



# STORMWATER steward

A Stormwater SMART publication

Volume 9, Issue 2

Summer, 2017

at a  
glance

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WATERSHED**



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## RESTORING THE SWEARING CREEK WATERSHED

Located within Davidson County, the Swearing Creek watershed spans 49 square-miles through the western half of Lexington and drains into High Rock Lake. This watershed is currently listed as impaired by the NC Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Water Resources. After an assessment of the watershed was completed by PTRC, it was found that the majority of the impacts to the health of Swearing Creek come from various nonpoint source pollutants. In addition to Swearing Creek, High Rock Lake is listed as an impaired waterbody.

Litter has been a major issue of concern within Davidson County. An article written by Kim Wynne from FOX 8 highlights the efforts being taken by the county to put a stop to the littering and vandalism surrounding the Wil-Cox bridge. The bridge was constructed in the 1920's, and the county hopes to eventually turn it into a river park and tourist attraction. In an effort to improve the beautification of the area, Parks & Rec director Thomas Marshburn coordinated and executed two community cleanups for this year. They picked up couches, TV's, and other general household trash. The county's local paper, the Dispatch, released an article that discussed 4

main ideas, presented by Courtney Crowson, on how the county can work together to control their litter problem. Her ideas were: improve public awareness, increase Adopt-A-Highway participation, deploy stationary security cameras, and initiate an Adopt-A-Building program for government buildings.

"Getting the kids involved, as they become adults, maybe they're not trashing our streets because they've been out picking it up."

-Commissioner Zak Crofts

Crowson's idea about improving public awareness and outreach is crucial to helping restore this watershed. Stormwater SMART assists by attending various festivals and providing year-round educational programs about the implications littering has on our local water bodies. Our mission and purpose focuses heavily on the increased awareness and outreach component. However, education alone is not nearly as powerful as when it is paired with community involvement. The cleanups that took place at Wil-Cox bridge this year are great first steps to encourage the community to take action in their local watershed. Similar events, such as stream cleanups within



Photo by PTRC

Swearing Creek, or paddle cleanups in the section that drains into High Rock Lake, could have a huge impact on improving the health of these water bodies. Additionally, marking any unmarked local storm drains to make community members aware of where their storm drains lead to would be beneficial for the Swearing Creek Watershed. Since Davidson County is one of Stormwater SMART's member communities, we can all work together to make an impact.

If you are a Davidson County community member and would like to get more involved, reach out to us on [Facebook](#) so we can help make it happen! Or send an email to:

[stormwatersmart@ptrc.org](mailto:stormwatersmart@ptrc.org).

Article Sources:

<http://myfox8.com/2017/03/08/litter-problems-near-wil-cox-bridge-in-davidson-county/>  
<http://www.the-dispatch.com/news/20170406/littering-remains-concern-for-davidson-county>

## SUMMER TIME = CAMP TIME

We had a very busy and productive school year providing programs throughout the Piedmont Triad. Our fun doesn't stop there, though! Once school is out and kids are home for the summer, that's when the real fun begins. Throughout our 19 member communities, Stormwater SMART staff tries their best to get to as many camps as possible in the region.



Photo by Stormwater SMART

Between day camps and specialty camps, we've been able to prepare and provide innovative summer programs for kids of all ages. One of the main concerns when kids have a summer off from school is the fear of them getting out of their routine. School provides their minds with constant thinking and stimulation, but when they come back from summer vacation they can seem "groggy". While our main priority is for kids to have fun at our summer camp programs, we also incorporate plenty of educational learning opportunities for everyone involved. Our goal is to provide education and outreach throughout the Piedmont Triad

on topics such as stormwater, water quality, pollution, and best management practices in a fun and enjoyable way.

This year, our macroinvertebrate surveys using leaf packs have been a hit at many of the summer camps. In the past, we have discussed how macroinvertebrates are used to determine stream health. A few weeks in advance of these camps, staff went out to deploy leaf packs as a means of attracting the macroinvertebrates. On the day of the camps, we pulled out the bags and let the campers sort through the leaves, document what they found, and look at them under our stereoscopes. We also had some campers get into the water to try and find the macroinvertebrates on their own. Even those that were initially timid about touching the smelly leaves and tiny critters were enjoying themselves by the end of the programs! Immersing these kids in the outdoors allows them to make that connection with nature and understand how everything is linked.

### *Testimonials*

"The kids really enjoyed exploring the leaf packs for macroinvertebrates and learning what these small aquatic insects tell us about water quality! The hands on activities were very engaging and a great way to help kids understand the effects of pollution and how we can make a difference!"

**-Burlington Recreation & Parks**

## WE STILL HAVE SPACE!

Do you have a summer camp going on this summer that needs something a little extra? Well, you're in luck! We still have plenty of space in our calendar to do more summer camps during the month of August. Whether it's a standard day camp or a specialty camp, we can customize our programs to best fit your needs. Plus, our programs are great for getting kids back into thinking mode right before they return to school!

The best part: if your county or municipality is a Stormwater SMART member, we provide you with these programs free of charge! If you have any questions please send an email to either:

Lindsey Lengyel  
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[llengyel@ptrc.org](mailto:llengyel@ptrc.org)

Lindsey Bijas  
AmeriCorps Member/Outreach Coordinator  
[lbijas@ptrc.org](mailto:lbijas@ptrc.org)

We look forward to hearing from you!



Photo by [Archdale Parks and Rec](#)

## Library Visits

Randolph County has housed a variety of our programs through its various libraries. We recently facilitated a rain barrel workshop and upon demonstrating how to put one together, it was raffled off to one lucky winner! So far, we have provided programs for these libraries within the county:

- Asheboro Public Library
- Randleman Public Library
- Archdale Public Library

Speaking of libraries, this year's library theme has been "Build a Better World"! To adhere to that theme, our library programs this year have started off with a reading of Miss Rumphius, written by Barbara Cooney. This story focuses on a woman who has three tasks to accomplish in her life; travel to far away places, come back home to live by the sea, and do something to make the world more beautiful. She accomplishes the third and toughest thing of all by planting lupines, her favorite flower, all across town. Inspired by her actions, the next part of our program is to create origami animals out of wildflower seed paper. Participants can later "plant" their origami to help make the world more beautiful. To finish up, we walk everyone through our A-maze-ing water activity to demonstrate how water travels through our storm drains and can get polluted along the way. That then ties into how we use plants to manage polluted stormwater runoff. Overall, this program shows how we can all make a difference, even if it seems as simple as planting flowers.

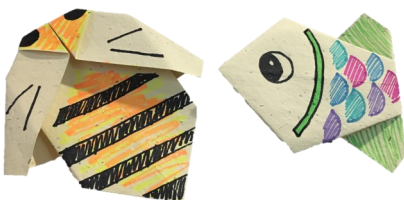


Photo by Stormwater SMART

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: RANDOLPH COUNTY

The current population in Randolph County is estimated to be just over 142,000, making it the 14th most populated county of North Carolina. Due to its location, half of the county resides in the Cape Fear River basin while the other half resides in the Yadkin Pee Dee River basin; the first and second largest river basins in the state, respectively.

Similar to the Swearing Creek Watershed located in Davidson County, a major concern of pollution for this area is littering. When evaluated, the overall litter score for the county was calculated to be a 1.8 out of 4, with 4 being extremely littered. This score came from the county's Litter Inventory that required observers in several designated spots to assess and give an individual score for that area. Then, all of their scores were averaged out to achieve Randolph's overall score. A majority of this litter has been pinpointed to unofficial and illegal dumpsites, mostly containing household items and building materials. Many individuals wanted to address the issues that were impacting their environment, so they did just that.

As an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, members of the county formed what is now called Keep Randolph County Beautiful. This is a nonprofit, volunteer organization who's main mission is to promote beautification through increased education and involvement in their community. Its three main concerns focus on protecting the quality of the air, the water, and the appearance of Randolph County. In order to achieve their mission, KRCB holds various cleanups, volunteer events, and attended local festivals to promote awareness within their county. They hold what they call "Meetup Cleanups" where picking up litter and socializing mix together effortlessly.

Also, in an effort to shed some light on proper recycling and disposal techniques, they hold annual "Multi-Stream Recycling Day". Items collected for this event range from old/unused medications, electronics, paper documents, to plastic products.

This past March, we at Stormwater SMART paired up with KRCB and Trees NC to celebrate Arbor Day. At our booth we demonstrated how rain barrels operate, and how someone can even build their own. (Pictured below)



Photo by [Keep Randolph County Beautiful](http://keepncbeautiful.org/)

Since the startup of KRCB, there has been a noticeably drastic increase in community involvement. Making the residents of Randolph County aware that they can make a difference and positively impact their environment is what Keep America Beautiful is all about! Although KRCB is not an affiliate, Keep NC Beautiful is a chapter of Keep America Beautiful and has all of its affiliates in the state listed on their website. If you are curious to see if your county is already involved or want to initiate your own chapter, you can visit the link below for more information.

<http://keepncbeautiful.org/affiliates/>



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 Randolph County  
 Rockingham County  
 Archdale  
 Asheboro  
 Burlington  
 Elon  
 Gibsonville  
 Graham  
 Green Level  
 Haw River  
 Lexington  
 Mebane  
 Oak Ridge  
 Summerfield  
 Randleman  
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## THIS SEASON'S FOCUS: WASHING YOUR CAR

For this season's focus, we're going to discuss some environmentally friendly ways of washing your car! Now that the weather is nice and warm, going outside to wash your car doesn't seem as daunting. However, before you run out there with your soapy buckets, hoses, and sponges, try to keep a few things in mind. There are several ways you can wash your car and still help protect your local water quality and benefit the environment. The top recommended way of washing your car is to bring it to a local car wash! Many commercial car washes treat and recycle their water. This way, you're protecting and conserving water at the same time. If you really prefer to wash your car at home, just be mindful of where exactly you're washing it. Washing your car on a permeable surface, such as your lawn, is better for the environment than washing your car on an impermeable surface, such as your driveway or the street. By washing your car on a permeable surface, the water running off of your car will absorb into the

soil as opposed to running down into the storm drain. Last but not least, if you're going to wash your car at home, take a look at the type of soap you are using. If you can, we highly recommend using biodegradable soap. Many detergents contain surfactants, which are found in various products such as shampoo, conditioner, herbicides, fabric softener, etc. These surfactants may work well for your washing your hair, clothes, or car, but they can also wash the slimy coating you find on fish. That slime serves a purpose in protecting them from harmful bacteria, parasites, and absorbing other pollutants. Not only is biodegradable soap less harmful for the environment, but it is less harmful for your car as well!

Image by [Mr. Wash](#)



## LOOK FOR STORMWATER SMART AT AN EVENT NEAR YOU

July 21 - Randleman Library

Archdale Creekside Park Camp

July 22 - Piedmont Triad Farmers Market

July 24 - Asheboro Public Library

July 26 - Camp Elon

July 27 - Thomasville Parks and Rec

August 7 - Asheboro Public Library

August 9 - Burlington Wildlife Camp

August 16 - Archdale Creekside Park Camp

October 7 - Randolph Fall Festival

October 21 - Reidsville Fall Jubilee

October 28 - Oak Ridge Great Pumpkin Event

Lexington BBQ Festival

Stormwater SMART was created by the Piedmont Triad Regional Council (formerly Piedmont Triad Council of Governments) to help Phase II communities comply with National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and Jordan Lake Public Education and Outreach requirements. Stormwater SMART is supported through dues paid by member governments.