

Rock Creek Conservation Corps members work together to plant trees as part of a stormwater management project with Audubon Naturalist Society at Woodend Sanctuary and Mansion.

Credit: Katie Schuler

DOING OUR PART

PREPARING A FUTURE GENERATION

Rock Creek Conservation Corps, or "RC3," is a summer youth conservation program that brings high school students into nature in order to restore Rock Creek and its parklands. The program provides a transformative experience to youth from underserved communities; gives these students the opportunity to better understand and steward their local natural environment; and helps them to develop the tools needed to make conservation a career.

2017 PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

- **Four weeks.** Our 4-week July program included 1 training week and 3 weeks of field work.
- **40 crew members.** We doubled our participants and had four crews made up of 10 students between the ages of 15 and 19.
- **Having an impact.** In 2017, crew members removed exotic plants, installed green infrastructure, built trails, and harnessed emerging technologies to enhance community outreach.
- **Partners in conservation.** To reach their goals, RC3 crew members worked with the National Park Service, the Audubon Naturalist Society, and Montgomery County Parks and Recreation.
- **Creating community.** To encourage a culture of stewardship, RC3 crew members were selected from three area high schools east of Rock Creek Park. Theodore Roosevelt, EL Haynes and Capital City Public Charter School.



A 2017 crew member plants native trees as part of a larger stormwater management project. Credit: Katie Schuler

ON THE JOB EDUCATION

Crew members leave the program with an appreciation of Rock Creek and its ecology, the impact that modern life can have on water quality, the relationship of the park to the community, and the importance of maintaining a healthy watershed.

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2017 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

“RC3 was my first job and it was a great experience.

It taught me so much about how Rock Creek is connected to our lives. Through this program I've realized how much humans negatively affect the watershed and how invasive species can really destroy an ecosystem. It inspired me to do my best during my work time and to best help the environment in any way that I can.”



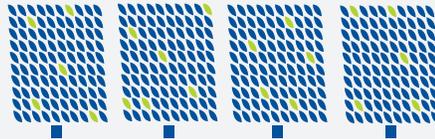
Kyle Ugoeze
EL Haynes Crew
2017



WEED WARRIORS

Carter Baron Amphitheater

RC3 crews removed harmful invasive plants including:



= one bush honeysuckle plant

400 bush honeysuckle plants
(*Lonicera maackii*)

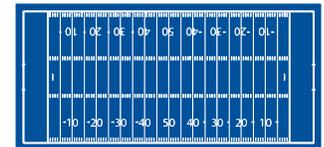
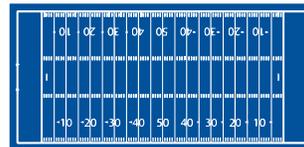


= one full bag

25 bags full of periwinkle
(*Vinca minor*)

Montgomery County Parks

RC3 crews removed **2 acres (about 2 football fields)** of the harmful invasive plants Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), Autumn Olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) and Wineberry (*Rubus phoenicolasius*) along Upper Rock Creek Trail.



One acre is about the size of one football field. So, RC3 cleared two football fields worth of invasive species in 2017!



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

RC3 partnered with Audubon Naturalist Society to install a 1000 square foot stormwater management project adjacent to Rock Creek at Woodend Sanctuary.

“We were able to contribute to forest restoration efforts in the sanctuary, as well as gain context for how certain plants and animals in the area affect Rock Creek.”

- anonymous crew member



TRAIL WORK

RC3 installed 100 feet of trail closure at **Piney Branch by Mount Pleasant** to help recover an area of the slope that is severely eroded.

RC3 crews built a 45 degree back slope, cleared brush, and removed exposed roots along Upper Rock Creek Trail.

Left: Crew members work together to build trails. Photo credit: Katie Schuler.