

## Notes from West Creek Conservancy

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Visit us online at  
[www.westcreek.org](http://www.westcreek.org)  
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# MARCH



**DID YOU KNOW?** Studies show mowing your lawn to a height of 4 inches prevents crabgrass as effectively as a chemical herbicide.

### Spring Mower Maintenance Checklist

- Sharpen mower blades
- Check filters and replace if necessary
- Clean spark plugs and replace if necessary
- Clean the deck
- Set the blades at 3 or 4 inches

### MOWING MARCH MADNESS

- Get your lawn mower ready for the busy season ahead.
- Every 3 years, soil test in spring (or late fall) to determine what nutrients need to be added to the soil. Testing saves money, time and prevents over application of nutrients. Kits can be found at local Soil and Water Conservation District or Cooperative Extension offices.
- Lightly rake the lawn to remove compacted grass and snow mold caused by excess moisture.
- Start a compost pile with the first grass clippings of the season. Subsequent clippings should be left on the lawn as nature's fertilizer.



Notes from

# West Creek Conservancy

*A Land Trust Serving Greater Cleveland*

March 2015

## Rebuilding our Natural Corridors:

Since West Creek Conservancy's inception in 1997, the organization's focus has been simple...well, relatively speaking.

The original individuals who got it all going had tremendous foresight and amazing dedication, and though their idea was clear - preserve greenspace in their community - the path getting there was anything but clear.

Preserving greenspace meant acquiring and owning. Owning meant stewardship and in many cases restoration. And then who was going to own it long term, potentially construct trail, manage it, mow it, and so on. That was a lot to take on to say the least. But great ideas beget great support.

West Creek Conservancy has been able to successfully protect over 5 miles of stream alone in the West Creek valley, significant portions along Big Creek, Euclid Creek and even Rocky River. The organization has additionally helped protect areas within Tinkers Creek, Yellow Creek, Nine Mile, Hemlock Creek and Chippewa Creek, as well as reaches along the Cuyahoga River.

Now, without a map in front of you, these acquisitions may seem somewhat ad-hoc. In reality, West Creek Conservancy has taken a watershed-restoration focus to preserving and reclaiming our natural corridors and greenspaces. Some areas that we've protected - with your help - are simply intact natural corridors or spaces within our community. However, in some circumstances, we've acquired properties that contained structures of some sort (e.g. warehouse at the confluence, homes within floodplains, etc). Once such properties are acquired, we remove all the impervious surface possible and try to restore the immediate floodplain or riparian area.

Short term the impacts are immediate, whether that is creation of publicly accessible greenspace or removal of impervious surface adjacent to a waterway, which reduces non-point or stormwater loading. Long-term, our approach has been to recreate natural and ecologically functional corridors. Protected corridors then become a community asset both for water quality and recreational connection.

A parcel by parcel approach...**protect - restore - connect.**



**Celebrate World Water Day**

Hands-on activities • Wagon Tours • Entertainment  
**Sunday, March 22 • Noon to 4:30 p.m.**  
 Watershed Stewardship Center • West Creek Reservation

clevelandmetroparks.com • 440-887-1968

**AUSTRALIA**  
 Challenge - Climate change limits access to clean freshwater

**ITALY**  
 Challenge - Harmful algal blooms endanger wildlife and human drinking water

**JAPAN**  
 Challenge - Overharvesting fish leads to imbalanced ecosystems and societal issues

**KAZAKHSTAN**  
 Challenge - Unsustainable diversions for agriculture and drought is drying up the Aral Sea

**TURKEY**  
 Challenge - Damming rivers prevents water from flowing into neighboring countries

**Special Features**

- ◇ Water Woes for Wildlife live animal show
- ◇ Weather & Climate: The Rain Makers By the National Weather Service
- ◇ Sho-jo-ji Japanese Dancers
- ◇ Cleveland Division of Water Chemistry Demonstration
- ◇ Guided Wagon Tours every 1/2 hour from 12:30 - 4pm
- ◇ World Water Day Monitoring Challenge
- ◇ Dragonboat Demonstrations
- ◇ Passport Photo booth courtesy of *Clear Choice Photo Booth*
- ◇ Global food tasting courtesy of *Merwin's Wharf*



**2015 Events!**

\* **West Creek Conservancy Annual Meeting:**

April 21, 6:30pm  
 Watershed Stewardship Center  
 more [info@westcreek.org](mailto:info@westcreek.org)

• **RiverSweep**

May 9, 9am-Noon, 7400 Giant Eagle  
 Clean-up, planting, invasive specie removal,  
 rain garden maintenance

To get involved: [info@westcreek.org](mailto:info@westcreek.org)

\* **Year of Clean Water**

2015 has been designated Year of Clean Water.  
 To see how you can get involved and for a full calendar of events, please visit:  
<http://www.sustainablecleveland.org/celebration-topics/2015-clean-water/>



**Images of an Urban Watershed**

*What does an urban watershed look like to you?*

We're putting the call out for photos - images of our urban watersheds!

We'll be collecting these images over the next year, compiling as many as are submitted until December 2015; capturing all seasons & CLE weather conditions! Images will then be on display for all to see and will additionally be highlighted at the Watershed Stewardship Center, other local venues, as well as WCC's 2016 Annual Meeting!

Submissions can be sent to [info@westcreek.org](mailto:info@westcreek.org)

Looking forward to seeing what *an urban watershed looks like to you...*

