Monitoring Water Quality and Community Quality of Life to Restore an Urban Storm Watershed

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Biographical Sketches of Authors

Guy W. Hager - As Director of Great Parks, Clean Streams & Green Communities, Guy is responsible for managing several partnerships aimed at improving Baltimore's ecosystem. Guy is working with Watershed 263's many project partners to undertake plan development and implementation efforts. The Parks and People Foundation is Baltimore's leading nonprofit organization providing creative solutions for recreation, parks, and natural resources.

William Stack is a Program Administrator of the City of Baltimore's Water Quality Management Section in the Department of Public Works and has served in that capacity since 1989. He has a B.S. and M.S. Degree in Biology and is a registered Professional Engineer. The principal responsibilities of his section include the Municipal Stormwater Permit Program, Source Water Protection Program, and Flood Warning Program. His section is involved in numerous water monitoring studies involving the urban streams and source water tributaries and reservoirs. Mr. Stack participates in numerous professional organizations and is Chair of the Maryland water Monitoring Council.

Abstract

The goal of the Watershed 263 project is to prepare a model urban watershed management plan with active community participation and to strategically implement community-based restoration projects to measurably improve storm water quality and community quality of life in a 907-acre storm drain watershed in southwest Baltimore City. Home to 30,000 residents, the watershed is entirely urbanized with mixed industrial, institutional, and residential land uses, This project involves the efforts of several partners from all levels of government, academia, community-based organizations, and the private sector including the Parks & People Foundation, Baltimore City Department of Public Works, and the US Forest Service Research.

The plan process will test the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of various urban water quality restoration techniques to improve water infiltration, primarily focusing on comprehensive community greening on vacant abandoned residential and industrial sites, school grounds, and parks through community stewardship projects. This model plan will be monitored to measure outcomes and document the benefits verse the cost of various restoration techniques.

Sustained success will be dependant on the active participation of the people who live, work, and play in these racially diverse, low income, inner city neighborhoods. A fundamental element of the community-based environmental protection process is for diverse stakeholders to be involved in crafting and implementing a shared vision, goals, priorities, and strategies for sustainable environmental protection. Most importantly, the project will renew human spirits and hope in the neighborhoods within this urban watershed, while achieving environmental improvement such as nutrient and sediment reduction to the Chesapeake Bay.