

Northwest Branch Christmas Tree Streambank Stabilization- Adelphi , MD

Unstable streambanks are common throughout many parts of the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River. This project used volunteers and inexpensive recycled tree material to stabilize and revegetate a failing bank.

What was done and why?

Unstable streambanks are common throughout many parts of the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River. Recycled Christmas trees collected from volunteers and local municipalities were used as bank stabilization material along a section of Northwest Branch. Trees were arranged in layers along the bank and cabled together for strength. Dogwood cuttings were used to revegetate the bank initially. As sediment is trapped in the tree layers, natural vegetation can grow and further stabilize the bank. Stabilizing banks along the stream with vegetation will increase infiltration along the bank area and reduce bank erosion.

Who was involved?

This project was coordinated by the Anacostia Watershed Society, and local citizens and students were recruited as volunteers. Citizens, towns, and owners of tree lots donated tree material.

See more information on the [Anacostia Watershed Society's webpage](#)

Where can I see the results of this project?

Visit the site along the Northwest Branch in Adelphi , MD.

Why is this a model project?

This project is notable for enhancing resilience of the stream channel, one of the recognized factors for a successful ecological restoration project. Restoring stability to the banks with natural vegetation will provide increased infiltration, and reduce erosion and siltation . The people components of this project lead to its success; volunteers were used through every step and lead to the success of the implementation. This project demonstrates how grassroots groups can complete effective, inexpensive streambank restoration projects.

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Progression of recovery (photos courtesy of Anacostia Watershed Society)