Albion Hills Conservation Area Gabion Basket Removals

Habitat Project Lead: *Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters*

Habitat Project Funding Lead: *TD Friends of the Environment Foundation*

Date Completed: *September 11, 2012*

The Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program partnered with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) to undertake the removal of two failed gabion baskets along the Humber River in the Albion Hills Conservation Area. The project was completed by TRCA, Ontario Streams and OFAH Atlantic Salmon Program staff. Staff first installed a sediment fence to stop any erosion caused by working near the water and prevent any harmful alterations to existing fish habitat. Once the wire baskets were cut open we removed the stone and any remaining wire. The stream bank was built back up with one large root wad (stump with root attached) anchored to the bank with aircraft cable, covered with soil then a layer of coconut fabric and round river stone to fill in the bank at the water's edge. The revetment process (anchored logs), mixed with additional small stone is a much softer technique for stabilizing stream banks (compared to all hard rock) because they do no deflect the erosive force of the water downstream. The work took place from September 4 to September 11, 2012 and the sediment fence was left in for another three months to collect sediment as the newly restored bank settled. This project improved Atlantic Salmon habitat by providing shade under the overhanging root wad and stabilized the stream bank to reduce sediment loading on downstream fish spawning areas.

Figure 1: Two gabion baskets before removal.

Figure 2: Ontario Stream staff and University of Toronto student volunteer cutting the wire basket open and removing gabion stone by hand.

Figure 3: TRCA and OFAH staff installing a root wad in the stream bank.

Figure 4: Restoration site one month after completion.