

## O2 - Best Practice Data Sheet

People and Water NGO, Slovakia

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**Name of the Project:** HRIČOV WATER TRIP – ecosystem restoration of damage forest landscape in community forest Horny Hričov in 2009

**Carrier of the Project:** Horný Hričov Village

**Country:** Slovakia / Žilina region

**Contact:** Horný Hričov Village,  
<http://hornyhricov.sk/>

**Duration:** study and construction from 2007-2009



**Reference:**

<https://kravcik.blog.sme.sk/c/225669/Hricovska-vodna-cesta.html>

[https://www.zmos.sk/katalog-opatreni-rieseni-a-prikladov-z-praxe.phtml?id\\_menu=49905&module\\_action\\_121553\\_id\\_res=1](https://www.zmos.sk/katalog-opatreni-rieseni-a-prikladov-z-praxe.phtml?id_menu=49905&module_action_121553_id_res=1)

### **Origin and Context of the Project**

Hričov waterway was built as a flood protection against torrential rains. Visitors also come here for relaxation and hiking.

In 2008-2009, a cascade of wooden water retention measures was implemented in two valleys to retain rainwater and raise groundwater levels in the adjacent forest ecosystem.

An attractive zone was thus created in the locality, it is visited not only by inhabitants of Dolný Hričov but also by tourists from other parts of Slovakia. The revitalization project includes Šíповá studnička spring and the reverent place of the monk Tomáš Waterhouse, who lived in the nearby Hričov Castle, gathered medicinal herbs in the forests and treated sick people.





Thomas Waterhouse, reportedly appeared here when the King of England, Henry VIII, dissolved his community of monks, the so-called baggers. Šípová studnička was revitalized in his honour and a chapel for a monk was built as well.

The ceremonial opening of the project was also attended by the Franciscan monks, who increased the dignity of the reverent place with the monk Tomáš Waterhaus guarding the spring of Šípová studnička. According to legend, the monk Tomáš lived in this area and prayed for people and their health. He prayed that this water also served health purposes. In the past, people used this water to treat skin and eye diseases. To this day the inhabitants of Dolný Hričov only drink the water from Šípová studnička.

The project was financially supported from the funds of the Ministry of the Environment of the SR and the Environmental Fund. In this beautiful natural environment you can also see the ant path, water cascades in the valleys and deer and boars. The project made the forest ecosystem more attractive and it became a popular attraction of local tourism.

The project is both an inspiration and a relaxation zone. The local community also built a gazebo where frequent picnics and meetings of local people take place. The project is an example of how to make the environment more attractive with help of water linked to historical stories.

The innovative idea of the project is to revitalize a neglected forest by means of rainwater retention, to improve the hydrology of small streams (flood and drought prevention) with the addition of reverent places and thus to increase the attractiveness of the area for the development of local tourism.



Photo: Michal Kravčík