

STORMWATER BMP SITES IN PAXTON CREEK WATERSHED

BMP Type: Farm Show Vegetated Swale



Farm Show Vegetated Swale

Name and Location: This vegetated swale is located alongside the northern edge of the north parking area of the PA Farm Show Complex and Expo Center, adjacent to Wildwood Park Drive (formerly Industrial Road), Harrisburg

Project Site Number and BMP Type Code: 2J

GPS Coordinates: Lat N40.29088 degrees, Long W76.88205 degrees

Site Features: This vegetated swale is a collection & transport area for stormwater drainage from the north parking lot and 3 nearby roads. The unabsorbed, (un-infiltrated) drainage joins main stem Paxton Creek, as the creek flows southward near entrance 1 at Harrisburg Area Community College. This vegetated swale is a BMP by circumstance. It is essentially a 15-foot wide drainage ravine with mostly dense vegetation, once dominated by Narrow Leaf Cattail and Purple Loosestrife. The vegetation and soils serve important functions: stormwater absorption, runoff cooling, and partial pollutant removal during growing seasons. However, the drainage slopes (banks of the waterway) were managed mainly with regard to aesthetics and custom, rather than stormwater management effectiveness; the upper parts of the banks were mowed and mulched, rather than allowed to keep a denser, more messy (natural) appearance. Not today. Seedlings and samplings on the slopes further resist surface stormwater flows, enhance pollutant removal, and erode less into the swale. Expected pollutant removals in fully functioning vegetative swales are approximately: total suspended solids (mainly dirt), 50%; total phosphorus, 50%; nitrate, 20%. The pollutant removal efficiency varies by season (greater removal in spring and summer), and by swale condition (declines as vegetation dies, is smothered, and/or soils voids clog).

Site Directions: The BMP swale runs alongside Wildwood Park Drive for about 200 m, except for the northern entrance/exit to/from the north parking area of the PA Farm Show. An end of the swale is at the intersection of Cameron Street, Elmerton Avenue, and Wildwood Park Drive (formerly known as Industrial Road), where traffic is busy. Parking is possible in the Farm Show lot (fees may be required on event days), and on the dirt shoulders of Cameron Street and Wildwood Park Drive, but due to heavy traffic the latter are hazardous for pedestrians.