



# FEMA

## Recovery Efforts Retain Historic Gilbertsville

**Albany, NY** – With additional help from federal and state disaster agencies, the tiny Otsego County Village of Gilbertsville is rebuilding from the June 2006 floods without having to sacrifice one of its most historically significant features.

One of the prominent features of the district is a 200-foot-long manmade channel of laid-up, cut stone that carries the Dunderburg Brook through the center of the community. During the severe storms of June 26 - 28, 2006 the usually placid brook roared through the ravine, cresting several feet above it, flooding homes and businesses.

The historic retaining wall, which varies from 6 to 14 feet in height, held through the flood but was structurally compromised. Temporary bracing has since been put in place to stop the wall from falling further inward, but village officials found that permanent repairs will be much more costly.

When Otsego and 18 other counties in the region were declared eligible for federal disaster assistance last June, it triggered the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA) program. The program provides reimbursement to government entities and certain non-profits for repair of damaged public infrastructure.

FEMA provides 75 percent of the funding, and New York State funds the remaining 25 percent. The program is administered by the New York State Emergency Management Office (SEMO). Additional funding is available from FEMA through its hazard mitigation program which encourages, and pays for, preventative measures.

Restoring the wall to its original, historic state will require first removing and then replacing the damaged sections with concrete and then re-facing the wall with laid-up stone. In order to mitigate future damages, riprap is being placed to line the streambed beyond the retaining wall to prevent future erosion.

Mayor Musson worked with FEMA and state officials to secure the funding to return the wall to its original, historic state and to mitigate future damages. In late February, Senator Charles Schumer announced FEMA had approved more than \$1 million in public assistance for the project.



Otsego County,  
New York



### Quick Facts

Sector:

**Public**

Cost:

**\$1,378,000.00 (Actual)**

Primary Activity/Project:

**Retrofitting, Structural**

Primary Funding:

**Other FEMA funds/ US Department of Homeland Security**