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Ohio EPA Awards Nearly \$286,000 for Jackson County Restoration Project

Ohio EPA has awarded a \$285,900 grant to the Ohio Valley Conservation Coalition for a project to protect and restore Salt Creek in Jackson County. The Coalition is matching the grant with \$150,000. This grant is one of 12 totaling more than \$2.7 million awarded by Ohio EPA to help communities restore waterways impaired by [nonpoint source pollution](#).

The project will restore approximately 1,500 feet of streambank along a tributary at the confluence of Salt Lick Creek. The project also will create and expand 1.5 acres of floodplain wetlands and construct an inlet channel. Invasive species will be removed and native grasses, trees, shrubs and/or live stakes will be planted.

In addition, the city will donate approximately 100 acres of conservation easements. This project was recommended in the state-endorsed Salt Creek Watershed Action Plan and [study](#) completed by Ohio EPA and approved by U.S. EPA in 2009.

The project includes conducting public education and outreach. Successful completion of this project will result in reduced nonpoint source pollutant loadings. The estimated load reductions include 284 pounds per year of nitrogen, 142 pounds per year of phosphorus and 167 tons per year of sediment.

Nonpoint source pollution is the leading cause of water quality impairment in Ohio. 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](#).

-30-

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