



United States Department of the Interior

National Capital Parks-East
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Interior Region 1- National Capital Area
1900 Anacostia Drive, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20020

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1.A.1 (NCR-NACE)

February 11, 2021

RE: Public scoping announcement for Stickfoot Branch Stream Restoration Project

Dear Sir or Madam:

The National Park Service (NPS), in partnership with the District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE), is proposing stream restoration activities for Stickfoot Branch Stream located in the vicinity of the Garfield Heights neighborhood of southeast Washington, DC. The proposed project involves restoration of approximately 800 linear feet of Stickfoot Branch, and 140 linear feet of an unnamed tributary, within NPS parkland administered by National Capital Parks – East (NACE) located west of 22nd Street SE near its intersection with Hartford Street SE and Langston Place SE (Figure 1).

The purpose of the restoration is to:

- reduce streambank erosion and channel bed incision;
- improve macroinvertebrate in-stream habitat;
- manage invasive vegetation in the project area;
- ensure the long-term protection of existing sanitary and stormwater infrastructure; and
- minimize impacts to natural and cultural resources.

The restoration is needed to improve the long-term stability of Stickfoot Branch and to improve downstream water quality in support of the ongoing effort to achieve District of Columbia (DC) water quality standards for the Anacostia River watershed.

General Study Area Description

Stickfoot Branch is a perennial tributary stream of the Anacostia River that is mostly piped beneath southeast DC neighborhoods. The stream begins within the Garfield Heights neighborhood and flows northwest where it drains to the Anacostia River at Poplar Point. The segment of the stream proposed for restoration is one of only a few natural stream channel segments along Stickfoot Branch. The study area is characterized by mature and mid-successional forest with steep valley slopes. A combination of excessive unmanaged stormwater flows from 22nd Street SE, Suitland Parkway, and other overland flow pathways; as well as highly erodible soils on the site, have contributed to the degradation of Stickfoot Branch.

INTERIOR REGION 1 • NORTH ATLANTIC-APPALACHIAN

CONNECTICUT, DELAWARE, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, KENTUCKY, MAINE, MARYLAND, MASSACHUSETTS,
NEW HAMPSHIRE, NEW JERSEY, NEW YORK, PENNSYLVANIA, RHODE ISLAND, VERMONT,
VIRGINIA, WEST VIRGINIA

Streambank erosion and channel incision have disconnected the stream channel from its floodplain, which causes high energy stream flows within the channel during storm events that result in sediments, and the nutrients contained within such as nitrogen and phosphorus, to be transported downstream to the Anacostia River. Also, kudzu (*Pueraria montana*), a highly invasive, exotic vine species, has proliferated within the floodplain of Stickfoot Branch at the project site and needs to be managed.

Proposed Action

The NPS and DOEE, have identified a proposed approach to restore Stickfoot Branch that involves natural channel design techniques modified for an urban stream system. The proposed restoration design creates a new stream channel that is higher in elevation than the existing channel to reconnect the stream to the floodplain. This approach allows stream flow during storm events to spill out over the floodplain, which reduces the energy from the water within the channel and the erosional forces that cause stream degradation. The existing channel would be used to maintain stream flow during construction but would then be filled in as part of the floodplain. The new channel would be designed using a roughened channel approach that includes a series of rock sills, pools, boulder clusters, and other stream bed material to mimic the appearance and function of a natural stream channel. The rock sills act as grade control structures to prevent the stream channel from downcutting or eroding. It is expected that less than 15 trees with a diameter of 5 inches or greater would be removed to construct the project. A concept diagram of the proposed restoration design is attached to this letter (Figure 2).

Additionally, the proposed design incorporates measures to protect existing sewer system infrastructure that cross underneath the stream channel, as well as modifications to existing storm water pipes, that would be integrated into the stream design. Additionally, a 275 linear foot section of the existing pipe that conveys Stickfoot Branch under 22nd Street SE and into the project site will be removed and replaced with the natural channel design approach described above. After construction is completed, DOEE would stabilize disturbed areas with native vegetation and would replace any trees removed during construction with species and quantities negotiated with NPS. DOEE would also implement an invasive species management program on the site to remove kudzu and prevent the introduction of other invasive plants following construction. It is anticipated that special conditions of permits to be obtained for the project will require DOEE to conduct post-construction monitoring of the success of the project and perform any necessary remedial actions.

Virtual Public Meeting

The DOEE and NPS will be preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the environmental impacts proposed stream restoration project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public participation is vital to the planning process. There are several ways to get involved. The NEPA process will start with a 30-day public scoping period where the NPS and DOEE seek public input regarding issues or concerns associated with implementing the project. Feedback received during scoping will be used to inform refinements to the restoration design.

To provide information about the project, the DOEE and NPS will be hosting a virtual public meeting on February 24, 2021 from 6:30pm-8:00pm online. If you like to participate in the

meeting, please go to <https://stickfoot.eventbrite.com/> and register. Attendees will receive reminder emails in advance of the meeting from Eventbrite. Pre-registration is not required, attendees will be able to register even after the meeting has started.

The meeting will be recorded and will be posted at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/stickfoot> for review at your convenience if you are not able to attend the live meeting. If you do not have access to the internet and would like to listen to the presentation over the phone please use the following phone number and meeting code:

Call in Number: 1-202-860-2110
Access #: 180 130 4451

How to Comment

To provide comments online or get additional information on the proposed project, please visit the NPS planning website at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/stickfoot>. The public is invited to review the proposed strategy and provide comments through March 26, 2021. If you prefer to mail your comments, make sure they are postmarked by March 26, 2021 to receive consideration. Mail comments to the following address:

Superintendent
ATTN: Stickfoot Branch Comments
National Capital Parks – East
1900 Anacostia Drive, SE
Washington, DC 20020

Thank you for your interest and participation in this planning process. We look forward to your comments and appreciate your feedback on the proposed project, which we believe will benefit the Anacostia River watershed. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Mike Commisso, Chief of Resource Management, at michael_commisso@nps.gov at 202-494-6905.

Sincerely,

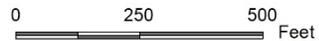


Tara D. Morrison
Superintendent

Enclosures: Study Area Map
Restoration Design Rendering



- Stickfoot Branch Stream Restoration Study Area
- Local Hydrography



Project
**Stickfoot Branch
 Stream Restoration Project**

Figure No.
1

Title
Study Area Map



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 OF ENERGY &
 ENVIRONMENT
 GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

