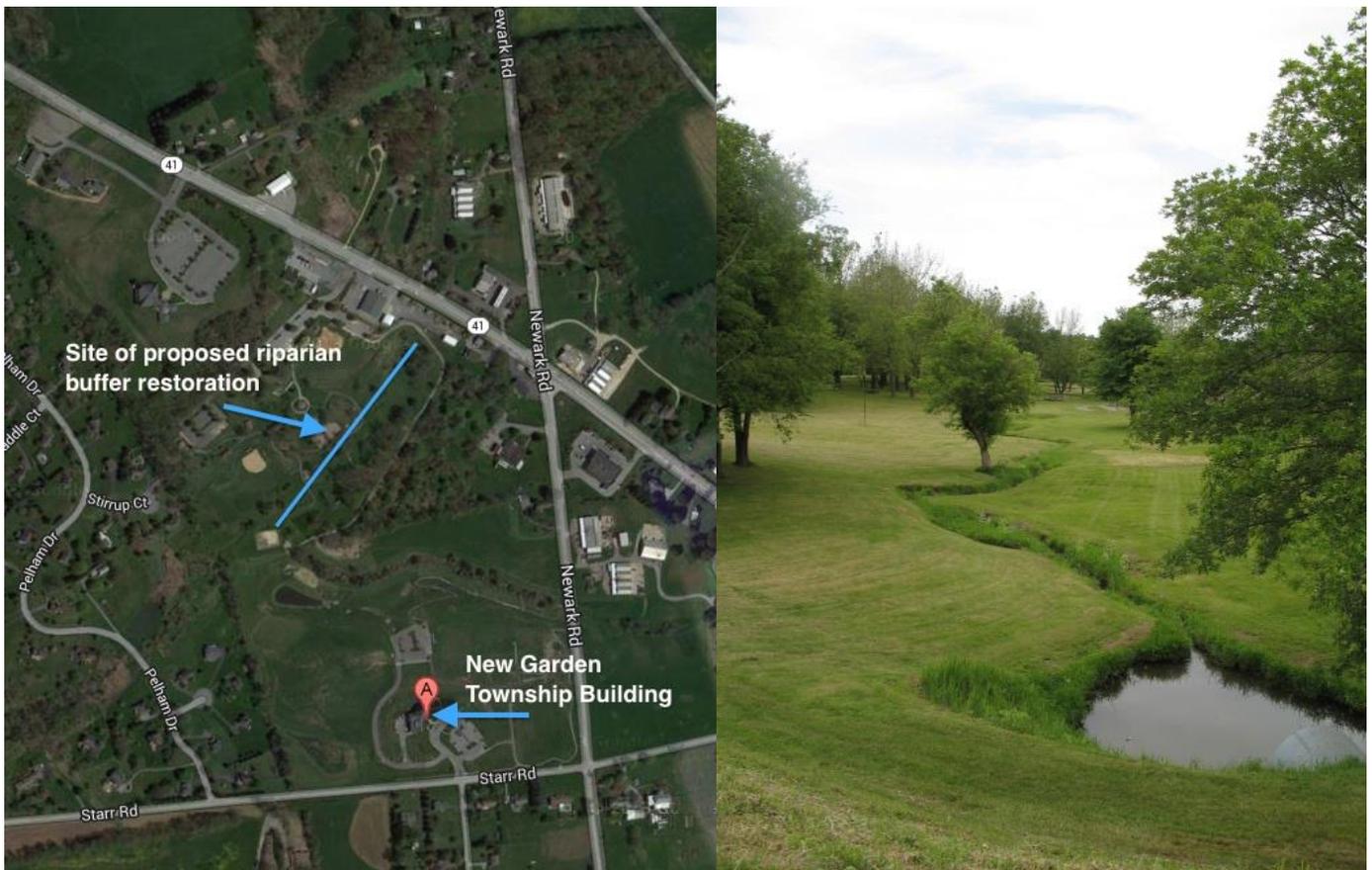




A needed stream improvement for a beloved community park!

By Shane Morgan, Management Plan Coordinator White Clay Wild & Scenic River Program

Parks play an important role in managing water in the community. They offer opportunities to showcase good land use practices by providing an easy, low cost way to engage visitors and illustrate the value of green spaces. This year New Garden Township, along with the help of the White Clay Watershed Association, will install plants and trees along Lamborn Run, a small stream running through New Garden Community Park that does not meet state water quality standards.



Approximate site location and close up view of mowed stream corridor from Rt. 41.

Currently, the land area along Lamborn Run is managed as open lawn and routinely mowed up to the stream bank. Mown turf grass diminishes stream habitat by providing little to no wildlife value. Additionally, it has very little root mass to help hold the banks together during heavy flows thereby contributing to poor water quality and stream habitat (photo 1 & 2 below).



Photo 1: Eroding Stream Bank © S. Morgan



Photo 2: Heavy Rain Event July 2013 © D. Sucksdorf

Riparian buffers, the land next to a stream or water body composed of community of plants such as grasses, flowers, shrubs, and trees, provide several environmental and recreational benefits. Specifically, they 'buffer' valuable aquatic resources from the potential negative impacts of human use of adjacent land.

Buffers have been shown to: increase groundwater infiltration, provide cooler water to support cold water fisheries and other stream life, decrease streambank erosion, filter sediments and pollutants commonly found in runoff, provide floodwater storage, and improve wildlife and stream habitat. They also provide enriched recreational opportunities for trail users and children to view and explore nature. Providing opportunities like this lead to a broader understanding and acceptance of storm water best management practices (BMPs) like riparian buffers and no mow zones along streams beds.

A riparian buffer is not a quick fix, it is a long-term investment in a living system that takes time to grow, and proper management to ensure its effectiveness, but with patience it can provide a lasting and cost effective improvement to stream habitat and water quality for future generations.

** This project was awarded \$53,000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Growing Greener Grant Program and \$7,000 from the White Clay Wild and Scenic Rivers Program. LandStudies, Inc. was contracted to design the streamside buffer. Volunteers will be recruited to help with the plantings. All work will be completed by December 2017.*

How can you get involved?

Looking for fun and meaningful opportunities in your community? Subscribe to the White Clay Creek National Wild & Scenic River Website for notices on upcoming volunteer opportunities like the New Garden Park volunteer planting at www.whiteclay.org.