

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Prospect Park Plants 170 Trees & Shrubs

PROSPECT PARK, Pennsylvania (November 25, 2024) – Over forty volunteers gathered at Moore’s Lake Park (The Hollow) in Prospect Park on Saturday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> for a massive planting of 170 shrubs and trees as part of a restoration effort to enhance the degraded Stoney Creek riparian zone. This was a collaboration by the Borough of Prospect Park, Delaware County Conservation District (DCCD), and Darby Creek Valley Association (DCVA).

The diverse variety of shrub and tree saplings were donated by the Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership backed by the Chesapeake Foundation. Their goal is to plant 10 million trees in Pennsylvania by 2025. Additionally, local business, Maria’s Bakery in Prospect Park donated plenty of tasty fresh baked doughnuts for the hungry yet willing volunteers, which was coupled with hot coffee provided by Borough residents, the Cook family.

This project started when Chris Cook, a Prospect Park resident and DCCD’s Watershed Specialist, reached out to Paul K. Johnson, Prospect Park Councilman about his concerns for water quality in Stoney Creek. Touring Moore’s Lake Park earlier this year Cook highlighted many environmental issues that contribute to Stoney Creek’s impairment status noted on the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection’s 2024 Integrated Report. Johnson also had concerns and wanted to discover solutions, as he learned more and gained resources from the 2024 Delaware County Sustainability Conference.

Through a partnership with the Keystone10 Million Program, DCCD can provide interested municipalities with information and application assistance to obtain free trees and shrub saplings for environmental enhancement projects. With the lack of an Environmental Advisory Council and Shade Tree Commission for assistance, Johnson worked with DCCD to apply on behalf of the borough to get donations of the free saplings. Upon notification that the donation request was honored, DCVA was contacted by Johnson and Cook to request promotional and planting assistance for this riparian buffer restoration project. Cook provided DCCD technical assistance through the development of a planting plan, site layout, and materials management. Prospect Park’s highway department and DCVA helped with site preparation on a cold, rainy, and snowy Friday. The next day on a brisk Saturday morning, over forty volunteers showed up ready to work.

After brief remarks by Johnson and DCVA Operations Manager Kyle Gaumann, Cook presented a quick and informative demonstration of planting these young saplings. Utilizing the tools made available from the Conservation Planting Trailer through DCCD’s involvement in the Southeastern PA Resource Conservation and Development Council, volunteers spread across the park to begin planting. Within 3 hours, all 170 trees shrubs would call Prospect Park home, welcomed by a drink of water and fresh mulch!

Through these diversified partnerships, generous donations, and voluntary actions this incredible project was completed successfully at little to no cost!

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About Delaware County Conservation District – The mission of the Conservation District is to ensure the wise use of Delaware County’s natural resources and to protect and restore the natural environment through the conservation of its soil, water, and related resources. The Conservation District is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of PA, with direction and participation from its Board of Directors, and operates under both state and county guidelines/requirements. The District works with land owners and land users, providing technical assistance and tools that support the management and protection of land and water resources. For more information, please visit [delcocd.org](http://delcocd.org).

About Darby Creek Valley Association – Darby Creek Valley Association is a nonprofit watershed organization dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the Darby Creek watershed and its resources, including water, wildlife, historical sites, floodplains, wetlands, and riparian zones. DCVA works to prevent all forms of pollution in Darby Creek and its tributaries. The conservation approach is achieved by protection, stewardship, restoration, education, and monitoring. For more information, please visit [deva.org](http://deva.org).

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*Figure 1 Delaware County Conservation District (DCCD) Watershed Specialist Chris Cook (Left), Borough Concilman Paul K. Johnson (Center), and Darby Creek Valley Association (DCVA) Operations Manager Kyle Gaumann (Right) celebrate the project's success after the last tree was planted, protected, mulched, and watered!*

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*Figure 2 Over 40 local residents of the Delaware County community showed up throughout the day to support the planting effort, including close friends and family members of DCCD Watershed Specialist Chris Cook and Baruchan Johnson Paul K. Johnson.*

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*Figure 3 A past look at one section of the project site around the time of Hurricane Isais presenting a strong tropical storm to the Southeast Pennsylvania (08/04/2020). Note the invasive Japanese Knotweed along the left streambank*

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*Figure 4 Invasive vegetation mechanically controlled along the lands adjacent the stream by the Borough's Highway Department (07/01/2024).*

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*Figure 5 A look at one section of the project site prepared for plating after Invasive Japanese Knot Weed was mechanically controlled and grass was established to mitigate erosion. Note the holes are prepared by DCVA's Kyle Gaumann after the site had been flagged by DCCD's Watershed Specialist Chris Cook and Borough Concilman Paul K. Johnson (11/22/2024).*

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*Figure 6 Many volunteers with their families and friends planting trees and shrubs (11/23/2024)!*



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*Figure 7 A look at one section of the project site planted with native trees and shrubs after invasive species were controlled. Note spacing of plants are a minimum of 10' to allow for ease of site maintenance until the plants are mature and thereafter as desired (11/25/2024).*

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*Figure 8 DCCD Watershed Specialist and resident of the Borough Chris Cook, using satellite imagery and other resources to develop a planting plan for Moore's Lake (The Hollow). Enjoying the park themselves while growing up in the area, they were mindful to limit the projects potential for recreation conflicts, while accenting the environmental and beautification opportunities.*

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*Figure 9 Volunteers planting young trees and shrubs along the creek with protective tubes to prevent damage from deer, rodents, birds, and lawn mowers. Tubes will be removed once the plants are mature.*

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*Figure 10 Borough Councilman / resident Paul K. Johnson teaching children from a neighboring municipality how to plant a tree, as their chaperonen stands over the group. Emphasizing that the plants could stay in the park long after his time passes, he fostered excitement in the volunteering youth for what the park will eventually look like.*