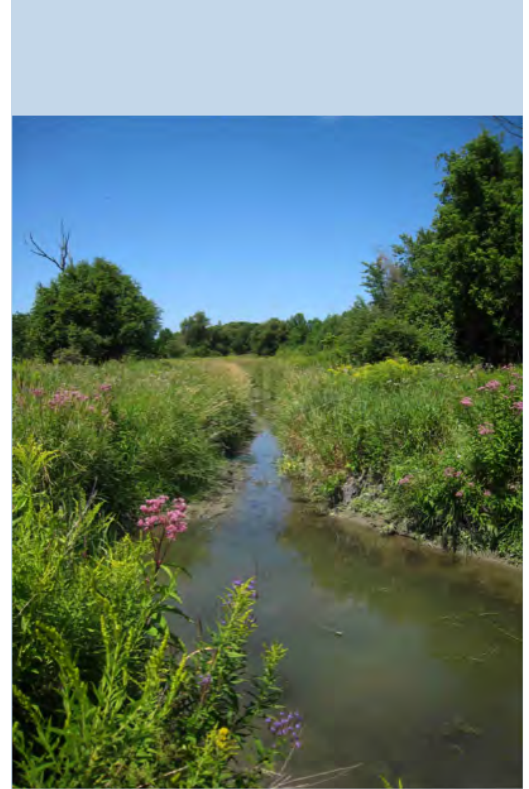


Enhancing fish habitat in Watts Creek, Ottawa

The Project

Watts Creek is an urban stream located in the west end of Ottawa, ON. This creek supports a diverse array of freshwater fish species, yet is highly impacted by surrounding urbanization. With support from the Great Lakes Community Garden Fund, our goal was to improve the amount and availability of fish habitat. This brochure highlights some of the work completed since the fall of 2012.



Watts Creek in the Summer

Training Sessions

We hosted six training sessions that were paired with hands on restoration work in Watts

Creek. Close to 50 volunteers were involved with these activities, learning about the issues facing Watts Creek and actively being involved in planting trees to stabilize banks and provide shade, removing instream debris, and installing instream structure.



Volunteers pose after a fun day in the field

Tree Planting

From the fall of 2012 to the fall of 2013, over 280 trees representing 5 species were planted within the riparian zone of Watts Creek at 9 locations.



Some of our fantastic volunteers!

Species Planted

- Black willow (*Salix nigra*)
- Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*)
- Tamarack (*Larix laricina*)
- Serviceberry (*Amelanchier* sp.)
- Sweet gale (*Myrica gale*)



Black willow planted at Watts

Debris Removal

Instream debris, both natural and unnatural, was removed from over 400-m of the Creek. Items found include tires, signs, and couches!



Before and after removal of instream debris accumulating on this log. If left covered, this log would have eventually impeded water and fish movement past the log.



Volunteers planting a Tamarack tree

Instream Structure

To increase habitat for local fish species and also help stabilize eroding banks, cedar sweepers were installed in 40 m² of the Creek.



Volunteers preparing and installing cedar sweepers in Watts Creek

Erosion Pins

To establish baseline levels of erosion within the system, 20 erosion pins were installed into key areas of Watts Creek. The average rate of erosion in the system was 0.45 cm/day, emphasizing the need to control erosion in the system.

Conclusions

While specific funding for the restoration work completed over the past year has ended, our group along with students from the Institute of Environmental Science at Carleton University and the National Capital Commission will continue to work to improve the condition of Watts Creek.

Get in contact:

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Completed instream structure (along the left bank)



Installing erosion pins in Watts Creek