Outlook

Greenspace Newsletter

January

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The Neighborhood Chronicle #5

BOB O LINK GREENSPACE

Welcome 2026!



Do you dare to dream?

Big Picture Dreaming

Our neighborhood is fortunate to be part of a larger natural network—one that includes creeks, wildlife, and green corridors that quietly support both the environment and our quality of life. As we look ahead, we're beginning a **community conversation** about how our local greenspace can grow into a **conservation greenway**: a protected, thoughtfully cared-for area that balances ecological health with everyday enjoyment.

A conservation greenway is different from a typical park. Its core purpose is long-term stewardship—preserving natural habitats, supporting biodiversity, and protecting water quality—while also offering welcoming ways for neighbors to connect with nature.

From restoring native plants and pollinator habitats, to caring for the creek and improving water quality, these efforts help wildlife thrive and keep our environment healthy for future generations. At the same time, greenways provide simple, meaningful benefits for people: peaceful places to walk, spend time outdoors, garden, learn, and recharge.

We're also excited about the potential for environmental education—through signage, guided walks, school programs, newsletters, and shared learning that helps all of us better understand and care for the land we share.

Our section of the creek is part of a much larger system. The Picadome stretch of Vaughn's Branch connects into a network of waterways and stewardship projects throughout surrounding neighborhoods. What we do here matters—not just locally, but as part of a bigger picture.

This Is Where You Come In

This is not a finished plan. It's the beginning of a conversation.

Ava, we'd love your input: online survey form

- How do you currently use the greenspace?
- What would you like to see there in the future?
- What activities, features, or conservation efforts matter most to you?
- Are there ways you'd like to be involved—hands-on or behind the scenes?

Whether your interests lean toward walking paths, native meadows, community gardens, educational events, or simply preserving a quiet natural space, your voice helps shape what comes next. Together, we can create something that reflects both our shared values and the natural beauty we're lucky to call home. 🌿 Check out the list, The Big Picture Goals, on our website. https://bobolink-greenspace.com/the-big-picture-goals

Stay green, stay kind, stay connected - Jennifer Erena

STEWARDSHIP SUPPORT

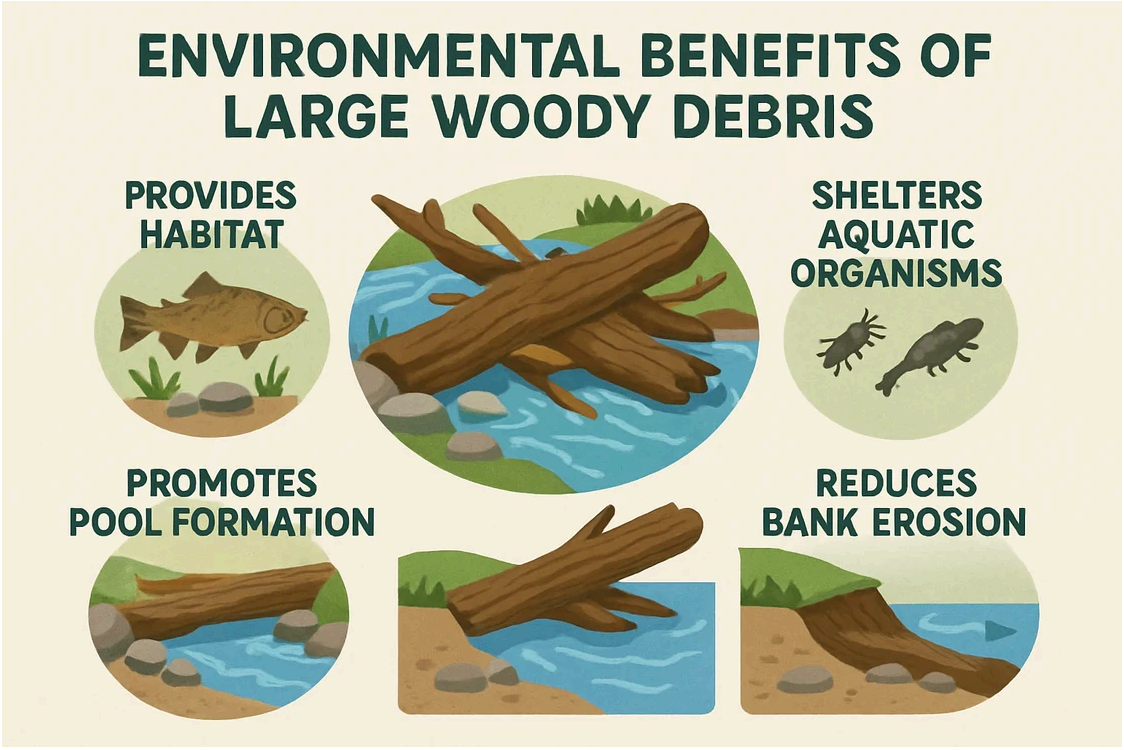


LFUCG Water Quality Grant > approved and ready to go!

Natural Resource Conservation Service EQIP and CSP Funding

We have progressed to the next step! We just got our farm number and can now turn our attention to the above funding applications.

FIELD NOTES



Environmental benefits of Large Woody Debris

In the field of stream ecology, Large Woody Debris (LWD) is often referred to as a "biological legacy." While a "log jam" can look like a mess to the human eye, it serves as a critical structural engine for a healthy waterway.

The following information outlines the scientific justification for leaving LWD in place when it is not causing human-related hazards (like trash collection or structural flooding).

Creation of Essential Habitat (The "Diversity Engine")

LWD is the primary driver of physical complexity in streams. When a log enters a stream, it forces the water to move around it, under it, or over it.

- **Pool Formation:** The energy of the water flowing over or around a log scours the stream bed, creating deep "plunge pools." These pools are vital for aquatic life/fish to rest, hide from predators, and survive during periods of low summer flow or drought.
- **Velocity Refugia:** LWD creates "slack water" or slow-moving zones behind the wood. This allows juvenile fish and aquatic insects to conserve energy instead of constantly fighting the main current.

Management of Sediment and Nutrients

A stream without wood is often a "high-speed pipe" that flushes everything downstream. LWD acts as a natural brake and filter.

- **Sediment Sorting:** Logs trap gravel and cobbles on their upstream side. These sorted gravel beds are the exact environments many fish species require for spawning (laying eggs).
- **Nutrient Cycling:** Woody debris traps falling leaves and smaller organic matter (detritus). This creates a "pantry" for macroinvertebrates—the "shredders" and "grazers" like mayflies and stoneflies that form the base of the food web. Without wood to hold this material, the food source simply washes away.

Dissipation of Energy (Natural Flood Control)

While large jams can cause local water levels to rise, they collectively protect the downstream ecosystem. By adding "roughness" to the channel, LWD slows the overall velocity of the water. This prevents the stream from "incising" (cutting down into its bed like a gully) and reduces the erosive force that would otherwise hit downstream banks and bridges.

Key Studies & Definitive Resources

If you are looking for formal scientific justification, these are the cornerstone resources used by ecologists and government agencies:

- **Ecosystem Benefits of Large Dead Wood (Oxford Research Encyclopedia):** A comprehensive modern summary of how LWD increases resilience to disturbances like drought and wildfire.
- **Large Woody Debris in Forested Streams (Bisson et al., 1987):** One of the most-cited foundational papers in the Pacific Northwest, outlining the role of debris in salmonid habitat and channel hydraulics.
- **The Role of LWD in Stream Channels (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers):** A technical note (ERDC TN-EMRRP-SR-13) that justifies the use of LWD for bank stabilization and habitat enhancement.
- **Ohio Stream Management Guide: Large Woody Debris (ODNR):** A highly readable government guide that explains why rootwads and logs are "essential components of a healthy stream's ecology."

The Lexington Division of Environmental Services (DES) team and its contractors fully understand the LWD values/benefits and where to draw the line on removal. Our LFUCG water quality grant will follow these best practice / scientific recommendations and consult with the DES team as necessary.

Thank you for caring,

Ken Cooke
Ultimate Stream Steward
Friends of Wolf Run



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https://bobolink-greenspace.com/blog/environmental-benefits-of-large-woody-debris

STEWARDSHIP STEPS

I'll be looking for some nice days this winter to plan a workday to manage some downed trees in accordance with the benefits of LWD.

SEASONAL SNAPSHOT



Our Stream in December after a big rain





If you haven't tried Berbere spice, you must - use it on Salmon, cauliflower and more! Check it out at Good Foods.

Past Newsletters

- 2025 December: Stream Stewards & Pet Ownership
- 2025 November: Green Tomato Gazpacho and Feeder Watch
- 2025_October: Lessons from a Messy Yard
- 2025_September: Bird Migration

🎓 **Learn more** about our beautiful planet and greenspace from our talented neighbors at https://bobolink-greenspace.com/

📩 **Want to write an article?** Or have a topic you want to learn more about? Send your article/ideas to jennifer.erena@me.com.

🌐 **View newsletter online** at https://bobolink-greenspace.com/greenspace-newsletter-5

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