

Using Brownfields Grants for Watershed Restoration and Revitalization

Camilla Warren
EPA Region 4 Brownfields

Wendy Jackson
Freshwater Land Trust

September 20, 2006
Webcast



Webcast sponsored by EPA's Watershed Academy

1

Overview

- Background
- Applicant Eligibility
- Application Requirements
- General Considerations
- Proposal Organization
- Tips

Brownfields Revitalization Act Subtitle A – Brownfields Program

- Legislative authority for grants
- Expands previous Brownfields grant program
 - cleanup funds provided
 - non-profits eligible applicants for cleanup or RLF subgrants
 - Petroleum sites eligible
 - Makes funds available for technical assistance, training and research
- Authorizes \$200 million for FY 02 thru FY 06
 - includes \$50 million for petroleum sites

*BROWNFIELDS
DEFINITION*

*“Real property, the expansion,
redevelopment,
or reuse of which may be
complicated by the presence
or potential presence of a
hazardous substance,
pollutant, or contaminant.”*



Overall Program Emphasis

- Human health and the environment
- Redevelopment and jobs
- Open Space and Parks
- Rural and Urban
- Local community involvement
- Environmental Justice



Brownfield Grants

- Assessment up to \$200,000 (site-specific up to \$350,000 with waiver)
 - 3 Year Project Period
- Cleanup up to \$200,000 per site
 - 3 Year Project Period
- Job Training up to \$200,000
 - 2 Year Project Period
- Revolving Loan Funds up to \$1 million
 - 5 Year Project Period
- Approximately \$72 million available for 200 grants

What Contaminants May Be Assessed and Cleaned Up?

- ✓ Hazardous Substances
- ✓ Contaminants
- ✓ Pollutants
- ✓ Controlled Substances
- ✓ Mine-Scarred Lands
- ✓ Petroleum Products



Who Is Eligible to Apply?

- ✓ Local Governments
- ✓ Land Clearance Authorities/Quasi-Governmental Entities Under Local Governmental Control
- ✓ State Legislated Government Entities
- ✓ Regional Councils of Government or Group of Local Governments
- ✓ Redevelopment Agency (State Chartered/Sanctioned)
- ✓ States
- ✓ Tribes
- ✓ Nonprofit Organizations (Cleanup Only)



Eligibility Requirements

■ Cleanup Grants

- Must be sole owner & own property by date certain – this grant cycle – date is JUNE 30, 2006 (“own” = Fee Simple Title)
- Phase I completed & Phase II underway

■ Cleanup & RLF Grants

- Must have a 20% Cost Share

Assessment Grants

■ Applicant Limitations

- Limited to a total of \$400,000
 - \$200,000 for hazardous substances
 - \$200,000 for petroleum
 - Up to \$350,000 may be requested for a site-specific waiver
- Site-specific or Community-wide



Assessment Grants (continued)

- Two Community-wide only if one is Hazardous Substance and one is Petroleum
- Two Site-Specific only if one is Hazardous Substance and one is Petroleum
- One Community-wide and One Site-specific proposal only if one is Hazardous Substance and the other is Petroleum
- Separate proposals for Hazardous Substances and Petroleum contamination

Waivers of Funding Limitation

- Only applies to a site-specific assessment proposal
- If request waiver & applicant is planning to expend funding on site previously awarded funding in a community-wide or site-specific grant -
 - must include such funding in calculating total amount expended on site, &
 - request may not exceed \$350,000 on site subject to waiver

Assessment Grant - Activities

- Property and Site Inventories
- Environmental Site Assessments
 - Phase I/II ESAs
- Public Outreach and Involvement
- Cleanup Planning
- Redevelopment Planning
- 10% for Monitoring Public Health

Cleanup Grants

- Applicant can apply for up to five sites - \$200,000 each
- Separate proposal for each site
- Applicant must be sole owner & own property no later than 6/30/05 or not eligible for funding
- ASTM Phase I Report completed & minimum of Phase II Assessment underway or complete
- 20% cost share

Revolving Loan Fund Grants

Up to \$1,000,000

- Certain Federal Cleanup Requirements Apply to All Cleanup Activities
 - (e.g. Community Notice)
- 20% Cost Share
 - Money, labor, material or services
 - Eligible and allowable costs
- Coalitions may apply

Revolving Loan Fund Grants

- Up to 40% of RLF Funds May Be Used for Direct Cleanup
 - Subgrants to Eligible Entities and Nonprofits
 - Subgrantee must own the property
- 60% must be used for loans
 - Applicant can loan to itself

16

Eligible Borrowers for RLF

- A Site Owner
- Site Developer
- Nonprofit Organization

Proposal Guidelines for Brownfields Assessment, RLF, and Cleanup Grants

- Found on our website:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/applicat.htm>
- All details provided for potential applicants
- So if you want the money.....

Early Considerations for Your Proposal

- Requires Big Picture Thinking
 - Can you describe a Vision for long term?
 - What happens after the assessment?
 - Do you have other resources for the other steps?
- Very competitive
- Winning proposals require time and thought

The Proposal

- Separate proposal for each Grant Type (assessment, cleanup or RLF)
- Address ALL Threshold & Ranking Criteria
- Each proposal must be complete (may require repetition between multiple proposals)
- 17 page limit
 - 2 page limit for cover letter
 - 15 page limit for proposal responses
 - minimal attachments
- Organize application according to Guidelines

20

Proposal Elements

- Cover letter – 2 pages
- Applicant information
- Threshold: Pass or Fail
- Ranking: Evaluated on a point system by a national panel (not by Region 4)
- State Letter(s)

21

Proposal - Threshold Criteria (Assessment, Cleanup & RLF)

- Applicant Eligibility
- Community Notification
- State Acknowledgement Letter
- Site Eligibility & Property Ownership Eligibility
- State Petroleum Determination letter, if applicable
- May not substitute another site in a Site-specific proposal where subject site is determined ineligible

22

Questions?

Petroleum Determination Letter

- Threshold requirement
- Request from State early
- Provide necessary information
- Site-specific detail
 - Current and immediate past owner of site
 - Description of site
 - Acquisition description
 - When
 - What method

Petroleum Determination Letter (continued)

- Provide site-specific detail (continued)
 - Your Liability to the site
 - Knowledge of its risk (Low)
 - Judgments, Orders or Third Party suits?
 - Subject to RCRA?
 - Financial Viability of Responsible Parties

Threshold Criteria (Cleanup and RLF Applications)

- Cleanup Authority and Oversight Structure
- 20% Cost Share (or petition for a Hardship Waiver)
- Legal Authority to Manage RLF (RLF only)

Threshold 'Lessons Learned'

- Investigate, Investigate, and Investigate
 - Look at Environmental Databases
 - Know Who Owns Site
 - Know Site History
- Give State Enough Time to Provide Letters
- Do Everything Suggested for Community Notification
 - Then Do More - Attach Documentation
- Follow Guideline Instructions

27

Ranking Criteria

- Note Points assigned - unless otherwise noted, sub-questions/sub-items under each criterion will have equal weight
- Emphasis on criteria with greater points

20 to 24 Point Ranking Criteria

- Reduction of Threats to Human Health and the Environment
 - 20 points for Assessment
 - 21 points for Cleanup and RLF
- Business Plan for RLF Loans and Subgrants
 - 24 points

16 Pt RANKING CRITERIA

- Community Involvement
 - Early Relationship Building
 - Tools used (meetings, charettes, Internet)
 - Community Based group involvement
 - Citizen advisory committees, task forces, etc

15 Pt RANKING CRITERIA

- Community Need
 - Compare demographics to state/national
 - Think sensitive populations (children/elderly)

- Programmatic Capability
 - Different weights for sub-questions
 - Some sub-questions only applicable to previous recipients of Brownfields Grants
 - Includes description of Management Structure for RLF

10 to 12 Pt RANKING CRITERIA

- Sustainable Reuse of Brownfields
 - 12 points
 - Address all 6 items
- Leveraging Additional Resources
 - 12 points for RLF grants
 - 10 points for Assessment & Cleanup
 - Project realistic costs
 - Explain funds
- Budget
 - 10 points
 - Explain costs in narrative

32

5 to 6 Pt RANKING CRITERIA

- Site Selection Process
 - 6 points
 - Assessment only
- Creation and/or Preservation of Greenspace/Open Space or Nonprofit Purpose
 - 5 points

Leveraging Criteria – Some Examples

- Local or State incentives
 - Tax Incentives/TIFs/Brownfield job bonuses
- EDA – Building demolition
- Enterprise Community funds

Planning Considerations

- Focus On Target Areas – Master Plans, EZs Main Street Programs
- Consider Your Project “Cradle to Graduation”
- Identify Key Partners and involve them early
- Identify Resources
- Regional Approaches – Consider How Your Plan Fits With Your Surrounding Area (Coalitions/Planning Councils May Apply)

More Considerations

- Decide if you want the 10% health monitoring
 - only local governments
 - call Health Department/College
 - studies/exposures?



Requirements to Remember

- Public Notification
 - Proposal available for Public Comment
- Favorable to have all assessment complete
 - For cleanup grants only
- Investigate Site Ownership, Access and Eligibility Issues Early
 - assessment and cleanup only

And....

- State letters
 - One for Acknowledgement
 - One for Petroleum
- Community Reference checks by EPA

Common Weaknesses

- Does not address all criteria
- Generic responses
 - Not specific to site or project
- Unclear site ownership issues
- Weak responses
 - i.e. Reduction of Threats and Sustainable Reuse criteria

Common Strengths

- Strong Clear Vision
- Specific End Goals
- Reached out to other organizations (Govt., Public, and non-profits, etc.)
- Formed and/or utilized Community Task Force(s)
- Detailed without generalities

40

Suggestions for Better Proposals

- Address each and every ranking criteria
 - Address each question within criterion
- Create a plan not just a proposal
- Stick to specifics of project not broad principals
- Contact recent grant award recipients for their experiences or assistance

Application Package

Submittal:

- US Postal Service or commercial delivery service
 - Postmarked by December 14, 2005, 5:00 p.m. EST
 - Send original to EPA contractor
 - Send complete copy to EPA Region 4

- Electronically through www.grants.gov
 - Received by 5:00 p.m. EDT on December 14, 2005
 - Refer to special instructions in Appendix 5 for submittal – registration process

Grant Alternative: EPA's Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) Program

- Eligible entities: states, tribes, and municipalities. Targets especially those without EPA Brownfields Assessment grants. TBAs help minimize the uncertainties of contamination.
- Region 4 awards 3-4 TBAs per year on an application basis; they are less than \$100,000 each; at no-cost to eligible party.
- Application process is outlined on:
www.epa.gov/region4/waste/bf/tbaapplic.pdf





Brownfields National Homepage
www.epa.gov/brownfields

EPA Region 4
www.epa.gov/region4/waste/bf/index.htm



- Atlanta & Alabama Project Manager
 - Camilla Warren
 - 404-562-8519
- Revolving Loan Fund Grant Program
 - Wanda Jennings
 - 404-562-8682
- Job Training Grant Program
 - Kathleen Curry
 - 404-562-8660

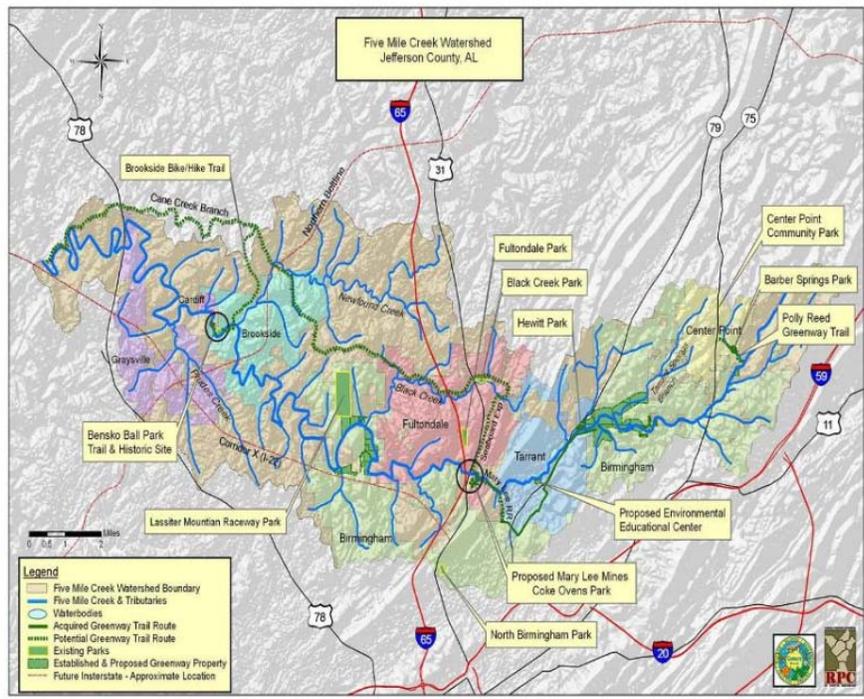
Questions?



Case Study

Black Warrior-Cahaba Rivers Land Trust:
Five Mile Creek Project

Wendy Jackson







50





4-9-02

Hope for 'Creosote Creek'



NEWS STAFF/HAL YEAGER

Iron and other substances pollute Five Mile Creek, which in places shows no signs of life. But state environmental officials are debating today requiring that the stream be cleaned up to the level that it is habitable by fish and wildlife.

ADEM proposes cleanup for polluted Five Mile

By KATHERINE BOUMA
News staff writer

Dogs, neighbors remember, never liked Five Mile Creek. "It would cure the mange," recalls David Tidwell, who grew up along the creek in the 1950s and '60s. "It must have hurt the dogs, but it cured the mange." He's not the only one who recalls when the creek was so toxic that its best use was killing parasites. Neighbors still call Five Mile "Creosote Creek" for the tangy chemical smell rising off the water. But today, nearly 30 years after the passage of the U.S. Clean Water Act, the state environmental agency proposes to mandate a cleanup of Five Mile Creek that would make it habitable for fish and wildlife. "It's a great victory for water quality," said Brad McClain, Alabama Rivers Alliance executive director. "It's one of the most significant rule changes I've seen in several years in terms of restoring a de-



Five Mile Creek changes from green to orange to brown because of pollution as it flows through northern Birmingham.

graded stream from the impacts of toxic pollution." In 1972, Congress approved the Clean Water Act with the goal that all U.S. waters would be fishable and swimmable by 1987. That hasn't happened. But today, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management hopes to take another step toward that goal,

asking its board to remove the last of the streams still listed under the "agriculture and industry" classification, which allows waters to be so polluted they are unsuitable for aquatic life or recreation. Village Creek is also proposed for an upgrade, to a slightly looser, newly created category called "limited warmwater fishery." A part of Valley Creek also is proposed for a change to "fish and wildlife." If the Environmental Management Commission approves the change in Five Mile Creek's status today, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management would change the permits of the three primary polluters on the stream, Sloss Industries, ABC Coke, and Jefferson County's wastewater plants. ABC Coke is concerned that the change would cost \$6 million to get the cyanide out of its discharges, said Mark

► See Creek, Page 6C







\$140,000 ADEM grant to impact Tarrant area

By JENNIFER MURPHREE
News staff writer

A \$140,000 Brownfield grant from the Alabama Department of Environmental Management may help develop Tarrant's proposed multiuse recreational area along Five Mile Creek.

Tarrant was awarded the grant in late 2001, but the money only recently became available and will be put to use in upcoming weeks.

Tarrant city officials met last week with Jymalyn Redmond, chief of site assessment for ADEM, and Jefferson County Commissioner Bettye Fine Collins. The group discussed possible expansion of the park and recreational

area to be built where Five Mile Creek flooded Mobile Home Estates in April 2000.

The 10-acre site was declared a disaster area, and the city was awarded \$1.4 million in grant money by FEMA in late 2001. After former residents were relocated and the city acquired the land, plans were made to turn the attractive but flood-prone property into a park and recreational complex.

Tarrant Fire Chief C.W. "Billy" Hewitt later applied for a state Brownfield grant from ADEM.

Brownfield properties are abandoned, idle or underused industrial and commercial facilities where real or perceived environmental contamination is

a barrier to redevelopment.

If a city is awarded the grant, the burden of environmental testing prior to development is lifted off the city. State money and equipment are used to determine if the property is safe, which encourages development in areas many businesses or investors might otherwise avoid.

ADEM's Redmond said environmental testing of three sites in Tarrant will begin in about two weeks. The sites are city property adjacent to the Five-Mile Creek land that were not included in the original park plans. Preliminary soil tests of the park site and adjacent land look positive, meaning little or no contamination has occurred and the once-

industrialized land and surrounding water can be used as community recreational property.

Tarrant's Hewitt said if testing proves the land suitable for recreational use, park plans would expand into a two-mile greenway that would follow the natural path of Five-Mile Creek, snaking under U.S. 79 and ending at Tarrant Athletic Complex off Clow Road.

"We think this is what we've been looking for and needing in this city for so long," Hewitt said. "We've got these resources and land that aren't doing anyone any good."

Jefferson County Commissioner Collins supports Hewitt's ideas and is pushing the commission to allocate

some of its \$30 million Greenway Fund to Tarrant for the project.

City officials are also in the process of negotiating the sale or acquisition of an 11-acre and 9-acre lake and adjoining land owned by Drummond Oil Co. The property is a former home to a fertilizer plant and has been vacant for almost 50 years. If the city acquires the land, Redmond said, another Brownfield grant would more than likely be in the picture to pay for testing of the area.

"This is a well organized and thorough plan," she said. "From what I see so far, Tarrant could become a model city for Brownfield redevelopment."



NEWS STAFF/PHILIP BARR

Wendy Allen, executive director of the Black Warrior-Cahaba Rivers Land Trust, looks for snails under rocks on a recent visit to Five Mile Creek in Tarrant where a new park is being built.

In upstream effort, cities unite for picturesque, protective plan

By KATHERINE BOUMA
News staff writer

No question about it, Five Mile Creek has a bad reputation. For decades, local residents have called it Creosote Creek for the stinky, chemical smell that rises from it. State inspectors have found it littered with dead fish and crayfish near the discharge pipe of one of the creek's chronic polluters. All in all, it's not a pretty picture.

But it could be, argue conservationists and civic leaders up and down the creek. They've come up with a plan to turn the stream with a reputation as little more than a pollution pit into a community amenity.

In an alliance conservationists say is unique in Alabama, Jefferson County and all the cities on Five Mile Creek have signed a memorandum of agreement to protect the stream by creating a greenway along its banks, buffering it from de-

velopment to come.

"Thirty years from now I think we're going to look back and say, 'Wow,' because 30 years from now I think north Jefferson County is going to look a lot different," said Wendy Allen, executive director of the Black Warrior-Cahaba Rivers Land Trust.

Planners say that when Corridor X is completed in 2016 and the Northern

See Creek, Page 10A

Land deal to guard waterway

Land trust wants 588 acres on Five Mile Creek

By KATHERINE BOUMA
News staff writer

Nearly 600 acres along Five Mile Creek will be used to protect miles of the beleaguered waterway under a plan informally agreed upon Wednesday.

The Birmingham Water Works Board and a Jefferson County land preserve group, the Black Warrior-Cahaba Rivers Land Trust, said they intend for the purchase price to be set by an independent appraiser.

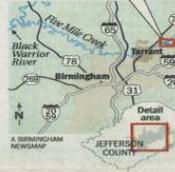
When the land was last appraised in 1999, it was worth about \$1 million, said Randy Chaffin, assistant general manager of the Water Works.

Final approval by boards of both organizations is expected following the appraisal.

"We've had a number of offers to buy this piece of property, a number of offers to clear-cut this piece of property, a number of offers to develop this piece of property," said Miles Creel, chairman of the water board's real estate committee. "I'm so glad the water board had the courage and insight to keep this piece of property and preserve it."

The Water Works has owned the land since 1896, when the city of Birmingham first laid

Five Mile Creek
Setting aside 588 acres of land would protect nearly five miles of the polluted creek.



plans to draw drinking water from Five Mile Creek. The land has been preserved and is a pristine forest of primarily hardwoods, officials said.

"We felt like this piece of land

► See Land, Page 2A

INSIDE

► Part of Turkey Creek becomes nature preserve / 3B



From News

Greenway goal

2-5-03

Federal grant lays groundwork for Five Mile Creek

Things just keep looking up for Five Mile Creek.

First, after quite a political brawl, the state Environmental Management Commission set more stringent pollution standards to upgrade the creek's environmental quality.

The new guidelines are supposed to make the creek suitable for fishing and swimming.

Now, a proposed greenway along the creek has gotten a \$500,000 shot in the arm. The federal grant should help area leaders turn the waterway into a recreational asset in north Jefferson County.

The county and cities along Five Mile envision a 25-mile stretch — extending from the creek's headwaters to where it meets with Locust Fork — that could be biked, hiked or canoed. The grant is expected to be used in part to develop a master plan.

The plan is important if individual cities, planning agencies and other entities are to develop a workable network of parks and trails for area residents to enjoy. But the intent goes beyond recreation. Part of the project's goals is to form a buffer of land to protect the creek from development and pollution. That's equally

important.

An ongoing challenge will be buying the land. The Black Warrior-Caha Rivers Land Trust already has acquired 588 acres for the project, but there are no guarantees that other land will be available.

Still, area officials are laying the right groundwork, and they deserve credit for signing on to this worthwhile project. Tarrant got the ball rolling after buying out a flood-prone trailer park near Five Mile Creek's headwaters and converting it into a 13-acre park. Since then, Jefferson County and all the cities along the creek have signed an agreement to try to complete the greenway, with help from the Regional Planning Commission.

The project is a good example of what is possible when leaders develop the right kind of vision and work together for the good of the entire community. Remember, this is one of the dirtiest waterways in the state. But that didn't stop area leaders from seeing what it could become, with the right investment.

Let's hope this \$500,000 grant will allow them to start turning their far-sighted vision into a reality.

October 8th, 2004



FIVE MILE CREEK CURRENTS

Five Mile Creek Greenway Partnership

The Bi-Monthly Newsletter for the restoration and preservation of Five Mile Creek

Volume 1, Issue 1

First Ever Cleanup on Five Mile Creek Huge Success

On August 28th, 2004, the Five Mile Creek Greenway Partnership and the Alabama Power Service Organization (Magic City Chapter) held the first ever community cleanup on Five Mile Creek in the town of Brookside. With almost 200 volunteers and 15 sponsors, the cleanup pulled 14 tons of "trees, tin, and timber" out of the creek. Much of the large debris in the creek was the result of the devastating 2003 flood in Brookside. The first of what will be a series of Five Mile Creek Cleanups, the event aimed to improve the environment along the creek and raise awareness of the proposed Five Mile Creek Greenway. Thanks to Jefferson County and the cleanup, Brookside now has two new permanent canoe launches and a beautiful spot to start up a recreational greenway.



(Photo by Nelson Brinker, Back Water Riverkeeper)



Thanks to our hard-working volunteers, the cleanup was able to pull much of the 2003 flood debris out of Five Mile Creek. (Photo by Nelson Brinker)

Volunteers from local schools, governments, nonprofit agencies, and communities spent a hot three hours pulling out tire after tire, and even a few large appliances. Canoe-loads of trash were hauled to dumpsters, as volunteers waded up to their waists to pull out everything they could. The youngest volunteers were taught about the "good bugs" and the "bad bugs" by Alabama Water Watch, inspiring a new generation of Five Mile Creek stewards. At the end of the day, everyone enjoyed a hot dog lunch and a break from the heat. Thanks to our amazing volunteers and sponsors, the first ever clean-up of Five Mile Creek was a wonderful success, and will be a challenge to improve upon with the second ever Five Mile Creek Clean-up, tentatively scheduled for May 21st 2004.

Inside this issue:

Alabama Water Watch Trains Citizens to Protect Local Waterways	2
What is the Five Mile Creek Greenway Partnership?	2
Cleaning Up Brewfields Along Five Mile Creek	3
Five Mile Minutes:	4
• Outdoor Classroom for Huffman High	
• Cahaba River Study of "Steampunk"	
• Arce Revisited Tell History of Five Mile Creek	
Watershed Resources Update	5
Upcoming Events	6
Thank You Sponsors!	7
OSM/STETA Watershed Development Team	8



Mystery history of Five Mile Creek



NEWS PHOTO/STEVE BARNETT

Left: Samford University professor Ken Kirby overlooks the creek from a Futordale bridge. To his left was the Mary Lee Mine #1 and in the distance, the old Lewisburg School site and ballfields.

Below left: The late Lawson Corley, a specialist in Indian lore, whose story about the naming of Five Mile Creek found its way into an oral history of the region.

Below: How the creek got its name, according to some sources: The distance pioneers had to drive their wagons from a watering hole to the Ruhama boarding school.



A BIRMINGHAM NEWSMAP

Oral histories unearthing name's origin

By LIZ ELLABY
News staff writer

Agencies working together since 2002 to protect a Jefferson County stream confronted a troubling question: How did the 28-mile waterway come to be known as Five Mile Creek?

This fall, Samford Professor Ken Kirby offered a possible answer.

According to Kirby's source, the name refers to the distance from a pioneer-era creek crossing in Center Point



FILE

to the old Ruhama Academy boarding school, in what is now South East Lake. The log cabin school, closed during the Civil War, was built at a site on Second Avenue South and 80th Street, in Birmingham.

Kirby got his story from Catherine Hodges, 82, of Center Point, who is one of 12 people interviewed for an oral

history project about the creek — and the closest Kirby has come to a first-hand source.

"Families back then prized schooling and would go to considerable lengths to get their children an education," said Hodges. "When they got to the creek to water their horses, they knew the journey was almost over."

Hodges, local historian and member of the Five Mile Presbyterian Church, said she got the story from the late Lawson Corley, an East Lake resident steeped in local Indian lore.

The watering hole Corley described

is a spring at Spring Lake.

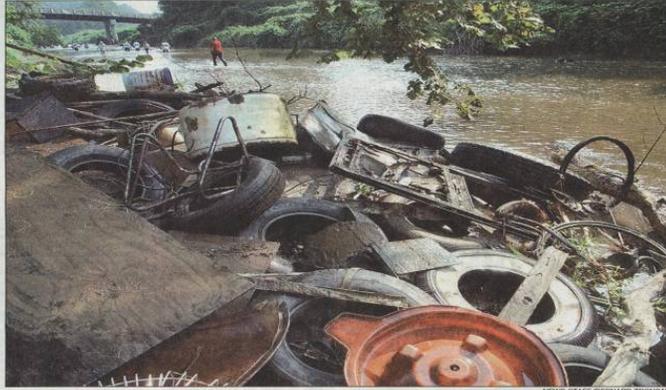
Hodges said she clocked the distance from the spring to the Ruhama site in her car — not by overland wagon — and still found it to be exactly five miles.

Corley died in 2002, but his story did not. Kirby is collecting his and other histories of Five Mile Creek, which flows from Center Point across Jefferson County through six other cities before emptying into the Black Warrior River.

A report on Kirby's work appeared in this

63

► See Creek, Page 7W



NEWS STAFF/BERNARD TRONCALE

Volunteers pulled a stack of tires, plywood and other debris onto the banks of Five Mile Creek during a cleanup Saturday in Brookside.

Five Mile Creek gets community cleanup

By CHARLES J. DEAN
News staff writer

Dennis Cordell leaned on the tailgate of a pickup truck, laboring to towel off the muddy brown water of Five Mile Creek and his own sweat. Cordell, a Brookside City Council member, had just walked out of the muddy creek where he and several hundred volunteers spent Saturday morning wading and walking the banks collecting all manner of trash.

"You name it, I think you could find it in that creek," Cordell said. "We've pulled out sheets of tin, doors, a dog house and tires, lots and lots of tires. Downstream, I heard somebody found a refrigerator," a winded Cordell added.

Up and down the stream in and around Brookside Saturday, the volunteers, many with their children, troled for trash. It was part of the first-ever community cleanup of Five Mile Creek.



NEWS STAFF/BERNARD TRONCALE

Richard Brennan of Tarrant removes a tire Saturday from Five Mile Creek in Brookside.

► See **Creek**, Page 24A

Tarrant 'Park-Raising' set at Five Mile Creek

City plans 16-acre park
at former 'Creosote Creek'
with communities' help

By PATRICK HICKERSON
News staff writer

The star of the Five Mile Creek Greenway in Tarrant is tucked away like a Hollywood celebrity in a Manhattan apartment.

After a 10-minute walk from the Alabama 79 entrance, up a rise, the creek flows about 20 feet wide. It trickles a little, shrouded in shadows by flowering

willows and bowing sycamores.

"Creosote Creek" has come a long way.

Volunteers on Saturday will begin transforming the 16-acre site at the northern edge of Tarrant into the first park, called Tarrant Community Park, along the planned 28-mile Five Mile Creek Greenway.

"The vision is to go west to Locust Fork in Graysville," Tarrant Fire Chief Billy Hewitt said.

Organizers are calling Saturday's event a "Park-Raising," likening it to the

► See Five Mile, Page 5C



NEWS STAFF/JERRY A

Libba Vaughan, Tarrant Fire Chief Billy Hewitt and Tarrant Mayor Loxcil Tuck visit Five Mile Creek where it runs alongside a 16-acre site that will be the first park along the planned Five Mile Creek Greenway.



NEWS STAFF/ANNA STELTER

Volunteers and conservation groups cleaned up an area along Five Mile Creek to help turn a former mobile home park into a recreational park. Here Huel Evans, Kandice Mattingly, 11, and J.R. Mattingly, 9, sit in a canoe full of trash and debris.

Tarrant event builds first park in 28-mile greenway

By PATRICK WICKERSON
News Staff writer

The park was barely raised in Tarrant Saturday afternoon before someone started pedaling a bicycle along the figure-eight path.

More than 200 volunteers turned out for a "park-raising" along Alabama 79 by planting wildflowers, removing trash and doing other chores.

Tarrant Mayor Loyell Tuck said the park should be open in a few weeks.

In a bit of a surprise, the park was dedicated as "Chief William C. 'Billy' Hewitt Park," honoring Tarrant's first chief, who has been a central figure in getting the park established.

"It's not about me," Hewitt said. "It's about bringing a community together."

The park is viewed as a facet in the planned 28-mile Five Mile Creek Greenway that ends at Locust Fork.

The Five Mile Creek Partnership includes the Black Warrior Cahaba Rivers Land Trust, Jefferson County, Birmingham, Brookside, Center Point, Fulondale, Grayville and Tarrant.

The 16-acre park previously was a mobile-home community that housed frequently. Visitors Saturday passed through its old wooden gate.

Lisa Ham, who lives in nearby Robinwood, spent most of the morning planting wildflowers, spreading hay and picking up rocks.

Since it's a 10-minute walk from her house, Isom said she felt an obligation to help. "It's so convenient," Isom said. "We can walk here."

Hoss LaPorte, a 15-year-old who attends Oak Mountain High School, recanted planting grass and other trees.

"Once it all grows, it'll probably look good."

Playground equipment and pavilions are expected to arrive before the end of June.

Other volunteers helped clean debris from Five Mile Creek, which was once known as "Crenshaw Creek" for its pungent odor and reputation as a dump for trash.

Wendy Jackson, Black Warrior Cahaba Rivers Land Trust executive director, recalled a child about 5 or 6 years old boasting about pulling a toilet out of the creek.

Many who attended called the Tarrant park the first part in a necklace of parks stretching along Five Mile Creek.

The Land Trust acquired 588 acres upstream of the park that includes wetlands that feed the creek. "It's an urban park with access to a nature preserve," Jackson said. "So it's the best of both worlds."

E-MAIL: pwicker@ohannusa.com





68



Tarrant Community Park

BWSC BARGE
WAGGONER
SUMNER &
CANNON, INC.
69

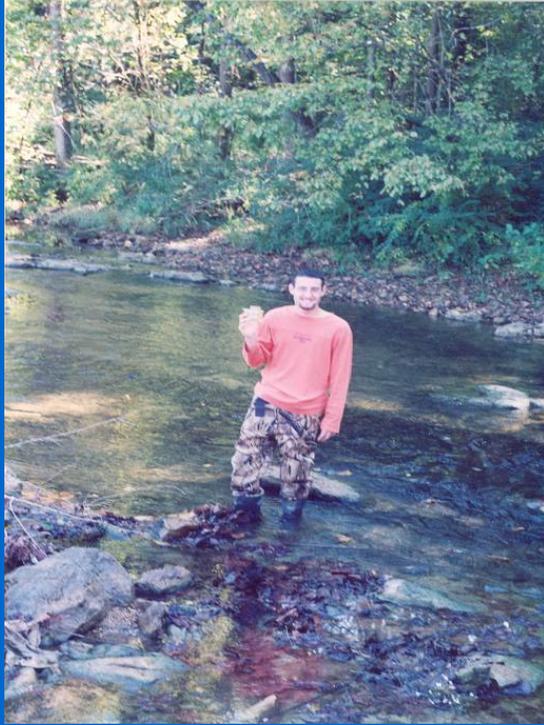


70









OCT 23 - 2002

Tarrant may get grant for greenway project

By JENNIFER MURPHREE
News staff writer

Tarrant officials believe they are close to receiving a \$100,000 National Park Service grant after getting a letter of conditional reward from Gov. Don Siegelman, endorsing and approving the grant request.

The Alabama Department of Economics and Community Affairs would award the grant. Another grant, for \$1,000, has been given to the city by the Kodak National Greenway Project.

ADECA representatives said Tarrant should receive more details on the grant by the end of this month.

Tarrant's proposed park and greenway project on Alabama 79 is a 10-acre site declared a disaster area in 2001.

Residents were evacuated from the former mobile-home park, and the first \$1.4 million FEMA grant came to the city in late 2001. The money jump-

started the proposed park site's cleanup and aroused citizens' interest in the project.

So far, environmental testing has found the land suitable for recreational use.

"This money will go a long way in pushing this plan into fruition," said Tarrant Fire Chief Billy Hewitt, who has written federal and state grant requests for the project.

Mayor Raymond Phillips said, "We think this proves the state will stay behind this project until it's done. Because we know it will take a lot more money, work and cooperation from the community and all the help we can get from the state."

City officials are negotiating with Drummond Oil Co. about acquiring an 11-acre site and a 9-acre lake which are owned by Drummond and would add to the 10-acre park land already acquired.

B'ham News
Mon. July 26, 04

Jeffco could be targeted for system of greenways



NEWS STAFF/HAL YEAGER



Wildflowers and wildlife can be seen along the Shades Creek greenway in Homewood, a project that began six years ago

Long-dormant plan resurrected; group set to build parks

By **KATHERINE BOUMA**
News staff writer

A confluence of natural disasters, illegal pollution and voluntary donations may bring a system of greenways throughout Jefferson County.

"All the ingredients are here," said Wendy Allen Jackson, executive director of the Black Warrior-Cahaba Rivers Land Trust. "We could become the premier park and recreation system and become a mecca for the outdoors."

Dave Atkisson, president of the Birmingham Regional Chamber of Commerce, agrees. But first, he said, Birmingham has to catch up with cities that have been building bike trails, jogging paths and other "linear parks" for decades.

"The advantage Birmingham has is that it's a naturally beautiful topography," Atkisson said.

The Land Trust has plans to build a series of linear parks and connect greenways along the significant waterways in the area: the Cahaba River, Shades Creek, Village

► See **Greenways**, Page **2A**



Tarrant Pedestrian Trail

2006-TA-0200

Jefferson County

A 3.9 mile long trail connecting
residential neighborhoods and schools
with Hewitt Park

Architectural Revitalization

■ Retail revitalization on Ford Street





The Commercial District

83

Ford Street: *The Pedestrian Experience*













Questions?



90

Webcast Evaluation Form:

www.clu-in.org/conf/tio/owbfgrants/feedback.cfm

Webcast Additional Resources:

www.clu-in.org/conf/tio/owbfgrants/resource.cfm