



First Annual Report, June 2010

The Little Falls Watershed Alliance

**4920 Dorset Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815**

www.LFWA.org

What is the Little Falls Watershed?

The Little Falls watershed is the nine square mile area that drains into the Little Falls Branch, the Willet Branch and the Minnehaha Creek. These creeks drain into the Potomac at the Little Falls section of the river. The watershed is located on either side of Western Ave in both Montgomery County and Washington DC, mostly west of Wisconsin Ave and south of Wilson Lane.

It has one major park, the Little Falls Stream Valley Park which runs from Norwood Park in Chevy Chase to MacArthur Blvd on the DC/MD border.

The Little Falls Watershed Alliance was incorporated in 2008 as a stewardship group for this fragile urban watershed.

The Alliance is an all volunteer organization with annual budget of less than \$10,000 and over 150 members. It is managed by a board which meets monthly to discuss watershed issues and plan events and actions.



LABEL THE WATERSHED

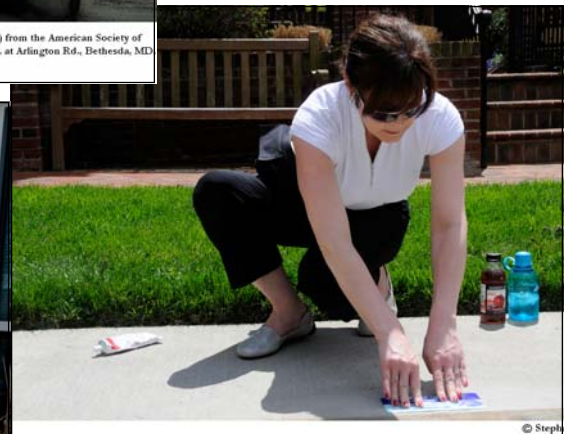
2010

Label the Watershed 2010 was an event developed to raise awareness of the problems of stormwater runoff. We labeled 250 storm drains in the watershed during this two day event and passed out over 2,500 brochures about stormwater issues. Over 150 volunteers participated.

We were supported by:

- * 16 Businesses who donated raffle prizes
- * 6 Businesses who donated of \$100 or more.
- * and a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

In addition, we partnered with Montgomery County and the District of Columbia governments who provided the labels and other civic groups including Bethesda Green and Friends of the Bethesda Library.



LABEL THE WATERSHED 2010

For our second annual Label the Watershed, June 5, we have partnered with local citizen groups to provide community specific labels. In purchasing labels with their neighbor association identified, the civic associations are sending a strong message that they care about the watershed. Five groups have joined in the effort.

We are also partnering with Washington DC and Montgomery County governments and expect to have business sponsors as well.



Quantity 100



Quantity 30



Quantity 50



Quantity 50



Quantity 50



Quantity 30

Invasive Weed Removal

Saturdays in the Park:

Twice a month, LFWA leads invasive weed removal sessions in the Little Falls Stream Valley Park.

Westbrook ES Forest Rehabilitation:

Working with Westbrook faculty and PTA, we are restoring a portion of the forest that surrounds the school, removing invasives, labeling trees and planting a meadow. We are recipients of a Chesapeake Bay Trust grant to partially fund this project.

Student Service Days:

We work with local schools and lead groups of students in invasive weed removal at various sites around the watershed.

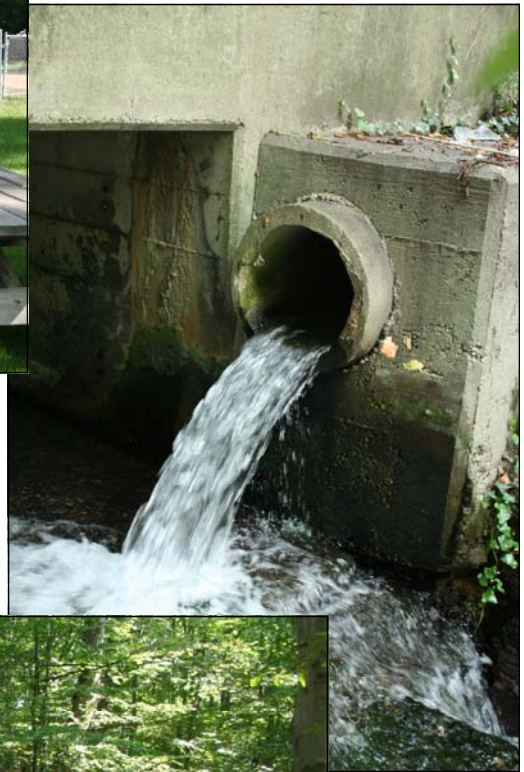


Volunteer frees a tree - above before, to the left after!

Stream Walks

One of the missions of the Little Falls Watershed Alliance is to educate citizens on the natural environment and the problems that an urban stream faces. We lead walks along the Little Falls Branch to point out the unique problems of an urban stream. We also talk about storm drain outlets, stream restoration and stabilization and the steps citizens can take to protect this fragile environment.

LFWA also works with Somerset Elementary School fourth graders and leads stream team groups.



Creek Clean-up

In 2009 and 2010, we participated in the Annual Alice Ferguson Potomac River Watershed Clean-up.

Over 50 volunteers joined us this year, removing over 50 bags of trash and recyclables from the Little Falls Branch and the Willet Branch as well as one man hole cover, one shopping cart, many pieces of fencing, construction supplies and a computer!



Other Accomplishments

Trash Abatement

The Little Falls Watershed Alliance is active with local and State governments advocating for a trash free watershed.

We have lobbied in DC and Annapolis for stricter litter laws. Richard Yates, chair of our trash abatement committee has worked with Montgomery County Council persons to draft legislation which will increase litter fines and require businesses to be more active in cleaning up outside their establishments.

We are working with DC Government and Neighborhood Associations on stricter enforcement of litter laws. We have sponsored two trash pick up days and work with the Wisconsin Ave Beautification Project on litter patrol. We have also adopted a stretch of the Little Falls Parkway and are committed to keeping it clean.

Advocacy

The Little Falls Watershed Alliance is a member of Stormwater Partners of Montgomery County and advocated on behalf of the new County MS4 stormwater permit. Board members have traveled to Annapolis to testify for the Stormwater Act of 2007 and other legislation related to environmental issues.

We are members of the River Keepers and the Chesapeake Network and support their efforts with letter writing and testimony. We co-sponsored a Get the Mud Out session to train citizen activists on how to recognize and report violations of erosion control laws.

Board members have attended conferences regarding watershed issues including the Alice Ferguson Trash Free Potomac Summit and the River Rally in Baltimore.

