



**Teaneck Creek
Conservancy**

Where nature, history and art come full circle

For Immediate Release:

August 31, 2020

Media Contact:

Derek Sands

Dsands@co.bergen.nj.us

WORK TO BEGIN ON TEANECK CREEK PARK HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT

Large-scale project starts at Teaneck Creek Park

HACKENSACK, N.J. – Work is set to begin today on a large-scale habitat restoration project at the [Teaneck Creek Park](#), a tributary of the Overpeck Lake.

The \$5.6 million project will enhance the site’s natural resources; increase biodiversity with native grasses, shrubs and trees; improve stormwater management with natural infrastructure; and improve park access by repairing and replacing footbridges and addressing deficient trails that are inaccessible due to washouts.

“This project is about the continuation of reclaiming park land for Bergen County residents, a major principle laid out in the parks master plan that was universally applauded by residents and the environmental community alike. My administration remains committed to righting the environmental injustices that have occurred in the past at Overpeck and its surrounding areas. Through best management practices highlighting clean storm water technology, this restoration will meet the County’s obligation to cap and clean this environmentally sensitive land and allow its flora and fauna to thrive in this healed environment while continuing our mission to educate and teach school kids through associates programs” said Bergen County Executive Jim Tedesco.

“We are proud of and committed to Bergen County’s Park system. The Overpeck area in particular has been a challenge, as we have transformed what was a landfill into green space. The Teaneck Creek Park Restoration Project continues our commitment to returning a potential landfill and storm water basin into a natural habitat that will allow our citizens to experience more of the Great Outdoors” said Freeholder Chairwoman Mary Amoroso.

“We are thrilled to see our 20 year partnership with Bergen County yield such an impactful restoration project that will benefit not only our ecosystem and habitat, but our wonderful community. We are grateful to Bergen County for investing time and resources to being a model of sound ecological restoration in New Jersey,” said Alexa Fantacone, Executive Director of the Teaneck Creek Conservancy.

To safely accommodate crews and equipment, the Puffin Way park entrance will be closed through 2020. Park availability will be limited to the Fycke Lane entrance of the park. Trail closures will be necessary during the project.

Work is expected to continue through fall 2021, although crews will continue to manage the newly planted vegetation and control invasive species after construction completion.

In the early 1950s the property was filled with clay material to serve as a base liner for a planned landfill. While, the landfill was never built, clay material remained on site. In addition, multiple stormwater outfalls discharge to the site. As a result of this past human disturbance the natural hydrology of the site was disrupted resulting in severe erosion and the colonization of invasive plant species on the property.

The work at Teaneck Creek Park will remove clay material, restore the way water flows across the site through natural stormwater conveyance systems, and regrading portions of the site to create wetland habitat. Additional work includes relocating and consolidating debris piles, improving trail conditions, and removing invasive species and replacing them with native grasses, shrubs, and trees.

Through a partnership started in 2001, the non-profit Teaneck Creek Conservancy has organized citizen volunteers to care for the park while providing passive recreation and environmental education programs with a unique emphasis on Eco-Art community projects.

The concept for this project started in 2007 with a plan developed by Rutgers University to improve the quality of the wildlife habitat on the site. Several years later the Department of Parks retained an ecological restoration firm, Biohabitats Inc., to produce the final habitat and wetlands restoration plan.

Using Regenerative Stormwater Conveyance techniques, the project will convert stormwater outfalls, such as the heavily eroded gully known as “Stormwater Canyon,” into integrated stream and wetland systems. The conveyance systems will be connected to sand seepage areas that will slow and spread stormwater throughout the site to reduce and filter runoff, creating diverse wetland and riparian habitats. The innovative natural techniques employed at Teaneck Creek Park will serve as a demonstration project to inform stormwater management practices through the County.

Sources of funding for this project come from New Jersey Green Acres, the Bergen County Open Space Preservation Trust Fund, and Bergen County capital funding. For information about the project, please email Adam Strobel at ASTrobel@co.bergen.nj.us or visit <https://www.co.bergen.nj.us/departments-and-services/parks>.

The Bergen County Parks Department is dedicated to providing recreation opportunities for all, preserving open space, enhancing environmental health, and protecting significant cultural and historic site for current and future generations. The Bergen County Parks System which has been connecting people to nature for over 73 years, spans nearly 9,000 acres and includes a nationally accredited zoo, six golf courses, 21 parks, two horseback riding areas, an environmental center and nine historic sites.

Teaneck Creek Conservancy is a non-profit organization dedicated to the reclamation and protection of the cultural, historical, and environmental legacy of the Teaneck Creek watershed. Since 2001 we have been working hard to transform a once-neglected dumpsite into a place of natural beauty. Visit our park complete with almost two miles of groomed trails, an Outdoor Classroom for learning, and beautiful artwork such as our Five Pipes Mural and a Peace Labyrinth for quiet reflection. Teaneck Creek Conservancy acts as stewards for this unique space, providing educational opportunities and passive recreational amenities to the surrounding community. www.teaneckcreek.org

###