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Ohio EPA Awards Nearly \$540,000 for Two Franklin County Water Restoration Projects

Ohio EPA has awarded a \$230,885 grant to the city of New Albany and a \$308,220 grant to the Columbus & Franklin County Metropolitan Park District for projects to benefit local streams. These grants are two of 12 totaling more than \$2.7 million awarded by Ohio EPA to help communities restore waterways impaired by [nonpoint source pollution](#).

Rose Run Restoration

The first project will facilitate storm water demonstration practices at New Albany High School and enhance streamside areas along Rose Run, a tributary of Rocky Fork Creek. The project also will be integrated into New Albany's environmental science curriculum. New Albany is matching the grant with \$78,115.

An existing storm water detention basin will be retrofitted into a one-acre treatment wetland with varying water elevations and micro pools. The existing storm water conveyance ditch will be retrofitted into a linear high marsh and function as the initial treatment area, prior to discharge to the larger wetland complex within the pond. Streambank enhancements include restoration and stabilization of 291 feet of Rose Run. Nearly four acres of invasive species will be removed and native trees and grasses will be planted.

This project was recommended in the Big Walnut Creek watershed restoration plan and [report](#) approved by U.S. EPA in 2005. The project includes conducting public education and outreach. Successful completion of this project will reduce nonpoint source pollutant loadings to Rose Run. The estimated load reductions include 73 pounds per year of nitrogen, 22 pounds per year of phosphorus and 6.3 tons per year of sediment.

Blacklick Creek Restoration

Metro Park will match its grant with \$108,700 to help stabilize severely eroding banks along Blacklick Creek and significantly improve in-stream habitat in the creek's main-stem between U.S. Route 33 and Winchester Pike. The creek is currently breached by a storm water detention basin and impacted by channel instabilities. This project will restore 4,850 feet of natural flow with design techniques, including grade control features.

Nearly 500 container shrubs and trees and 7,000 bare root shrubs and trees will be planted, along with eight acres of shrubs, trees and native grasses in the streamside area. Additionally, the 23.8-acre area inside designated parkland (Blacklick Greenway Trail) will be permanently protected by a conservation easement.

The project includes conducting public education and outreach. Successful completion of this project will reduce nonpoint source pollutant loadings to Rose Run. The estimated load reductions include 229 pounds per year of nitrogen, 114 pounds per year of phosphorus and 114 tons per year of sediment.

Nonpoint Source Pollution

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](#).