



City of Harrisonburg
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City Partners to Improve Blacks Run

Harrisonburg, VA – The City of Harrisonburg is partnering in a project called, “Upper Shenandoah MS4 Partnership Retrofit Assessment Project,” which is aimed at cleaning up Blacks Run and other local waterways. Last year, several organizations applied for a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and received \$100,000 for this project.

On March 20 through March 21, City staff along with members from the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, James Madison University, and the Town of Bridgewater will be conducting field work in the Blacks Run and North River watersheds.

The Center for Watershed Protection was selected to assist these organizations in a stormwater retrofit study.

This study will identify potential stormwater retrofit projects to capture and treat additional volumes of stormwater runoff generated by impervious urban areas. It will also help the City, James Madison University, and the Town of Bridgewater meet their Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit, which are issued by the Virginia Department of Recreation and Conservation.

The City has had an MS4 permit since 2003 and the permit must be renewed every five years. The next permit becomes effective July 1, 2013 and will require the City and other permitted entities to reduce a specified numeric pollutant load entering local waterways.

“We are fortunate to have an opportunity to identify and prioritize projects we will need in order to continue the cleanup and improvements of Blacks Run and other waterways in the Chesapeake Bay watershed,” said Thanh Dang, Planner for Public Works.

The grant also includes leadership work sessions that will focus on the requirements of the new permit and the need for increased and sustainable funding to run a program and ensure it is in compliance.

It is not just up to the City to cleanup Blacks Run and local watersheds, citizens can help too!

One way to help is by participating in Blacks Run CleanUp Day, which will be held on April 13 and volunteers are needed. To sign up or attend the event, please visit www.cleanstream.org.

More information on the City's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4 permit) is available at www.Harrisonburgva.gov/MS4-permit-program.

To learn about the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, visit www.cspdc.org.

***The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 50,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.*

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