



July 2022

Creek Keeper Program

Overview

As part of the Stormwater Management Grant Program, the Friends of Cabin John Creek (FoCJC) manages a Creek Keeper Program of dedicated volunteers to help monitor and maintain the health of the mainstem and tributaries of Cabin John Creek. With 25 square miles of watershed and eight named tributaries feeding into the Cabin John Creek mainstem, our Creek Keepers are essential stewards of the watershed.

As stewards of the Cabin John Creek Watershed, Creek Keepers will provide oversight, leadership, and hands-on work within the section of the creek in which they live and FoCJC will educate them on watershed issues and how they can help within their communities. Creek Keepers will also act as citizen scientists to conduct periodic monitoring and reporting including stream surveys, erosion issues, water pollution/trash, and water quality monitoring.

Our Creek Keepers program is designed to empower participants to take individual steps to protect the watershed, and to create opportunities for them to join with others in seeking communal solutions within the watershed. Within each community, there is some degree of existing awareness of these concerns, but we will work with Creek Keepers in each community to determine and meet its unique needs in terms of education, training, and project implementation. This program will reinforce the message to watershed residents that even modest changes at home or in the community can make a difference in the health of the watershed, and educate them on solving stormwater problems on their property and community.

Goal

To engage, educate, and train dedicated community volunteers as watershed stewards in the Cabin John Creek Watershed and encourage personal and community behavioral changes.

Who?

Anyone 12 years old or up who cares about the creek and can monitor a quarter mile or more along the creek can become an FoCJC Creek Keeper. We welcome individuals, couples, families, friends, or small groups.



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Responsibilities

The work of Creek Keepers is variable, depending on interest and time, as well as the needs of their segment and their community. We seek to accommodate a variety of interests. We are looking for a commitment of around 2 hours every quarter during the year with activities of most interest to the Creek Keeper.

Creek Keepers do not have to do it all yet should plan to attend or participate in at least one activity per quarter. Do you love to walk the creek and observe? Or organize or attend cleanups? Want to participate in citizen science and measure water quality?

Some Creek Keeper duties include:

- Serving as FoCJC's eyes and ears, performing creek and neighborhood surveys, walking their segment of the creek periodically, noting and reporting new problems, or passing on issues identified by others in the community to FoCJC (greg@cabinjohncreek.org).
- Helping FoCJC coordinate quarterly events within their section, either as part of an all-creek event or one focused on their creek segment. Typical stewardship activities include trash clean-ups and invasive plant removal in their creek.
- Participating in selected water quality monitoring activities including macroinvertebrate, chemical, and salt monitoring.
- Staying current with scheduled activities and developments via the FoCJC e-newsletter and the website (www.cabinjohncreek.org) and encouraging community participation.
- Sharing your experiences or animal/flora sightings along the creek to the [FoCJC Facebook page](#) and using the [iNaturalist](#) App.

FoCJC will provide:

- Creek Keeper Program Manager (greg@cabinjohncreek.org) to oversee the program and to manage quarterly activities and reporting for Creek Keepers.
- Training and education opportunities (in person and webinars) throughout the year on watershed issues and potential solutions, empowering Creek Keepers as advocates in their communities to improve water quality.
- Support Creek Keepers in identifying opportunities to directly improve water quality in their communities.
- Support for any certifications desired to perform stewardship activities (e.g. [Weed Warrior](#), [Macroinvertebrate Monitoring Team Lead](#)).
- Follow up and coordination on issues reported.
- Tracking and reporting on conditions in the watershed over time to our partners and the public.



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Quarterly Activities

The following are regularly scheduled stewardship events for Creek Keepers, organized by FoCJC or Creek Keepers. Creek Keepers do not have to do it all yet should plan to attend or participate in at least one activity per quarter.

*We would need a commitment from chemical monitors of once per quarter (~ 1 hrs/outing) and twice a year for macroinvertebrate volunteers (~4 hrs/outing). For our bacterial testing, there are 16 weekly bacterial tests each summer (Wednesday mornings June 1 through mid-Sep) which require dedicated volunteers and a commitment of 10 of the 16 weekly sessions.

Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
Walk the Creek	Walk the Creek	Walk the Creek	Walk the Creek
*Water Quality Monitoring	*Water Quality Monitoring	*Water Quality Monitoring	*Water Quality Monitoring
Creek Cleanup	Creek Cleanup	Creek Cleanup	Creek Cleanup
Salt Watch	Weed Warriors	Weed Warriors	Weed Warriors
MLK Day of Service	Earth Day Service	Neighborhood Survey	Creek Survey

Volunteer Resources

In addition to FoCJC initiatives above, there are additional opportunities sponsored by Montgomery Parks for Creek Keepers to volunteer and make a difference within the Cabin John Creek watershed.

- [Stream & Park Cleanups](#)
- [Weed Warriors](#)
- [Nature & Environment](#)
- [Trails](#)

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