

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape SUCCESS STORY

By: Lehigh Gap Nature Center
(Wildlife Information Center)

Student-led Riparian Restoration in Fountain Park (2016)

SUMMARY

Students in the Environmental Club at Roberto Clemente Charter School designed and implemented a riparian restoration project with guidance from Lehigh Gap Nature Center staff and help from Allentown Parks Department. Students met with Park's Director Taylor, mapped the restoration area, selected the plants, and planted them. Parks department personnel removed invasive species including providing labor and herbicide for project.



CHALLENGE

Ecologically, the project was needed because a Japanese Knotweed invasion has taken over the river bank along the Little Lehigh in Fountain Park, Allentown. This project removed the knotweed and replaced it with native shrubs which flower and produce berries as well as foraging for native insects and bees, including supporting butterfly and moth larvae.

Socially, this provides a highly visible example of riparian restoration for people who use this park for walking.

Educationally, this project provided an opportunity for a group of motivated students to plan and execute a hands-on conservation project and learn about native plants, invasive species and the importance of the riparian zone to a stream.

FUNDING

Grant Award:
\$1,976

Match:
\$1,976

Total Project Cost:
\$3,952

PARTNERSHIP IS KEY

Allentown Parks Department provided herbicide and labor for invasive species removal. Edge of the Woods Native Plant Nursery provided some of the plant materials for the project.



SOLUTION

The students investigated the area and mapped it in order to observe and define the extent of the invasive species problem. They met with the Director of Allentown Parks Department to gain approval and cooperation for the project, requesting help for controlling the Japanese Knotweed invasion with herbicides. They then researched appropriate native shrubs to plant and replace the knotweed. Subsequently they watered the plants and in spring, weeded around them to remove the re-growing knotweed.

RESULTS

100 linear feet of streambank along the Little Lehigh in Fountain park was rehabilitated by removing invasive Japanese Knotweed and replacing it with native flowering and berry-producing shrubs. 36 shrubs, including serviceberry, chokeberry, dogwoods, elderberry and viburnums were installed in October 2016 with 100% surviving through spring 2017.

Contact



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