

Initiatives to Reduce Stormwater Runoff

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Community Solutions to Stormwater Pollution

Grant Provided to DCR by National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (October 1, 2009- June 30, 2012)

- Five sub-grantees of DCR:
 - City of Harrisonburg
 - Shenandoah Valley SWCD (support from VA DEQ)
 - James Madison University
 - Eastern Mennonite University
 - Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority

Shenandoah Valley SWCD:

Neighborhood and Community Scale Projects

- Neighborhood Stewardship Workshop Themes:
 - Managing use of fertilizers (free composters, pet waste digesters distributed, free soil test kits)
 - Making and installing a rainbarrel (workshop & free rainbarrel)
 - Raingardens (field trip to constructed raingarden)
 - Riparian Buffer plantings (Purcell Park)
- Community Rainbarrel workshops
- Raingarden construction workshop for landscapers
- Residential raingarden installation
- Soil testing and pet waste digester distribution
- Tree Plantings at Hillandale Park

Neighborhood Stewardship Workshops

- Two neighborhoods
 - One in downtown, older, diverse neighborhood
 - One on outskirts, smaller area, newer homes
- Nine households
- Kickoff meetings in May/June 2010
 - Met monthly through November

Neighborhood Stewardship Kickoff Meeting

Dear neighbor,

Our neighborhood has been selected to serve as the site for a pilot project for community-sponsored backyard conservation. The Shenandoah Valley Soil and Water Conservation District has received a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for this effort, and is looking for interested homeowners to participate. The project will include a series of informal workshops on things homeowners can do to be more environmentally friendly - starting in our own backyards. Here are some details!



- ❖ Total of 5 workshops held once a month at various homes in our neighborhood
- ❖ Kickoff meeting on May 6 from 7-8.30pm at my home (1101 Decca Drive)
- ❖ FREE of charge!
- ❖ Come have fun, connect with your neighbors, and learn some tips and tricks to be a little "greener"



Workshop themes include:

- **Wise use of fertilizers in your backyard:** receive a pet waste digester, a free soil test kit, and a backyard composter
- **Making and installing a rain barrel:** build your own rain barrel and learn how to connect it
- **Landscaping to reduce polluted runoff:** learn how these features work and how to install them
- **Streamside plantings:** the community will get together to plant trees and shrubs along Blacks Run

This project is part of a larger effort to improve the health of our local stream, Blacks Run. I hope you'll consider participating in this ground-breaking project and help Stone Spring Village serve as an example for other neighborhoods in Harrisonburg. **The only commitment is your time and enthusiasm!**

Please RSVP by phone or email to me by **Monday, May 3** in order to reserve your spot in the workshops. Dates for each workshop will be selected at the kick off meeting, so bring your calendar. We can accommodate up to 12 households, so RSVP early! I look forward to working together to make a difference in our community!

Sincerely,

Tara L. Sieber



Phone: 574.7870
Email: tara.sieber@deq.virginia.gov

Composter, soil testing and pet waste digester distribution



Neighborhood Rain Barrel workshop



Neighborhood Riparian Buffer Planting



Community Rainbarrel Workshops

- Two held
 - June and July 2011
- Twenty-one participants (took home 27 rainbarrels)
- Included brief presentation on local water quality by professionals



Raingarden Construction Workshop



** Workshop was a pre-requisite for bidding on rain garden construction as part of grant **

Raingardens

A Raingarden is a low-lying landscape feature designed to absorb runoff from impervious surfaces, such as roofs and parking lots. Raingardens are planted with perennial native plants that can tolerate wet and dry conditions.



Residential Raingardens

- 7 homeowners will receive a raingarden through the NFWF grant
- Participants were solicited through Neighborhood Stewardship members and neighbor-to-neighbor outreach and then site approved by SVSWCD and DCR
- Installation is happening now!

Building on Previous Success

Shenandoah Valley SWCD and DEQ joint WQIF grant in 2006-2008: Common Sense Solutions to Water Pollution

- Focused on what homeowners can do on their property to improve water quality in Blacks Run and Cooks Creek (Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County)
- Community essay contest to become “Model Homes” to have water quality makeovers and install:
 - Rain barrels
 - Composters
 - Raingardens
 - Pet Waste Digesters

Model Home Open House Night



Model Home Raingarden Construction

City of Harrisonburg, Blacks Run watershed



Phase 1



Phase 2

Phase 3



Raingarden is
complete!

Model Home Rain Garden

2008



2010



Runner-up Rain Garden

2008



2010



Lessons Learned

- Keys to success:
 - Fun to work with excited, engaged people on low-cost, efficient BMPs
 - FLEXIBILITY
 - Overall, people who were interested readily adapted and accepted behavior change (installation of pet waste digester & composter, soil testing, using rainbarrels)
 - Most popular practice: rainbarrel workshops **WHY?** Economics, use of non-chlorinated water for a healthy garden, assist with stormwater drainage issues especially in subdivisions where natural drainage patterns have been altered
 - Neighbor-to-neighbor outreach and communication is most effective

Lessons Learned

- Roadblocks
 - Raingardens are not the solution to every problem and require additional information than just drainage area and precipitation data (easements, homeowner wishes, neighbor issues, existing stormwater conveyances)
 - Government red tape can be an issue
 - Some people intimidated by long-term maintenance

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