



LITTLE FALLS WATERSHED ALLIANCE

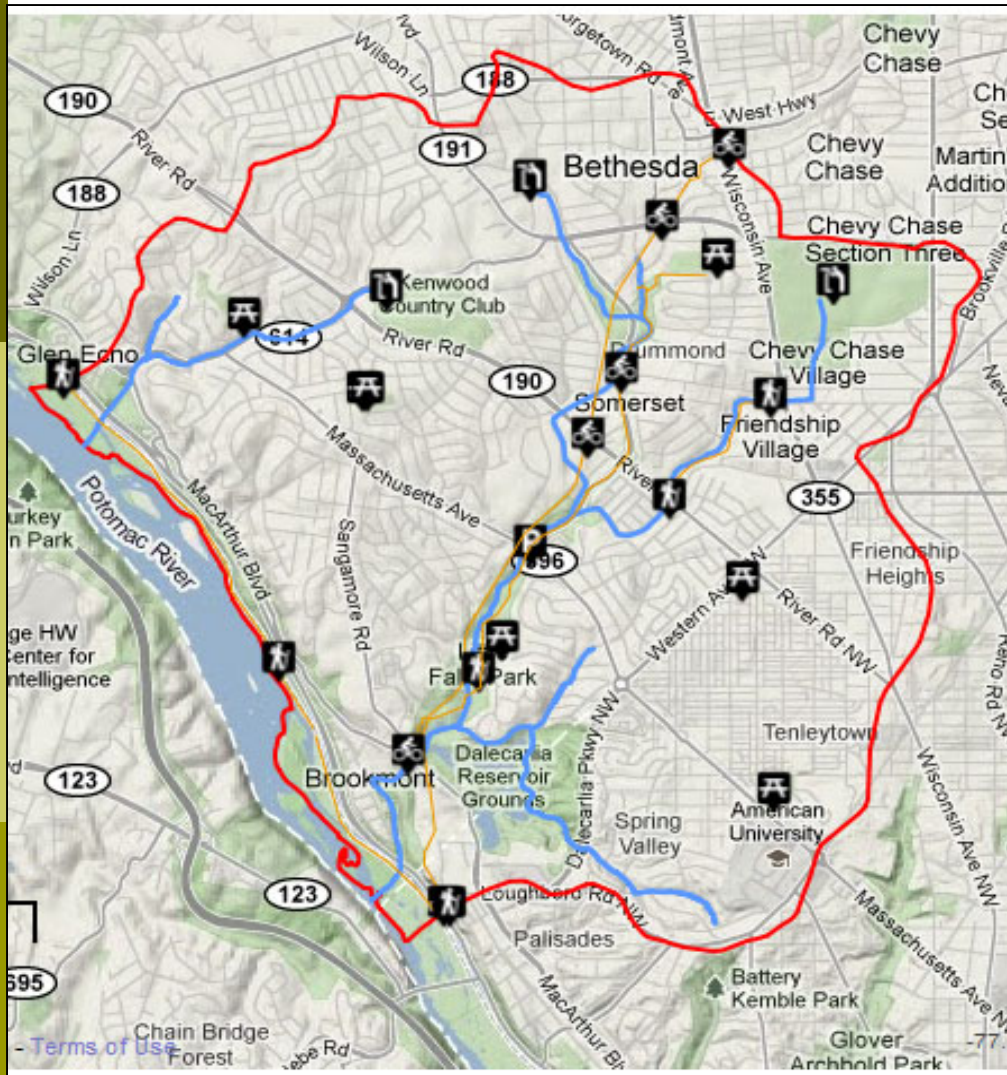
EDUCATION - ACTION - STEWARDSHIP

2019 Annual Report

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Little Falls Watershed Alliance

- ❑ Little Falls Watershed Alliance is an environmental stewardship group, founded in 2008 by a group of neighbors committed to protecting the fragile natural environment of the Little Falls and Willett Branches and surrounding Little Falls watershed. Our mission is to ensure that the natural spaces in our area persist for generations to come. We strive to bring neighbors together in order to build awareness, improve the natural habitat, protect our community's natural heritage, and enhance the community's enjoyment of our creeks and wooded areas.
- ❑ From our first meeting, we have grown to over 2,800 members and engaged more than 6,500 volunteers in over 600 work days and other activities. Our volunteers have logged over 17,000 hours of service to the watershed.
- ❑ As stewards, we are committed to restoring the water quality, natural habitat and ecological well-being of the Little Falls Watershed. We focus on trash abatement, habitat restoration, and stormwater management.
- ❑ As advocates, we speak up for the needs of our parks and natural areas, and we advocate for clean water laws that are fair and enforced consistently.
- ❑ As educators, we work with neighbors, school groups, local businesses and other community members to educate through classroom activities, festivals, community work days and outreach events.



Where Are We?

- ▣ 9.5 square miles in Lower Montgomery County and Upper NW DC
- ▣ Three Creeks –
 - Little Falls Branch
 - Willett Branch
 - Minnehaha Branch
- ▣ Three Main Parks:
 - Little Falls Stream Valley Park
 - Capital Crescent Trail
 - C&O Canal

Stewardship – Community Work Days

Trash Removal



- Partnership with Montgomery Parks and Montgomery County DOT. We provide volunteers with boots, gloves and bags.
- Hosted Community Work Days on the first Saturday of every month.
- Supplied bags and boots.
- 522 volunteers; 980 man hours
- 7,020 pounds of trash; 42 bags of recyclables

Stewardship: Community Work Days Invasive Weed Removal

- ❑ Hosted 2 or 3 Community Work days every month in Norwood Park and in the Little Falls Stream Valley Park below Massachusetts Avenue.
- ❑ Partner with Montgomery County Parks and Montgomery County Public Schools.
- ❑ Focused on removing porcelainberry vines, bush honeysuckle, English ivy and other non-native invasives.



Stewardship: Special Work Days

Invasive Weed Removal

- ❑ LFWA works with local businesses, area high schools and civic groups to plan a community service day for their employees, providing tool, gloves and supervisors.
- ❑ Groups for 2019 included Waldorf School, Bullis HS, Potomac School, Home Snap, MOMS Organic Market, Accenture, Riverbed Technologies, American University, and SC&H Group.
- ❑ Special Groups provide alkd hours of man power.



Stewardship - Habitat Restoration

Green Acres Meadow

- ❑ Neighborhood led; Partnership with Department of Transportation.
- ❑ Phase Two completed: Land cleared and 200 native wild flowers and grasses planted with help of community members and local Elementary School Environmental club.
- ❑ Phase Three completed: 15 trees and shrubs planted along the creek bank in partnership with DOT.



Stewardship – Habitat Restoration

Norwood Meadow

- ❑ Installed in 2011 in partnership with Montgomery Parks, funded in part by a grant from Whole Foods
- ❑ First meadow installed in a County park outside of Brookside Gardens.
- ❑ Ten community planting days have installed over 3,000 native grasses and wildflowers.
- ❑ Reseeded with wildflower seeds gathered from Montgomery County plants.



Stewardship - Habitat Restoration

Westbrook ES Meadow

- ❑ Partnership with Montgomery Parks and Westbrook Elementary School (MCPS).
- ❑ Students from the elementary school grew trees and plants from seeds.
- ❑ Local neighbors maintain meadow.
- ❑ Started in 2009 as a community project.



Stewardship

Creek Monitoring

- ❑ **Benthic Macro-Invertebrate Monitoring:**
 - Monitor Little Falls Branch four times a year
 - 13 person teamed trained to capture and identify macro-invertebrates living on the bottom of the creek.
 - Report data to partner Audubon Naturalist Society
- ❑ **Salt Level Monitoring:**
 - Test salt level in four locations as part of national study on impact of road salt on waterways.
 - Data is reported to Isaac Walton League



www.iwla.org

Stewardship - Stormwater Management

Sumner Village Grant

Stormwater Management Project



- Awarded a \$20,000 grant to install project. Funding for the grant is from the Montgomery County Water Quality Protection Fund.
- Worked with Sumner Village Homeowners Association to install green stormwater management to address severe erosion and flooding caused by run-off from uphill properties.
- Project includes dry creek, dry well and native planting.
- Project was completed will be completed in summer 2020 with a gala show and tell event.



Education and Outreach

Creek Critter Days

- ❑ Free family event to hunt for Macro-invertebrates.
- ❑ Educates on stream health and engages public in stream ecology and understanding the need for clean water.
- ❑ Spring and Fall events lead by our stream monitoring team were attended by over 60 children and adults
- ❑ Partnership with Audubon Naturalist Society



Advocacy

Willett Branch; Stormwater Management



Willett Branch today

Willett Branch Greenway

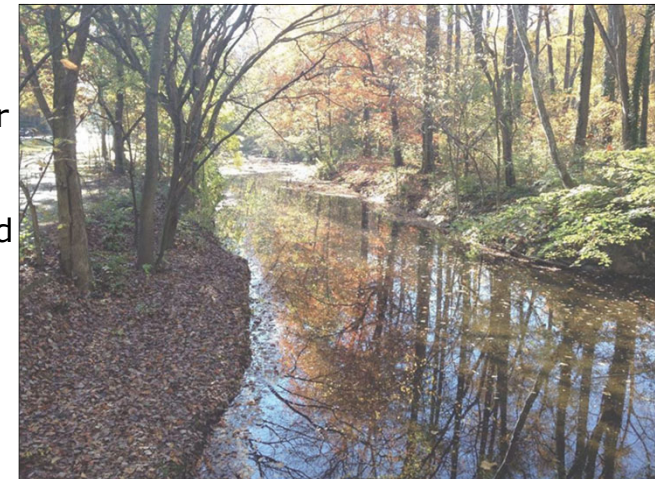
Since 2015, LFWA has been advocating for the formation of the Willett Branch Greenway, a new park and naturalized stream to replace the graffiti covered concrete culvert that is the current Willett Branch. The focus of much of our advocacy has been to ensure that development in the area of the new park conforms to the strictest stormwater management regulations. 2019 was an important year as the preliminary plans for the development were approved.

Vision for the future

Stormwater Partners

LFWA is a member of Stormwater Partners, an advocacy group for stormwater management regulations in Montgomery County. As a member of the group, LFWA has been involved in writing comments on the new stormwater (MS4) permit for both Maryland and for Montgomery County, advocating for implementation of a “no waiver” policy for stormwater management permits for new construction.

LFWA is also a member of the **Chose Clean Water Coalition**, **Montgomery Conservancy**, and **Trash-Free Maryland** and participates in their advocacy campaigns.



Advocacy

Local Development

The health of the watershed is effected by development and permitting regulations at both the state and local levels. It is important to our mission that we work to ensure that regulations and decisions are made in such a way that the needs of the environment are met.



JANUARY 29, 2019

WESTBARD TO WILLETT BRANCH
DEVELOPMENT IMPACT STREAM NATURALIZATION: OPPORTUNITY
ENGINEERING ANALYSIS

Little Falls Watershed Alliance
Designgreen, LLC

Regency Center Development at Westbard:

We are committed to closely monitoring development in the watershed and advocating for the strongest application of environmental standards.

- ❑ Testified for the strictest application of stormwater management for the new Regency Center Development. Worked with planning staff to get more permeable pavement, bioretention swales and suspended pavement tree boxes in the final plan.
- ❑ Engineering study of the stormwater management plan was complete in January 2019 and presented to Planning Board and Staff as a road map for applying the best stormwater management possible for the new development.
- ❑ Testified before the Planning Board in March for application of strictest Stormwater Management for the project. Most of our recommendations were approved with the final approval of the preliminary plans!

Partners in Stewardship

Over 40 community partners support our efforts including:

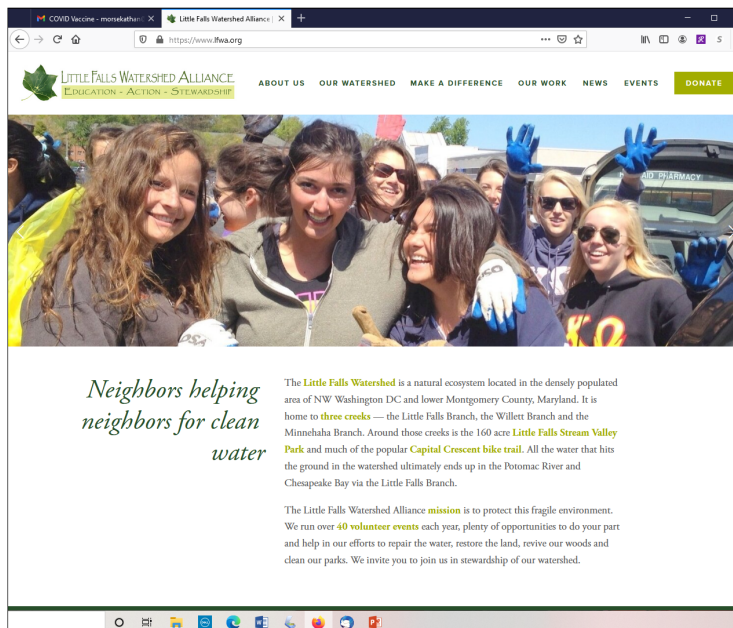
MOMs Organic Market, George Washington Freshman Experience, Accenture, Wedding Wire, Spark Post, Abt Consulting, Kind Deeds, Outdoor Illumination, Audubon Naturalist Society, Sidwell Friends Lower School, Cub Scout Pack 256, Cub Scout Pack 100, Montgomery Parks, UCG, DSG, Westland Middle School, the Democratic National Committee, Ledo's Pizza, Strosnider's Hardware, Westmoreland Church, St. Dunstan's Church, Westmoreland Hills Garden Club, the Citizen's Coordinating Council of Friendship Heights, the Chevy Chase Garden Club, Young Ambassadors for Community Service Programme (YACS), Montgomery County Public Schools, The Potomac School, Home Snap, SC&H Group, Bullis HS, Riverbed Technologies and the Washington Waldorf School.



Education and Outreach

Social Media, Community Events

- ❑ Publish monthly e-newsletter with information on environmental issues, native plants and events of interest. Newsletter is sent to 2,800 people on our mailing list.
- ❑ Speak to local garden clubs on issues facing the watershed
- ❑ Active Facebook page with pictures of events and exchange of information on native plants, stormwater issues, events of interest.
- ❑ Developed a new website that can be viewed on phones and tablets.





LITTLE FALLS WATERSHED ALLIANCE
www.LFWA.org

May in the Watershed

Dear Watershed Friends,

These last six weeks have been tough. We are all adjusting to a new normal and becoming familiar with the term "social distancing". We have had to cancel all our trash clean-ups, non-native invasive removal workdays and other volunteer events. However, one thing that we have discovered is how many people are turning to trails and parks to exercise and to enjoy the respite, comfort, and pleasures that nature has to offer us. Whether you are walking in the Little Falls Stream Valley Park, or biking along the Capital Crescent trail, it is clear that the watershed is an important part of your day.

With this in mind, we offer a few suggestions below on how you can experience the beauty of the Little Falls watershed while social distancing and help us continue our stewardship.

Please stay safe, healthy and be mindful of the guidelines for safe outdoor activities.


 Sarah Morse
Executive Director




Thank you to everyone who is making a difference in this time of social distancing. Our volunteer days may be cancelled, but that doesn't mean that our volunteers are not out there working on their own.

Montgomery County Weed Warriors have been especially busy. Six full bags of garlic mustard were piled by the trash can at Mass and Little Falls Parkway. The Kathman family reports that they pulled 12 bags of garlic mustard in April. And the Martin family has been working on removing non-native

Find a Hidden Gem

The Little Falls watershed is full of special places - ponds, waterfalls, creeks and little groves. While many people enjoy a walk along the Capital Crescent or the Little Falls hiker/biker trail, we challenge you to find a hidden gem, a special place off the beaten track.

Send us a photo of your discovery for us to post on our Facebook page, and we'll enter you into a raffle for a LFWA T-shirt. Send photos to info@LFWA.org.

Click [HERE](#) to see hidden gems our board members have discovered. Click [HERE](#) for some suggestions of places to hike in the watershed.

Have a Family Hunt for Macro-invertebrates!

The macro-invertebrates living in the creek tell you a lot about the water quality. We use the Creek Critter App at our family workshops and you can download it for an individual workshop. All you need is a net, a bucket, and a simple hand lens, and you can hunt for macro-invertebrates on your own or with your family.

Visit [HERE](#) for instructions

2019 Funders

Priscila Ahmed, Ben Alexandro, Sara Anderson, Matthew Babcock, William Baer, Megan Bailiff, Marion Ballard, Lynn Balzer-Martin, Joan Barron, Mary Barton-Dock, David Batson, Alan Bender, Jody Benjamin, James Berry, Susan Besharov, Randy Best, Robert Blake, Marna Blanchette, Julia Blatt, Lisa Blitt, Brian Borders, Brian Boyden, Peter Brandriss, Jonathan Breul, David Brooks, Arlene Bruhn, Barbara Bryniarski, Michael Buening, Joe Bush, Barbara Butera, Chesapeake Bay Trust, Dale Clayton-Morrison, Peggy Cloherty, Wendy Cohen, Sarah Courtney, Colette Cowey, Naira Darius, Dan Davidson, Jane Dealy, Jack Deutsch, Lynda DeWitt, David Donahue, Dan Dozier, Lisa Dunner, Joan Ebzery, Elizabeth Edmonds, Sonni Efron, Deborah Eichhorn, Victoria Elliott, Yukinori Endo, Faye Fager, Martin Family Foundation, Jester Fine, Matt Fink, Irene Boardman Foundation, Lois Frankel, Lucy Freeman, Jack Frink, Josiane Gabel, James Gallagher, Gardeners Too, Sandra Geddes, James Gerard, Seth Goldman, Jesse Goodman, Spencer Gordon, Jr., Cynthia Green, Russell Green, Bill Gruen, Ira Grushack, Samantha Guerry, Jocelyn Guyer, Reza Haghighi, Julie Hamre, Lindsay Harris, Bridget Hartman, Eileen Hartzell, Kathy Hill, Sylvia Horwitz, Brenda Howard, Elizabeth Hurwit, Neil Hurwitz, Robert Ives, Paul Janes, Peter Janssens, Jossine Josz, Hugh Kaplan, David Kathan, Toby Kathan, Maurie Kathan, Joey Kathan, Steven Katz, Maureen Kennedy, Susan Kessler, marguerite Kingston, Adam Kolton, Marc Korman, Jeanette Kreiser, Kathy Krieger, Gary Ladner, Jeff Lape, Sara Sherburne Laughlin, Allison Leotta, Barbara Lerner, Greg LeRoy, Sarah LeSueur, Noam Levey, Judy Lieberman, Matthew Liebman, Frank Linton, Ruth Lis, Jobuntu LLC, Debbie Logsdon, Bill Lohrman, Janet Lowenthal, Randy Lyon, Kristi Maasjo, Virginia Mahoney, Jen Mallon, Lucky & Bill Marmon, Grace Masur, Kathy Matthews, Elliot Maxwell, John McGrane, Jacqueline McKenna, Milly McLean, Roger McManus, Michele McNally, Dan Mick, Robyn Miller-Tarnoff, International Monetary Fund, Mikel Moore, Maria Morgan, Sarah Morse, Mary Morse, Corrie Morsey, Michael Morton, John Mulligan, Asaf Nagler, Adrienne Nassau, Abby Nolan, Mark Pearce, Margaret Pfohl, Birdie Pieczenik, Joanna and David Pistenmaa, Richard Podolske, Julie Raffensperger, Natalie Reddy, Amy Reichert, Suzanne Richman, Mike Riley, Melinda Robbins, Keith Roberts, Leslie Roberts, Sara Robinson, Rebecca Robinson, Michelle Roos, Carol Russel, Sesegma Rygzydmaeva, David Sacks, Maurie Saffarrans, Constance Salemi, Helen Saxenian, Robert Schlotterer, Geraldine Schneeberg, Ben Schneeberg, Deborah Schumann, Janell Schweickert, Catherine Scott, Marnie Shaul, Marianne Shoemaker, David Shumaker, Jeffrey Slavin, Doug Smith, Jack Sobel, Howard Solomon, Frances Spaeder, Laurie Sparling, Nessa Spitzer, Susan Spock, Kay Stevens, Daphne Stone, Russell Sturm, Mary Sutherland, Greta Swanson, Kari Swenson, Ann Swett, Alexandra Szostak, Carolyn Talcott, Tria Thalman, Helen Thompson Morrison, Karen Thornton, Maura Vanderzon, Liza Vertinsky, Albert Wavering, Kirby Weldon, Meredith Wellington, Ann Westerman, Paige Whitley, Elizabeth Wilcox, Michael Wilpers, Jim Wrona, George Wyeth, Anne Yap, Mark Zitter, Theresa Zmola, and Diana Zurer.

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* Returning officers