

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape SUCCESS STORY

By: Watershed Coalition of the
Lehigh Valley

2018 Lehigh Valley Master Watershed Steward Group Projects

SUMMARY

The 2018 Lehigh Valley Master Watershed Steward Group Projects set out to tackle multiple problems within our region related to water quality protection and sustainable land use. The WCLV and the 2018 class of MWS volunteers installed a demonstration pollinator meadow at Trexler Nature Preserve, assisted with the design and implementation of a multifunctional riparian buffer at Hokendauqua Park in Whitehall Township, and constructed a series of monofilament fishing line collection stations throughout the Lehigh Valley.



CHALLENGE

This project addressed three regional challenges:

Land Cover and Lawns: Traditional turf grass lawns pose a number of conservation challenges. The mono-culture creates a lack of habitat for both pollinators and native wildlife. Tight, uniform sod can impeded infiltration when compared to forest or meadow. Application of herbicides and fertilizers can cause runoff pollution as well.

Riparian Buffers: While the benefits of riparian buffers are well known, getting homeowners and agricultural producers to adopt them on their property is sometimes difficult. The WCLV, and partners across the state, are looking into multifunctional riparian buffers that can provide harvestable crops and other useful products.

Monofilament fishing line: Plastic monofilament fishing line is made from a non-biodegradable resin and often ends up in our waterways. Many anglers are unaware that this material can be recycled in a responsible manner, or toss it aside due to lack of convenient and proper disposal sites, causing hazards to both aquatic and terrestrial wildlife.

FUNDING

Grant Award:
\$10,000.00

Match:
\$14,997.48

Total Project Cost:
\$24,997.48

PARTNERSHIP IS KEY

The Watershed Coalition of the Lehigh Valley partnered with the Penn State Extension Master Watershed Stewards to implement three diverse water conservation projects across the Valley. These projects support monofilament recycling, a demonstration meadow for homeowners to replicate, and a multifunctional floral pussy willow riparian buffer.



PennState Extension

**Master Watershed
Steward Program**



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SOLUTION

The native meadow installed at Trexler Nature Preserve demonstrated methods of converting turf grass to a wildflower meadow using methods accessible by an average homeowner. The site involved using hand tools and tillers, as well as a mixture of native seeds and landscaping plugs.

The pussy-willow buffer at Hokendauqua Park demonstrated not only the usefulness of planting a harvestable woody floral in a riparian zone. This is on top of well-known riparian buffer benefits including soil stabilization and runoff filtration.

Finally, monofilament collection stations provide a convenient and contained method for anglers to dispose of excess fishing line. Volunteers will periodically collect line from the stations to be recycled.

RESULTS

The native wildflower meadow planted at Trexler Nature Preserve created a pocket meadow covering over 5,000 square feet, and incorporating over 800 native plant plugs, in addition to a conservation seed mix. This site will provide a demonstration of how homeowners can convert sections of lawn themselves in a practical manner, and what they can expect long term from such a project.

The multifunctional buffer at Hokendauqua Park showcases over 15 varieties of pussy willows native to North America, along over 700 feet of newly established riparian buffer on the Coplay Creek. These pussy willows can be harvested and sold to local florists for future fundraisers. This project is highly visible in a public park, providing an excellent opportunity to spread the word about multifunctional buffer alternatives.

Finally, over 20 monofilament fishing line collection stations were constructed by volunteers. These stations will be monitored over the next few years, with the collected line being recycled. These stations also include signage explaining why the line should be discarded properly, which will help spread the word about plastic pollution and the hazards it presents to our local wildlife.

Contact



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