



Lower Black River Heron Rookery Restoration Project - Phase I City of Lorain, Ohio



Funding provided by the U.S. Forest Service and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

The City of Lorain received a \$250,000 grant from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in 2013. The project will restore approximately 4 acres of floodplain adjacent to the existing heron rookery on the Black River. Several decades ago, a 30-foot tall pile of steel “slag” was disposed of in the restoration area, eliminating important floodplain habitat and contributing to water quality concerns in the Black River and the adjacent heron rookery. The project removed approximately 120,000 cubic yards of the slag material and restored the natural floodplain adjacent to the heron rookery. The removal of this material not only alleviated water quality concerns, but also increased the floodplain capacity of the Black River.



White contour lines in the figure above show the approximately 30-foot tall pile of steel “slag” that was removed during the project. After removal, the project area was restored to natural floodplain. With time, it is anticipated that the restored area will mimic habitat conditions present in the existing heron rookery.

Following the removal of the slag, subsoil and topsoil were placed and approximately 4 acres of native seed, 1,000 native shrubs, and 500 native trees were planted. With time, it is anticipated that the restoration area will mimic the habitat currently provided in the existing heron rookery. Construction of the restoration project was conducted with strict seasonal limitations to avoid any potential impacts to nesting birds.



After the slag was removed, soil and plants were installed at the site, which created floodplain wetland habitat similar to the conditions in the heron rookery.

