



Increasing Floodplain Capacity Along Neis Ditch in Village of Swanton

Metroparks Toledo has received a grant from the U.S. EPA through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to improve sections of Neis Ditch in Fulton and Lucas Counties. Through support from the Village of Swanton, a portion of the project will benefit Swanton community by increasing the capacity of the Neis Ditch floodplain to hold more water during high flow events. This project will occur along Neis Ditch in the Westpointe Estates housing community.



Why is Restoration of Neis Ditch Important?

Neis Ditch is part of the Maumee Area of Concern (AOC); a collection of 11 different watersheds that flow into Lake Erie. The Maumee AOC and other AOCs throughout the Great Lakes area have been designated as areas with severe environmental degradation. Federal funding is available to restore waterways and remove Beneficial Use Impairments within AOCs, which ultimately improves and protects the Great Lakes; the largest system of fresh surface water in the world.

The restoration project along Neis Ditch will do many things:

- Increase floodplain capacity during high flow events
- Improve water quality
- Improve benthic and invertebrate populations
- Improve fish habitat
- Reduce streambank erosion and improve the stream channel
- Increase native forested floodplain habitat

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE:

When will construction begin?

Construction will occur from October 2024 to March 2025. Hours of operation for the construction team will be Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Unless weather causes a need for weekend operations, no work is planned on weekends.

Will all of the trees be cut down?

No. We will preserve as many of the trees as possible. Some trees will need to be removed for floodplain expansion and channel improvements. New trees will be planted to maintain a forested floodplain habitat, which is optimal for water quality and wildlife habitat.

Will there continue to be mowed turf?

Yes. Most of the northern half of the project area will continue to be maintained as turf by the Village of Swanton. The spoils from this project will be placed into the northwest portion of the project area and be reseeded with turf grasses. Metroparks will maintain the newly planted trees and continued maintenance in the forested floodplain and stream channel.

Will this project cost the Village and/or residents anything?

No. This project is fully funded through an US EPA Great Lakes Restoration Grant. Because of the significant community and environmental benefits, this project is fully supported by The Village of Swanton.

Who will be doing the work?

Biohabitats was hired to do the engineering and design of this project. They are working in partnership with Meadville Land Service, Inc. to build this stream restoration project.

What is a riffle?

A riffle is a shallow, rocky area in a stream where the water flow creates bubbles, adding oxygen to water which is essential for aquatic organisms to thrive. Riffles are an important habitat for tiny organisms (microinvertebrate and benthic) that consume algae, bacteria and organic matter, making them indicators of stream health. They are also an important food source for larger aquatic wildlife such as fish.

MORE QUESTIONS?

Please feel free to contact LaRae Sprow at larae.spro@MetroparksToledo.com or 419-779-6047.

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