

## Little Lehigh Creek Invasive Plant Removal and Riparian Buffer Implementation Project - Final Report



**Before**



**After**

## **Project summary**

Several sites totaling approximately 1,800 feet of an unnamed tributary to the Little Lehigh Creek were targeted for Japanese knotweed removal and for the reestablishment of a native riparian buffer. 150 trees and shrubs were planted at the sites by community volunteers and students from a local charter school, and the sites were seeded with native mixes.

## **Project outcomes**

Project objectives were met-A native riparian buffer consisting of 150 native trees and shrubs and wildflower seed was planted along approximately 1,800 feet of stream bank. The community and partners were involved in invasive management, planting the buffer, and maintenance. The Japanese knotweed and other invasive plant species were removed and sites are currently being monitored for reemergence. Volunteers contributed a total of 210 hours in planting and follow-up monitoring and maintenance.

LCCD and partners are still working with the Borough to have additional “no mow” areas added to the buffers to allow for more herbaceous growth around the new plantings.

The project was promoted via partner websites and social media, and will continue to be promoted through the Borough’s newsletter and partner social media resources.

There is still additional knotweed management in other reaches of this tributary, so management will be ongoing. Additional plantings are scheduled for fall 2018 at several locations along the tributary to further enhance the riparian buffer.

## **Project sustainability**

Partners and community volunteers will continue to monitor the site every spring and summer for knotweed regrowth and growth of other invasive plant species for several years following the project. The Borough of Emmaus is committed to managing the invasive plants as needed. Mowing will be decreased, particularly around the new plantings to allow for the buffer to fill in. Tree tubes and deer fence will be maintained as needed.

## **Next phase or future projects**

Partners are targeting several other locations along this tributary to enhance riparian buffers with additional tree and shrub plantings.

## **Describe partner and volunteer involvement in the project including number of people, number of donated or in-kind hours, etc.**

Lehigh County Conservation District-worked with partners and coordinated with the school and Borough for each phase of the project. LCCD also secured the herbicide contractor to spray the knotweed and coordinated the planting

Wildlands Conservancy-assisted with organizing the planting, coordinating volunteers, creating planting plans, and ordering the plants

Borough of Emmaus-purchased “no mow” signage and cut the knotweed to help suppress growth prior to having it sprayed

Seven Generations Charter School-students and teachers helped plant native trees and shrubs

Emmaus EAC-assisted with volunteer recruitment

Penn State Master Watershed Steward-assisted with planting

Community volunteers (boy scouts, Emmaus Rotary Club, Emmaus high school students, residents-assisted with planting

Approximately 60 students and 30 volunteers contributed 210 hours assisting with planting the riparian buffer and performing follow-up monitoring.

### **Accomplishments and Outputs**

150 native trees and shrubs were planted along approximately 1,800 feet of stream bank. Invasive plants, primarily Japanese knotweed, were removed from approximately 900 feet of stream bank.



**Before Photos**





**Before photos showing knotweed growth in spring**





After Photos





