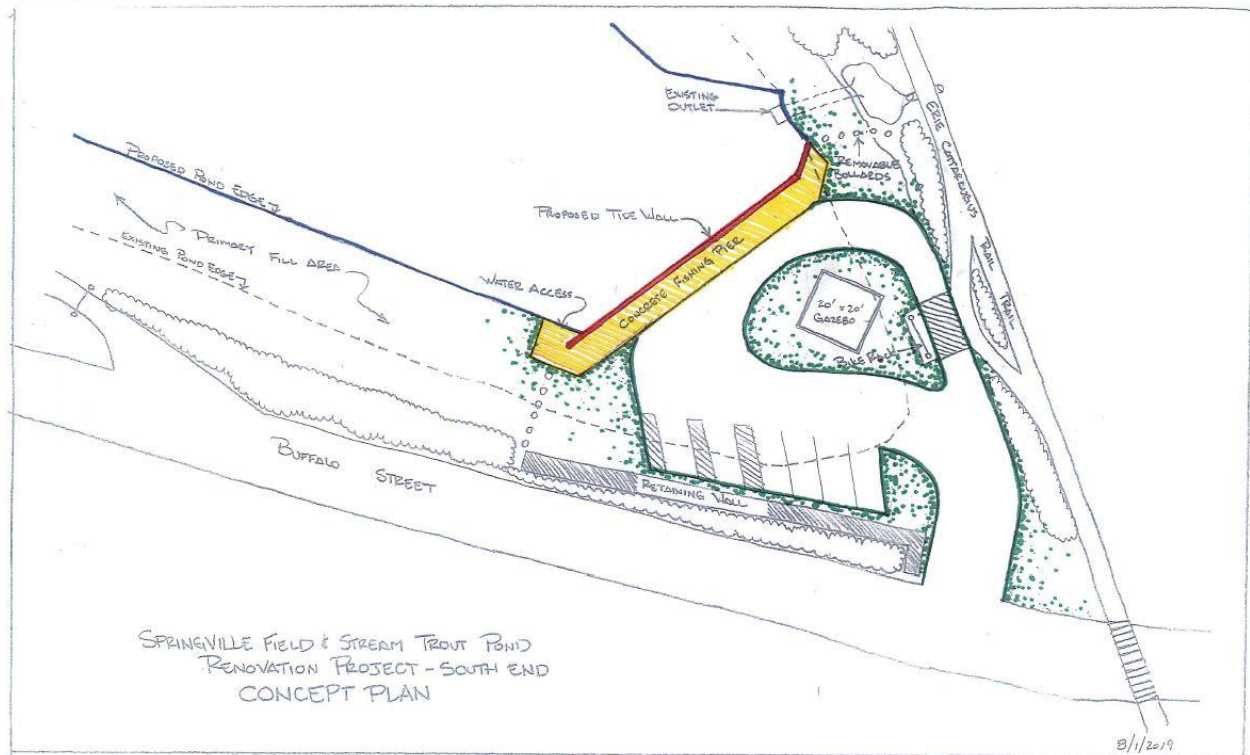
March Volunteer Spotlight: Jason Engel

Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail has enjoyed the benefits of partnering with a variety of community and regional organizations. Biking, hiking, scouting groups, snowmobile clubs, local businesses, Chambers of Commerce, and adjacent municipalities have supported the trail in a variety of ways and have, in turn, enjoyed positive community recognition and economic benefits.

Most recently, a new, exciting partnership is in the works between **ECRT and the Springville Community Trout Pond**. Eight years ago, **Jason Engel** took on a leadership role with Springville Field and Stream. His background in landscape architecture, business ownership and special projects work with the Amherst Planning Department made him an ideal candidate for the position. The heart of the project required significant dredging from a 1997 “100-year flood” that overwhelmed the popular trout pond, which sits adjacent to the trail, and created major erosion issues. The fish hatchery located at the pond’s north end was rendered inoperable.



As Engel explained, “We want to reclaim this popular and ecologically significant resource. To do so, we adopted a 3-phase project. **Phase one** includes dredging the pond, re-establishing the shoreline, and improving the fish habitat. **Phase two**, at the south end of the pond, will create an important connection to the adjacent ECRT trail. The new destination trail head is to include a pavilion, parking area, bike rack and an ingress and egress ramp for wheelchair accessibility to a fishing pier. In preparation for this phase, ECRT provided funds for a culvert which sits beneath the trail and connects the pond to Spring Brook, an important outlet for occasional flooding.”



Springville Field and Stream Trout Pond Renovation Project Concept plan.

Spring Brook, he went on to explain, travels north to East Concord and is one of the few streams in Erie County that is home to native brook trout – a rare find. It also was once an important water source for Springville – ergo, the town’s name.

“**Phase three** of the project includes reconstructing the trout hatchery at the north end of the Pond, with a small classroom where children and adults can learn more about aquaculture and fish habitat – a nice education stop for bikers and hikers along the trail.

“It is such an important partnership, and we know so many people, locally and regionally, will enjoy and benefit from the trail, the trout pond, and the unique recreational opportunities our collaboration will bring.”