

How to Control Erosion/ Restore Your Shoreline with Natural Vegetation & Habitat



Be a Good Creek Neighbor!



Bring Back Life to
Our Creek's Shoreline

The Spa Creek Conservancy is a volunteer organization dedicated to educating itself and its diverse resident and business neighbors to create, explore and carry out the rehabilitation and restoration of the Spa Creek watershed to meet its urban conservation and stewardship challenges

For More Information
Visit SINCH:

SCC's Information Clearing House at
www.spacreek.org

Want to Get Involved to
Protect and Restore Spa Creek?

JOIN the Spa Creek Conservancy

What Can a Good Creek Neighbor Do Whose Property is Not on the Water?

All of us can take an active part in protecting and restoring our Creek. Here are a few ways to reduce both the volume of stormwater and the pollutants it carries to our Creek.

Use professional carwashes or temporarily park your cars on the lawn for washing.

Select native species of plants that need little care and reduce the need for fertilizer.

Install rain barrels, rain gardens, eco-paved driveways & patios and terracing.

With these easy tools, you can actually slow the flow of rain water from your roof and driveway, retain the nutrients your plants need to thrive, and depend on the natural mechanism of the soil around your trees and in your gardens to absorb and filter the water and prevent it from rushing into the gutters and storm sewers

Be a good Spa Creek Observer and when you notice a problem - such as heavy flows of sediment during a storm or water with an oil sheen around a storm drain, take a photograph and report the incident to the city environmental department or to your local creek conservancy.

**For the Good of the Creek,
We Can All Be Good Spa Creek Neighbors**

Remember...

- Create natural buffers of trees, native plants, shrubbery and rain gardens.
- Replace hardened shoreline bulkheads with softening vegetation
- Install biologs, or SOXX secured by tree saplings.
- Build marshes and install plantings in front of bulkheads.

Resources & References...

Living Shorelines Program, www.dnr.state.md.us
Chesapeake Bay Foundation, www.cbf.org

I would like to join the Spa Creek Conservancy, Inc. and contribute:
 Regular/Family \$20 Associations/Businesses \$50
 Patrons \$100 Benefactors \$500

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Daytime Phone _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Where you would like to be involved: _____

Please make out your check to: Spa Creek Conservancy, Inc.

Mail to: SCC Treasurer, P.O. Box 2199, Annapolis, MD 21404-2199

New Ways to Control Shoreline Erosion and Restore our Creek

Chesapeake Bay waterfront property owners enjoy a privilege and bear a special responsibility as caretakers of a segment of the most dynamic habitat on earth, our shoreline. The marshes and sea grasses along a natural shoreline provide an endlessly inviting vista and essential habitat for soft crabs, many species of fish, and the insects and insect larvae the smaller fish feed on.

In urban environments such as Spa Creek, however, the shoreline is no longer in a natural state. Buildings and impervious surfaces, such as roads, driveways, sidewalks and parking lots cause storm water to run off, pour pollutants into the Creek and cause erosion. Eroding shorelines in turn, load our Creek with sediment—essentially eliminating habitat for aquatic life and soil for vegetation

Shoreline buffers composed of trees, shrubbery and well placed plantings or rain gardens—which slow and absorb storm water and filter out pollutants—can markedly lessen erosion and its damaging effects. Bulkheads made of wood, however—the most prevalent erosion control choice on our Creek—present a very hostile wall to aquatic life.

Is Bulkheading a Particular Problem for Spa Creek Waterfront Neighbors?

Because our watershed is so highly developed, most Spa Creek waterfront owners “protect” their property with bulkheads. Today we understand that while bulkheads may control erosion, at the same time they can destroy shallow water habitats and surrounding wetlands. In addition, the preservatives in the wood itself eventually leach out and further pollute the bottom sediment and the creek. Environmentally savvy Spa Creek neighbors now look to more aesthetically pleasing and environmentally sound alternatives.

How Can We Make Existing Bulkheads More Environmentally Friendly?

Install Biologs. Biologs are logs made of coconut fibers into which you can plant native grasses and shrubbery. The purpose of the biolog is to provide temporary—not permanent—support or platform for the plants while they are rooting. The plants you select must be varieties that are able to survive and thrive on the shoreline, once the log decomposes. For the biolog to be effective, it also must be in contact with the water so that the plants growing inside remain moist.

Add Fascines. One of the reasons that banks become more susceptible to erosion is a lack of vegetation to keep the soil in place. To further protect the bank, you can plant fascines behind the biologs. A fascine is a tightly bound bundle of live but dormant branches cut from trees and shrubs such as arrowwood, viburnum, red twig dogwood, alder and willow. Fascines eventually root and become functional shrubs. Live stakes of the same species – but larger in diameter—can be stuck in the upper and lower portions of the bank to help prevent erosion.

Sow native grasses along the edges and behind bulkheads to reduce their harshness, soften the edges of the land, filter storm water run off and provide food and shelter for shorebirds.

Utilize the root systems of deep rooted trees behind bulkheads to hold soils together and reduce soil erosion.

Install a rain garden (or two) on your property, above the shoreline, to slow the flow of water toward the bulkhead and infiltrate to reduce pollutants.

SOXX. Install various sized tubes or “sleeves” made of net, filled with wood chips, seeds and other vegetation, along bulkheads at mean-high tide level to support aquatic life and restore vegetation to bare banks. Known commercially as SOXX, they can be secured with stakes of young saplings.

before



after



Become a Good Creek Neighbor with Safer/Softer/Nonstructural Techniques

Take your first, step towards restoring the natural interface that once existed on Spa Creek and look into retrofitting your hard, lifeless shoreline with a nonstructural option. These techniques – there are many to choose from – not only cause the least disturbance to the natural environment but add to your enjoyment of your waterfront home.

“Repair” a Bulkhead with a Marsh

At the upper reaches of the Severn River, in Anne Arundel County, MD, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation has “repaired” an old, failing bulkhead by creating a marsh in front of it and planting shrubs and grasses on both the land and water sides. They are watching the bulkhead rot away, leaving the marsh to hold everything in place.