

## In This Issue

Bringing Back Black Branch: Uplifting a Community and its Environment	1
Community Outreach Vital to Black Branch Stream Restoration	2
Black Branch Stream: An Inclusive Green Infrastructure Economy	3
Maintaining Stream Restorations	4
Southlawn Stream Restoration Project Sees Progress and Partnership	4
CWP Thinks Outside the "School Box" during the Pandemic	5
Earth Day Cleanup 2022	5

## Bringing Back Black Branch: Uplifting a Community and its Environment



*Eroding, incised banks of Black Branch Stream before the restoration project*

In recent years the Clean Water Partnership (CWP) has added stream restorations to its arsenal of stormwater best management practices. While it is important to control and catch runoff from parking lots with devices like bio-retentions or ponds, many of the streams in Prince George's County and most urban areas have already been impacted by flooding and are in need of repair. Destabilized stream banks erode quickly, dumping massive amounts of sediment into waterways. This sediment clogs up rivers, kills vegetation, and pollutes the environment.

Black Branch Stream in Kettering showed all the signs of an impacted stream; steep incised banks, exposed tree roots, and a channel getting wider and deeper with each heavy storm. CWP engineers saw an opportunity to improve this damaged waterway for the surrounding community. After

careful planning, design and community outreach, the 100% County-based work-force began the actual restoration project in August 2021.

The experienced construction crew led by SMC and Bourn Environmental were able to cut the disturbance area for this project in half by using only one access road instead of two. This preserved a wide swath of forest and allowed us to save substantial taxpayer dollars. But that was just one success of this project. Upon completion in spring 2022, we've restored 1,715 linear feet of stream at Black Branch and have added the site to our routine maintenance and inspection schedule. To learn more about this project, stream restoration maintenance and recent CWP outreach efforts, continue reading The Drop.



*Black Branch Stream flowing through newly stabilized channel*

## By the Numbers

Program Costs Expended To Date

**\$224 Million**

Local/Minority Business Participation

**\$171.1 Million**

Current Status Completed

# of Sites

**235**

Credits Acres

**4,065.6**

Total LBS of Trash Removed by  
CWP Maintenance

**134,426**

Reporting period as of April 2022

Make sure you "Drop" back to the CWP website to view our new animated video in which students visit Stormwaterville Elementary School to learn about the benefits of stormwater filtration.



## Community Outreach Vital to Black Branch Stream Restoration



*Initial surveys of Black Branch Stream showed a site in need of repair*



*On-site meetings with local communities gave residents a chance to voice their concerns and learn more about the project*

The secret sauce to any impactful and successful project is community outreach. For the communities of Palisades at Oak Creek and Oak Creek Club neighborhoods, the Black Branch Stream restoration project in Kettering was a perfect example of how the Clean Water Partnership (CWP) engages with the community throughout the construction process to keep all stakeholders and parties informed.

Black Branch Stream is in a densely wooded area adjacent to the popular Whiteholm Park. This park is frequented by local residents and contains several athletic fields, a community garden, and miles of walking paths. The project's proximity to such a well used amenity made community coordination, and reduction of impact that much more important.

Starting in summer of 2020, the CWP's Outreach Team, including its general contractor SMC and subcontractor Bourn Environmental, informed stakeholders of upcoming construction impacts and educated the community on the environmental benefits of the stream's restoration. Here is a timeline of outreach and construction efforts:

**Summer 2020:** CWP's Outreach Team mailed an introductory letter to residents near the project site informing them of plans for a stream restoration in their community.

**Spring 2021:** Focusing on residents and stakeholders from adjacent

neighborhoods, the CWP Outreach Team, including Assedo Consulting, general contractor SMC, and designer Soltesz, LLC, held a virtual town hall meeting to keep the community up to speed on the project. The Cameron Grove Homeowners Association also invited the CWP team to present information on the project at their monthly virtual meeting. After the meeting, project informational pamphlets were mailed to more than 380 residents closest to the construction area.

**Summer 2021:** On August 11, the CWP team held an in-person pre-construction meeting at Whiteholm Park. Residents were invited to attend to ask the construction team any pressing questions about the project. CWP delivery partners in attendance included Black & Veatch, SMC, Bourn Environmental, Soltesz, LLC, Maryland Environmental Science, and other CWP consultants.

**September 2021:** The CWP Outreach Team posted project information signs and uneven path signaling along the park's trail to inform park users about the ongoing project.

**October 2021–February 2022:** Several communication updates were offered by the CWP Outreach Team to community members regarding site vandalism and inclement weather schedule adjustments.

**March 2022:** The Black Branch Stream restoration is completed.



*Oak Creek East Park was used for construction access during the restoration*



*Crews lay liners, vegetation matting, and rock to stabilize the stream channel*



## Black Branch Stream: An Inclusive Green Infrastructure Economy



Stream restoration work can be tricky. It requires a high magnitude of collaboration, and the timing must be perfect.

For instance, contractors work in tandem to control a stream's flow while working in its channel—adequately sequencing the work to ensure project success while remaining sensitive to protecting the natural environment. They can also only work in the stream bed from mid-June to mid-March each year. Adding this level of complexity to the typical barriers of entry that small and diverse businesses face can keep smaller businesses from even bidding on such a project. This is where the Clean Water Partnership (CWP) comes in.

The CWP pushes through the many impediments that have included pre-requisites around bonding, including cash flow, access to capital, and past performance. The CWP also works closely with the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC), important government bodies that closely monitor stream restoration projects.

The CWP's approach to procurement is to create more opportunities for local, small, and minority businesses by packaging bids based on local and diverse business market capacity. It also has a project management structure, process, and culture built to ensure that small and diverse businesses are successful within the CWP framework. The first step in the process was the selection of Storm Water Maintenance, LLC a women-owned minority business, as the General Contractor (GC). Storm Water Maintenance has six years of work experience as a GC with the CWP. The CWP team then led a brainstorming session with the GC to develop bid packages for Black Branch Stream that ensured small business participation while not compromising price, quality, or schedule. Storm Water Maintenance received proposals from seven contractors and awarded contracts to four certified County-Based businesses, achieving 100 percent local, small, and minority business participation.

Let's meet the winning contractors.

The lead subcontractor is **Bourn Environmental**, a County-based service-disabled veteran-owned small business in Mitchellville. Bourn was founded by Christopher Perry in 2014 after graduation from the US Military Academy at West Point and serving five years as a Combat Engineering Officer in Iraq and Afghanistan. Bourn Environmental focuses on ecological construction and wildlife/habitat management. The firm has competitively bid and consistently

received contract awards on CWP projects for the past six years. They restored significant portions of Black Branch Stream with the other subcontractors handling the peripheral areas.

**Clinton Sewer Experts, Inc.**, a County-based small minority-owned business in Cheverly, is responsible for clearing the site in preparation for the eight-month construction project. Clinton Sewer was established in 2016 by Francisco Alarcon and his brother, who sold their land in Guatemala to purchase equipment and start the company. Clinton Sewer, a family-owned and operated business, has worked on several CWP projects and performs stormwater work for Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC).

**SunRay Lawn and Landscaping, LLC** (SunRay) a County-based, women-owned, small minority business located in Laurel, is responsible for tree planting and native grass seeding. Maria and Ray O'Donnell founded SunRay in 2017 to focus on conservation landscaping and quickly enhanced their capabilities by working on green stormwater infrastructure projects. SunRay has a multi-year CWP maintenance contract and holds best management practices (BMP) maintenance contracts with surrounding jurisdictions.

**Arya Civil Construction, LLC**, a County-based, small minority-owned business in Laurel, will install erosion and sediment controls on Black Branch Stream. Arya Civil was founded in 2007 by Nandlal Gevaria, PE, focusing on green infrastructure and environmental engineering. Arya Civil is a maintenance contract holder with the CWP and has worked on numerous other CWP construction projects.

These small businesses have participated in the CWP's Mentor Protégé Program, which supports the development of their technical and business competencies, provides access to supportive services to fuel their growth, and delivers ongoing coaching to ensure their long-term success.

The Black Branch Stream Restoration project is just one out of over 200 projects constructed by all local, small, and minority-owned businesses. Overall inclusion across the CWP portfolio is approximately 80 percent over the past seven years. Prince George's County is becoming a community-based green infrastructure innovation center, improving the environment, building the capacity of local and minority businesses, positively affecting the local economy, and extending workforce opportunities!

## Maintaining Stream Restorations

When the Clean Water Partnership (CWP) completes a stormwater improvement project in Prince George's County, its work is not done when construction stops.

The CWP Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Team regularly swoops in to make sure this important community benefit is appreciated and preserved—ensuring that CWP projects and the work previously completed by the Prince George's County Department of the Environment (DoE) remain in pristine shape. In 2020, the CWP O&M Team began maintaining stream restoration projects in Prince George's County. As part of its ongoing commitment to improving the health of the Chesapeake Bay, the CWP O&M Team ensures these stream restoration projects are in good condition. Crews visit stream sites on a quarterly basis for maintenance, with annual visits for inspection. The CWP teams regularly inspect the stabilization of stream banks and provide landscape and structural maintenance. Other duties include trash and organic debris removal, as well as general upkeep.

One perfect example is a stream situated on Turkey Branch along Pyles Drive, between Norris Place and Brown Station Road. This stream was initially restored in 2013. At that time, bank protections were installed to improve the stream and prevent erosion. However, like many streams, Turkey Branch continues to move both laterally and vertically, transporting tons of sediment and organic matter downstream. In order to control the amount of sediment and debris that makes it downstream into the Chesapeake Bay, the CWP O&M Team reinforced the stream banks by installing an imbricated rip-rap wall; which is similar to a retaining wall but with boulders used to stabilize the stream bank and reduce erosion. The team also planted live stakes, which helps to reintroduce plant life into the stream banks. With the removal of approximate 8 tons of sediment and debris, the surrounding neighborhood continues to enjoy the stream.

Another example is at Fletchers Field Park. CWP's crews regularly clean up trash and debris on slopes and within step pools



*Turkey Branch Before*



*Turkey Branch After*



*Fletchers Field Park*

and rip-rap—otherwise known as human-placed rock or other material used to protect shorelines. During the most recent visit, the CWP teams removed 12 bags of trash and cleaned up the surrounding area.

## Southlawn Stream Restoration Project Sees Progress and Partnership

In the Southlawn community, the Clean Water Partnership (CWP) recently kicked off construction for a new stream restoration project—marking the first stormwater improvement project to start in 2022. However, this wasn't news to the nearby community and stakeholders. They have remained in constant contact with CWP since last summer—demonstrating the importance of CWP's unique communication and community outreach model.

With RES beginning construction this February on Outfall 563, a stream restoration project located near Oxon Hill in the Southlawn community, its evolution from design to construction is truly emblematic of how the CWP approaches its projects in Prince George's County. This project is also an example of not just CWP's commitment to working with communities, but also the positive impact and influence even one stakeholder can have on a project.

At the start of outreach, CWP Outreach Administrator, Patrick Smith, contacted the Southlawn Citizens Association (SCA) to inform the neighborhood of the upcoming project. Upon being connected to SCA President Patricia Monroe in August 2021, Mr. Smith and the CWP team have remained in close contact with Ms. Monroe ever since, as she has been an integral and active partner.

For instance, when a virtual community meeting was scheduled in December 2021, Ms. Monroe was critical in supplementing CWP Outreach Team's efforts to inform the community. She assisted in securing the ideal placement for virtual meeting signs in the neighborhood and regularly shared the meeting information with her



*CWP Project Team members and the Southlawn Citizens Association at the Outfall 563 pre-construction meeting on February 9.*

SCA network. The meeting saw great participation from Southlawn neighborhood residents.

On the heels of the start of construction, the CWP also invited Ms. Monroe to attend a February 9 on-site pre-construction meeting with CWP project team members. After the meeting, Ms. Monroe introduced the CWP Outreach Team to residents in her community. This brought a neighborly approach to outreach and engagement that the residents appreciated.

While the CWP is very thankful for this important partnership, Ms. Monroe agreed that the feeling was mutual, saying: "The [CWP] has been a pleasure to work with."

"Since meeting with [CWP Outreach] at the start of the project, they have regularly engaged with the community," she added. "Concerns from neighbors have been addressed and the CWP team has kept the residents informed of the project status. The residents of Southlawn are very pleased with the way this project is being handled."

With several additional projects set to start in 2022, CWP Community Outreach Team looks forward to building relationships with other communities throughout Prince George's County.



## CWP Thinks Outside the “School Box” during the Pandemic

The construction of stormwater management devices on school grounds and the educational activities that close out these construction projects are an important component of the collaboration between the Clean Water Partnership (CWP) and Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS).

However, the COVID-19 pandemic completely disrupted the way the CWP engaged with the school community. We realized if we wanted to reach students, we had to revisit the entire process and creatively think outside-of-the-box.

Our innovative team collectively decided to reimagine our countywide, planting events into an educational animation. We knew the animated project needed to bring our planting events to life.

The new Clean Water Partnership animated video is the culmination of months of designing characters, creating a storyline and storyboard animations, capturing voiceover recordings and so much more. The story begins as the CWP Community Outreach Team visits Stormwaterville Elementary School to demonstrate how the CWP works together with schools and small, local businesses in Prince George’s County. This

partnership creates green infrastructure projects that are both educational and environmentally friendly.

Nori, our CWP guide, takes the students on an educational expedition that shows them how stormwater filtration devices are installed and how they benefit the environment. We incorporate live video and photos from several of our own planting events to give an in-depth look at how we all can make a positive impact to the environment, even during a pandemic.

This animation accomplishes the goal of creating a stormwater management video that was educational, entertaining for all ages, and encourages students to continue to be conscious stewards of the environment. We are proud to share the CWP’s first ever animated video.

Please tune in! We hope you are inspired to be an “Environmental Champion.”

*Watch the video now!*



## Earth Day Cleanup 2022 with Anacostia Watershed Society



CWP crew joins Anacostia Watershed Society and local residents for a clean-up day at University Hills Duck Pond Park.

### CWP Delivery Partners



### CWP Highlights



The National Association of Counties (NACo) granted Prince George’s County a 2016 Achievement Award for the development of the Clean Water Partnership, in the category of Community/Economic Development.



MARYLAND LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS  
POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

The Maryland League of Conservation Voters honored the Prince George’s County Department of the Environment’s Director, Adam Ortiz, with the 2016 Environmental Leadership Award for his work with Corvias and the Clean Water Partnership.



The Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) convenes leaders to turn ideas into action. CGI Commitments to Action represent bold new ways that CGI members address global challenges—implemented through new methods of partnership and designed to maximize impact. Commitments can be small or large, global or local. No matter the size or scope, commitments help CGI members translate practical goals into meaningful and measurable results.



Storm Water Solutions (SWS) recognizes remarkable projects in the storm water and erosion control industries in its annual Top Storm Water & Erosion Control Projects awards. In 2021, Storm Water Solutions awarded The Clean Water Partnership a Top Project in recognition of our work with the Town of Fairmount Heights, where the CWP installed a micro-bioretenion device in the Fairmount Heights community.

### CONTACT US

#### The Clean Water Partnership

9475 Lottsford Road, Suite 100  
Largo, MD 20774 | 301-291-2259  
info@thecleanwaterpartnership.com  
thecleanwaterpartnership.com



**ABOUT THE CLEAN WATER PARTNERSHIP:** The Prince George’s County and Corvias Public-Private Partnership (P3), also called the Clean Water Partnership, is an agreement between County government and the private sector to retrofit up to 4,000 acres of impervious surfaces using green infrastructure. This community-focused program works to address the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay, while simultaneously focusing on the needs of Prince George’s County residents and local businesses.