



Catch the Rain! Get Creek Wise in White Clay.

By Shane Morgan, White Clay Creek Watershed Coordinator

Stormwater washing off land during rain events is the largest source of pollution to the White Clay Creek. In fact, almost all of the rain falling on roofs, driveways, roads, parking lots, mowed lawns, and patios ends up as stormwater runoff. In contrast, rain falling on forests and meadow, natural sponge-like surfaces, soaks gradually into the ground, filtering out pollutants, replenishing groundwater, and keeping streams flowing. Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) practices can incorporate the capture and detention of rainfall, simulate natural soil filtering, and reduce stormwater volumes and speeds. Reduced lawn sizes additionally lessen the need for mowing and fertilizer/pesticide applications. In fact, lawns have approximately the same coefficient of runoff as a driveway! Well-managed GSI practices on your property or in your neighborhood enhance community aesthetics, increase property values 5% or more, and provide important habitat for wildlife and native plants.



Before and After Conservation Landscaping. Photo courtesy of The Giving Garden.

The White Clay Wild & Scenic River Program, in partnership with the Brandywine Conservancy, is reaching out to homeowners in the White Clay watershed interested in learning more about green stormwater techniques that they can use in their yards. We are offering educational training, and financial and technical support to install voluntary stormwater management practices including rain barrels, rain gardens and infiltration trenches, pervious paving retrofits or removal of existing paving, conservation plantings, and canopy tree plantings.

The program targets suburban homeowners and possibly homeowners' associations, especially in older subdivisions lacking stormwater detention or filtration. Your project could be simply planting native shade trees over your driveway, installing an eye-catching bed of native wildflowers, or catching the runoff from your roof to

reuse on your lawn or garden. These small projects intended to catch water at its source can 'green' your neighborhood, boost your property values, save you money, and help the White Clay flow clear.



Rain garden and bioswale. Photo courtesy of Claudia West.

If you are interested in attending a workshop in mid or late summer to learn more about the program please contact Shane Morgan at mpc@whiteclay.org or Beth Burnam at bburnam@brandywine.org with the subject heading **Catch the Rain** and please include your name, address, and contact information in the body of the email.

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