

Lower Alum Creek Watershed Forum
Past and Future Actions on Behalf of Alum Creek
Wednesday, December 10, 2008

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District: David Reutter

- Education grants—Columbus, Bexley and Westerville
- In partnership with NRCS on Argyle Run bank stabilization project (Saint Mary of the Springs near Ohio Dominican University).
- Mapping
 - Streams/hydrology for the entire watershed completed
 - Illicit discharge and Detection Elimination in particular home sewer septic systems for City of Westerville completed. Pockets of pollution throughout Alum Creek watershed are being identified and should be completed in 2009.
- Conservation implementation
 - Rain Garden
 - Cost share program--- not taken advantage of it—cost share of installation not taking advantage 250.00 per owner cost share
 - Is there a fact sheet?
- OEEF Grant awarded to Central Ohio Rain Garden Initiative (CORGI). Involves the installation of a rain garden and follow up monitoring. To help prove the efficacy of rain gardens. Brook Run Subdivision- Spring Run drainage: Brook Run subdivision must be chosen. There are two other subdivisions in different watersheds that could be chosen.
- There are 2 active (and 1 inactive) construction sites underway and in compliance. Reviewed plans for 2 rezoning sites and had input on the new Clinton-Mifflin Land Use Plan, which should be approved in December.
- FSCWD reviewed a logging request for a seven acre parcel in Mifflin Township. It turned out not to be a viable stand and the owner thought the zoning issues would probably be difficult to overcome.

Westerville Water Treatment Plant: Dick Lorenz

- Westerville, Board of Health, County Commissioners, OEPA and different institutes to enforce/ensure that septic tanks are operational. The area of focus is along county line where it is believed that many septic tanks are failing.

Westerville Parks and Recreation Department: Michael Hooper

- Update on trail connection?

Preservation Parks: Frank DiMarco

--nothing to report specific to Alum Creek watershed

Franklin County Metroparks: Mac Albin and Jill Snyder

- Bike Trails
 - Bike trails —7.3 miles along Alum Creek---Metroparks
 - Bike trail in Sharon woods—connection with Alum Creek? Pressure to get a east west connector
- Fish and Amphibian Diversity: Pressure of increasing urbanizations
 - Paddle fish--- June 6th at the confluence in Alum Creek—feed on plankton on large rivers—

- Alum Creek at confluence is still alive, but the number of species is limited to one of each of thing. It is beautiful looking, but not a lot there. Pollutants filter out by the time it reaches the confluence, but there are still negative impacts from increasing urbanization.
- Spring creek at Sharon Woods—fish and aquatic insects nearly gone—Chemical sampling—heavy metals- parking run off—Polaris Parkway. Call OEPA about urban runoff signature
- Wood frogs been reintroduced – Sharon woods in vernal pools—wood frog areas were found in vernal pool
- Three Creeks
 - Streambank restoration to allow easier access to flood plain. Relocated bike trail. Used live stakes, but beavers ate them.
 - Alum Creek canoe access and parking off of Watkins Rd at Three Creeks Park.

City of Columbus Public Utilities: Laura Mohr

- Alum Creek Relief Tunnel going into design now. It will be a 14 mile tunnel that will alleviate sanitary sewer overflows

Heart of Ohio RCD: Traci Aquara

- Annual Plan –Plan of Work to address pasture management which will improve water quality. Work with Ohio Farm Bureau on pasture management. Every county on rotating basis. Information available online.
- Ohio RCD involved with CORGI –Central Ohio Rain Garden Initiative

Ohio American Water: Brian McFarland

- Two water treatment and one wastewater treatment plant. Installing clarifying system in the wastewater treatment plant to meet stricter water quality standards.

Friends of Alum Creek and Tributaries: David Hohmann and Kim Williams

- 70 tires out of creek bed this year with 500 tires overall since 2001.
- Removed two lowhead dams
- Restored nearly 5,000 linear feet of native trees and shrubs along Alum Creek corridor

MAD Scientist and Associates LLC: Mark Dilley

- Otterbein Lake removed honeysuckle and multiflora rose, and planted couple hundred trees such as button bush, spicebush and pussy willow.
- Modified water control structure at Otterbein Lake
- Educational efforts: Westerville Wetland Workshop at Boyer Nature Preserve, developed wetland displays for Wessie Fest and Westerville Earth Day event, Go Green Camp at Boyer Nature Preserve

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Habitat, Hydromodification, Stormwater, Land Use and Nutrient

- Methodical release schedule – more natural timing to help mitigate urban impact. The release is scheduled to address storage issues.
- Clean Ohio Fund: preserve land along Alum Creek with conservation easements along Alum Creek
- Ken Odiorne, RED Consulting, and Bill Ballantyne, property owner, have asked FACT and other interested organizations to assist with protecting the tributary that flows

- through Mr. Ballantyne's property. Water quality monitoring, site selection, water protection measures etc. were briefly discussed and will need to be explored further.
- Ohio American Water
 - may be able to assist with future chemical and microbial analysis of water
 - may be able to help with future restoration efforts at Castro Park
 - may be interested in placing an easement or some other land use conservation measure provided it does not limit their ability to drill for water wells in the future.

Education

- ANNOUNCEMENT: RCD—Carol Watkins—grant writing workshop – up in Knox County on Feb. 24 at Russell Cooper House. OEPA and RCD grant
- QUESTION: Is there a fact sheet for the cost share program offered by FSWCD in regards to rain garden installation?