



## NEWS

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**For IMMEDIATE RELEASE (March 6, 2023)**

### **Manor Brook Stream Restoration Project Completed in South Russell Village**

A stream in South Russell Village has been restored to a healthy form and function thanks to a \$262,528 grant awarded to the Village from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Section 319 Grant Program and through additional support provided by the Village.

A stream known locally as Manor Brook flows in a southwesterly direction through the Village before it flows into the North Branch of McFarland Creek and eventually enters the Aurora Branch of the Chagrin River. On common areas west of Chillicothe Road and north of Manor Brook Drive owned by the Whitetail Run Community Association, the stream was facing challenges such as historic straightening of the stream channel, loss of floodplain, flooding, and streambank erosion at the site as well as at downstream areas. To help address these challenges, the Village worked with Chagrin River Watershed Partners and CT Consultants to develop a stream restoration plan and apply for an Ohio EPA Section 319 Grant. The Section 319 Grant was awarded in 2019 and provided \$262,528 in federal funding towards the project along with \$188,990 in local match provided by the Village. The goals of this project were to help address community stormwater concerns, improve the function of the stream, and provide downstream water quality benefits to McFarland Creek and the Chagrin River.

The restoration design used a “bioengineering approach,” which incorporates hard structures such as rock and also vegetation, which helps stabilize streambank soils and rock as it grows over time. The project added more natural “sinuosity” or curviness to the previously straightened stream channel and reconnected the stream to its natural floodplain. Floodplains are low areas along a stream which allow the stream to spread out, slow down, and soak into the ground during and after flood events. Floodplains are important for dissipating the erosive energy of high flow floodwaters and filtering out pollutants from water. Streambank erosion jeopardizes nearby infrastructure and contributes excessive sediment and pollutants to downstream areas, leading to unhealthy habitat conditions for aquatic life.

The Manor Brook Stream Restoration Project also included plantings of native trees, shrubs, and wetland plant species in the “riparian” (or “streamside”) corridor. These native plants will help stabilize streambank soils, soak in water, filter out pollutants, and provide cooling shade to the stream as they grow. Trees that were felled to make room for the naturalized stream channel were incorporated into the stream as woody debris and log riffle structures to provide aquatic wildlife habitat and grade control for the stream. The Village selected Mr. Excavator to perform the restoration in Summer 2022 and native vegetation was installed during the preferred dormant season in Fall 2022. Through this project, 1,173 linear feet of stream and floodplain were restored, 1 acre of invasive plants were treated or removed, 1 acre of native riparian plantings were installed, and 1 acre of riparian corridor was protected through an environmental covenant. This project will also reduce sediment and nutrient pollution to the Chagrin River and Lake Erie.

The public is invited to a walking tour of the Manor Brook Stream Restoration Project on Tuesday, March 14th at 1:00 PM (Rain Date: Tuesday, March 21st at 1:00 PM). Join South Russell Village, Chagrin



River Watershed Partners, and the engineering and construction teams to learn about this project. For more information and to RSVP, please contact Kim Brewster Shefelton, Chagrin River Watershed Partners, at 440-975-3870 ext. 1006 or [kbrewster@crwp.org](mailto:kbrewster@crwp.org).

South Russell Village Mayor Dr. William Koons commented that “the flooding of residents' homes should be greatly reduced or hopefully eliminated entirely by the cooperative efforts of the Whitetail and Manor Brook HOAs, the Chagrin River Watershed Partners and the Village.” South Russell Village is a member of Chagrin River Watershed Partners (CRWP), a local nonprofit organization which assisted the Village in obtaining and managing the successful Section 319 Grant and helped the Village complete the project. Kim Brewster Shefelton, Deputy Director at CRWP, described the watershed benefits of the project: “This project was identified as a priority by the community and through local watershed planning efforts because it will improve the hydrologic function and habitat quality of the stream and provide downstream water quality benefits to the North Branch of McFarland Creek and the State Scenic Aurora Branch of the Chagrin River.”

The Ohio EPA Section 319 Grant Program, established under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, provides funding to address water quality impairment caused by non-point source pollution to Ohio’s surface water resources. More information can be found at [www.epa.ohio.gov](http://www.epa.ohio.gov).

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Chagrin River Watershed Partners is a nonprofit organization that uses a regional watershed approach to enhance quality of life by preserving rivers, planning for better development, and solving natural resource management problems. Sixteen communities, counties and park districts formed the Watershed Partners in 1996 to address rising infrastructure costs because of flooding, erosion, and water pollution. Today, the Partners’ 35 members represent over 91% of the land area in the watershed and it works with partner watershed organizations across Ohio’s Central Lake Erie Basin. For more information about the Watershed Partners, visit [www.crwp.org](http://www.crwp.org).

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Please see attached photo.

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For more information, contact:

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*Figure 1. Facing north, after seeding, mulching, and livestock installation of the newly restored stream. Photo source: Chagrin River Watershed Partners, December 6, 2022.*