

FALL 2016

Anheuser Busch's Vision for Rush Run

Anheuser Busch has been a strong supporter of a healthy Olentangy River watershed for many years, including this one.

This year, Anheuser Busch employees and FLOW volunteers planted 21 canopy trees that will help absorb excess runoff into Rush Run, a creek that runs through Worthington and drains an area of about two square miles. These trees will help reduce the runoff from the Southwest corner of the Anheuser Busch property.

Anheuser Busch and FLOW now have a five-year plan to plant prairies, a variety of trees, and a rain garden. This is designed to intercept storm water.

Water runoff in Rush Run is significantly higher than deemed healthy, due to a number of factors including lack of trees and other vegetation, and lack of porous surfaces. The headwaters area of Rush Run is 43% impervious, with roadways, parking lots, rooftops, and compacted soil. More than 11% causes stream degradation.



Calling all Wet Basements

Your damp basement might finally have a friend. The City of Columbus is installing free sump pumps and addressing other drainage problems for those who live in the Clintonville area that drains into Adena Brook. This is the site of the most frequent sewer overflows.

The city's Blueprint Columbus program is designed to reduce sewage overflows into streams. In this phase, it is attempting to stop sewage dumps into Adena Brook in Whetstone Park. The upgrades are all completely free to homeowners in the target area whose houses were built before 1963. Please visit www.blueprint.columbus.gov and click View Current Projects to see if you are in the target area.

Upgrades include:

- **Downspouts:** Redirecting rain water from downspouts away from your home's foundation and into a pipe that leads to the street where it can easily flow into the storm sewer system.
- **Your sanitary sewer pipes:** Replacing your old sanitary sewer pipes connecting to the City's sanitary sewer system. Lateral lining has minimal impact to the yard.

- **Sump pumps:** In older homes, the foundation drain connects directly to the sanitary sewer, which can cause sewage to back up into the basement during heavy rains. Residents with a single family or duplex home that does not currently have a sump pump can apply for the program if the home is located in an area where the City is implementing Blueprint Columbus.
- **Rain gardens and porous pavement:** Rain gardens and porous pavement, known as green infrastructure, slow the release of stormwater and keeps pollutants and trash out of the streams. This reduces roadway flooding and stops rainwater from getting into the sanitary sewers. Engineering studies have indicated where the rain gardens need to be. For the pilot project, rain gardens will be in tree lawns East of N. High St. between E. Weisheimer Rd. and Glencoe Rd. These rain gardens will be maintained by the city or a contractor.



Chemical Abstracts Riverbank Upgrade

FLOW teamed up with chemistry information provider Chemical Abstract Services (CAS) to plant six large trees along the Olentangy River near Dodridge Bridge.

FLOW and the CAS Green Club volunteers planted several species of oak, Ohio buckeye, American linden, and American elm. The new streamside trees at CAS will help protect the Olentangy River by stabilizing the riverbank, filtering water, and helping to prevent flooding.

The additional trees also support the City of Columbus's Branch Out initiative to increase tree canopy cover by 5% over the next 5 years. The tree project was supported by a grant from Lush Cosmetics.

In addition to the trees, FLOW members helped CAS Green Club members install new bird nest boxes at CAS for Eastern bluebirds and other native cavity nesting birds in this important ecosystem.

The Chemical Abstracts' 50-acre campus on the west bank of the Olentangy River, just north of Ohio State University, is home to hundreds of mature trees and is well known in the community as the former site of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra's Picnic with the Pops concerts.

This is one example of companies in the Olentangy watershed teaming with FLOW to help upgrade the quality of the Olentangy.

Ways that your company can help:

- Replace unneeded parking lots with prairies and trees
- Disconnect impervious areas from one another
- Plant trees
- Plant prairies to intercept water
- Do not mow areas around streams
- Reduce litter
- Contact FLOW for advice-



Back to School River Cleanup

This summer, 127 Ohio State students cleaned up mountains of trash from the Olentangy River, between Third Ave. to Lane Ave. These Natural Resource Scholars and fraternity members were participating in OSU's "Pay It Forward" program.



Measuring Stream Health

FLOW is engaged in a stream quality monitoring program to collect and analyze data. Some 50 volunteers, mostly high school and college students, collected stream data in 2015 and 2016. This will identify problem areas, measure how much impact FLOW projects are making, and thus help set future direction.

Volunteers from Upper Arlington High School, Buckeye Friends of Stone Lab, and TerrAqua, plus other individuals, have been taking samples three times per year. So far, the worst water quality is in Glen Echo in Clintonville and Turkey Run in Upper Arlington.



Coffee Pods made Useful

Plastic coffee pods are expensive, a major source of non-recyclable waste, and the safety of heating up the #7 plastic blend is being questioned. Here are two ways to address these issues:

- Search for refillable coffee pods, easily and inexpensively available on the Internet.
- Reuse the pods for baby plants. They are perfect for cuttings and as seed starters. Just take the top off, throw the grounds into your compost pile or on a plant, and save the cup part until you are ready to plant.



Succulent cuttings getting their start in a coffee pod

FLOW calendar of events

FLOW has a variety of activities throughout the year. Please join in! Check FLOW's calendar at www.olentangywatershed.org or see the Facebook page Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW).



Thanks to our Watershed Partners

Please consider visiting these businesses that help to support water quality where we live. Thanks to:

- To **Weilands Market** at 3600 Indianola Ave., which turned its 55th Birthday Party into a big benefit for six nonprofit agencies, including FLOW.
- To those who donate to FLOW through the **Kroger Community Rewards** program. This gives FLOW a percentage of eligible purchases at no cost to the shopper. Please see directions on the FLOW website.
- To those who donated to FLOW via **workplace giving** programs through EarthShare. Many federal, state, municipal, and county employees chose FLOW as their charity of choice.
- To **Norcross Wildlife Foundation** for their grant for equipment.
- To **Western Reserve Land Conservancy** (Dominion Energy) for their grant to market the need for trees.
- To the **National Environmental Education Fund** for pollinator gardens at Cranbrook Elementary School, the Ohio Historical Society by the vegetable gardens, and in the median of Colerain Ave. at Piedmont Rd.
- To the **Ohio EPA Environmental Education Fund** for supporting the stream quality monitoring program, and to the Agency for funds to conduct training.
- To **Battelle** employees for contributing, to Battelle for matching their employees' contributions, and to the River and Stream Team for another year of partnering to plant trees in the watershed.
- To **Anheuser-Busch Columbus Brewery** for their grants and annual volunteer service events that support FLOW and better water quality in central Ohio.
- To **Lush Homemade Cosmetics, REI, and Lucky's Market** for their continued support.
- To **The Outdoor Source in Kingsdale**. They have been supporters of FLOW events for years by providing kayaks, and helping FLOW to get grants from Patagonian.
- To the **Sierra Club** for providing monitoring equipment and supplies for our stream monitoring program.

Free ways to Donate to FLOW

KROGER PLUS CARD

By registering your Kroger Plus card, you can help FLOW receive a donation of 5% of qualified purchases under the Kroger Community Rewards Program at no cost to shoppers. Use your registered Kroger Plus card when shopping for each purchase to count. Visit our website at www.olentangywatershed.org for the link and instructions.



AmazonSmile:

With AmazonSmile, you can donate to FLOW at no cost to yourself. Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. Go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> and search for Friends Of The Lower Olentangy.

Thereafter, start your Amazon sessions at <http://smile.amazon.com>.



Published By:

Chair - Andrew Heckler
Vice-Chair - Kent Halloran
Treasurer - George Williams
Secretary - Laura Fay
Lisa Daris
Steve Leahy
Andrew Meador
David White
Newsletter: Lindalee
Brownstein

Newsletter Layout:

Ellie Nowels, Centipede Graphics

Contact FLOW

3528 N. High St., Suite F,
Columbus, OH 43214
614-267-3386 (phone)
info@olentangywatershed.org
www.olentangywatershed.org
Facebook group: Friends of the
Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW)

Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed
3528 N. High St., Suite F
Columbus, OH 43214

Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed is a non-profit organization dedicated to keeping the Olentangy River clean and safe for all to enjoy through public education, volunteer activities, and coordination with local decision makers. FLOW is registered with the IRS as a tax-exempt, nonprofit charitable organization under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible.

FLOW relies heavily on volunteer participation to create positive change in our watershed.

Please contact us for information on how you can volunteer. We have a wide variety of opportunities to fit your schedule and match your skills and interests. To be added to the FLOW email list, please send a request to info@olentangywatershed.org with a subject line of "Email list".



On the Slyh

With help from neighbors around Columbus's Cranbrook Elementary School, FLOW is making the Slyh run stream area healthier and more inviting.

Neighbors have brought tools, water, tents, and labor to the workdays, and Franklin Equipment provided a chipper.

The five FLOW events at that site this year have cleared 900 feet of invasive honeysuckle and planted 222 native trees and 95 native shrubs. Most planting is on the south side of the stream, where the canopy is sparse.

Plans are in place to add a prairie to an unused field on the north side of the stream.

Another focus will be on educating upstream property owners about how to care for their stream edge. This will include advising them to:

- Not mow or add rock along the edge. Grass contributes to erosion because it has short roots compared to native plants. Adding rock causes sediment in the stream and results in downstream erosion. Instead, use native trees including sycamore and river birch, and native shrubs and prairie plants.
- Keep fertilizer away from the stream, since it promotes excessive growth of the wrong kind of algae that harms fish and other water creatures. Avoid herbicides near streams.

For technical information about healthy stream edges, please see the Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District website (www.franklinswcd.org). Look under Conservation Easements for a link to Protecting Your Stream.

