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ADEM Supports Stream Restoration in Ida Belle Young Park

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Department of Environmental Management is announcing the start of the White’s Slough Stream Restoration Project at Ida Belle Young Park in Montgomery. The project, which is designed to improve water quality and enhance the overall quality of the park, is a cooperative effort between ADEM, the City of Montgomery, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System at Auburn University, the Auburn University Water Resources Center, the Alabama Clean Water Partnership, and Goodwyn, Mills, & Cawood, Incorporated.

The stream restoration project will improve water quality in White’s Slough which is a tributary to Catoma Creek. Catoma Creek has been identified by ADEM as being impaired due to organic enrichment, low dissolved oxygen, and pathogens. White’s Slough is currently channelized, deeply entrenched, and lacks adjacent stream bank vegetation. Due to these features, the current stream is an eye sore, a hazard to park visitors, and also contributes sediment and nutrients that degrade water quality in the watershed.

The first component of the restoration project involves restoring the stream to its natural, stable form by re-establishing the stream’s curvature, depth, width, and vegetative cover. This will improve water quality, improve fish habitat, reduce stream bank erosion, and reduce the loss of land along the stream bank. In addition, rain gardens and wetland vegetation will be constructed in order to further enhance the improvement of water quality and floodplain functions.

A second component of the restoration project is to build watershed restoration expertise by educating stakeholders on the importance of protecting water quality and by demonstrating innovative stormwater management practices. The project will support “hands-on” training workshops/seminars that focus on nonpoint source pollution, watershed protection, and watershed restoration opportunities.

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In addition, participants in the project have coordinated with several local schools in an effort to involve students in the project and provide them with an opportunity to learn about the importance of protecting water quality through restoration and management efforts. The goal is to allow Ida Bell Young Park to serve as an outdoor classroom for generations to come and enhance students' interest in environmental studies.

“The implementation of this project is a win-win situation for all parties involved,” said ADEM Director Trey Glenn. “The ability to implement a project that will improve water quality, enhance the value of one of Montgomery’s city parks, and also provide hands-on, outdoor study opportunity for local students is truly remarkable. I am pleased that the Alabama Department of Environmental Management can utilize its financial and technical resources to support this project and I appreciate all of the efforts of our valued partners that make this project possible.”

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