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Ohio EPA Awards Grant for Lorain County Stream Restoration Project

Restoration efforts in the [Black River watershed](#) will receive a big boost thanks to a \$260,586 grant awarded by [Ohio EPA](#). The grant to the city of [Elyria](#) is one of 12 Ohio EPA issued statewide totaling \$2.7 million to help communities restore waterways impaired by [nonpoint source pollution](#). Elyria will use the money – along with a local match of \$65,380 – to restore 1,300 feet of the Black River flowing through Cascade Park.

The city plans to restore the stream channel, re-grade and stabilize the streambank, replace invasive plants with native trees and shrubs, and forever protect 1.6 acres of forested riparian buffer. The restoration effort is expected to significantly reduce the amount of nitrogen, phosphorous and sediments discharging into the Black River's mainstem and improve overall water quality in the watershed.

Nonpoint source pollution is the leading cause of water quality impairment in Ohio's streams and lakes. It is caused by rain or snowmelt moving over and through the ground, picking up natural and human-made pollutants and depositing them in lakes, rivers, wetlands and other waterways. Other forms of nonpoint source pollution include modifications to natural stream flow, habitat alteration and nutrients. Polluted runoff can have harmful effects on drinking water supplies, recreation, fisheries and wildlife.

In 1987, [Section 319](#) of the federal Clean Water Act created a national program to control nonpoint source pollution. Ohio EPA administers the program for U.S. EPA and distributes millions of federal dollars to projects proposed by local governments and community organizations such as watershed groups. To be eligible, grant recipients must contribute at least a 20 percent match consisting of cash or in-kind contributions or services. Grants of up to \$350,000 are awarded for three-year periods.

Applications for the next round of grants, which are due on June 1, 2012, are available through Ohio EPA's district offices or by contacting [Russ Gibson](#) at (614) 644-2020 or [Martha Spurbeck](#) at (614) 644-2869. More information on the grants, an electronic application and examples of previously successful projects are available [online](#).

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