



GILLS CREEK WATERSHED ASSOCIATION RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2014-15

Outreach and Education

- ❖ Participated in 9 community events and festivals, with thousands of people in attendance; provided educational information about the watershed, major pollutants which impact water quality, and how people can become more involved
- ❖ Made presentations at 20 community meetings with over 910 people in attendance. These meetings included neighborhood and homeowner associations, civic groups, church groups, and conferences.
- ❖ Organized and led watershed clean-ups, resulting in the collection of 82 bags of trash and 40 bags of recycling
- ❖ Continued the adoption of South Beltline Boulevard through the Keep the Midlands Beautiful Adopt-a-Highway program including quarterly cleanups
- ❖ Sent monthly e-newsletters to over 700 people. The newsletters included information about current and upcoming events, water quality education, and updates on developments and projects.

Special Projects

- ❖ **Environmental Education Kiosks**
The GCWA received a grant from the Richland County Conservation Commission to design and install two environmental education kiosks at key locations throughout the watershed. You can see these kiosks at Cross Hill Market and Sesquicentennial State Park.
- ❖ **Little Jackson Creek Mitigation Project**
GCWA worked closely with Richland County and its consultant to select a site in the watershed suitable for large-scale stream restoration work. Little Jackson Creek near Spring Valley was selected for a stream restoration project and work is slated to begin fall of 2015.
- ❖ **Owens Field Park BMP and Education Project**
GCWA was awarded a 319 nonpoint source pollution reduction grant from DHEC in 2013. Funds from this grant will be used to construct three bioretention cells adjacent to Owens Field Park in the Rosewood area. These cells will capture and infiltrate stormwater runoff before causing additional erosion problems and before reaching Devil's Ditch and Gills Creek. Work continues on this project and we will soon be moving into the construction phase.
- ❖ **Orphanage Branch, Pen Branch Development**
GCWA helped successfully fight off a major development in Forest Acres. The proposed mixed-use development off of Sunnyside Drive and Belmont Drive had the potential to further impair Orphanage Branch, Pen Branch, and Lake Katharine just downstream.
- ❖ **Greenway Planning**
GCWA is continuing its Middle Watershed Greenway planning efforts by working with key landowners to secure necessary easements along the proposed route. GCWA also received a grant to begin another greenway plan along Wildcat Creek which is currently underway.

Leadership and Funding

- ❖ Increased our membership to 360 members – our highest ever!
- ❖ Exceeded our 2014/15 fundraising goal of \$23,000 from private donors and members