

## **Project Summary: Bellwood Preserve Riparian Buffer Restoration**

**Grantee: Heritage Conservancy**  
**Growing Greener Document # C990002454**  
**Project completed December 2023**

**Problem:** The Bellwood Preserve Riparian sought to alleviate some of the environmental degradations Mill Creek is experiencing including storm-water runoff, stream bank stabilization and thermal pollution abatement.

**Project Goals and Practices:** To plant 140 trees and 60 native shrubs with tree shelters in order to restore degraded stream banks along Mill Creek (a tributary to the Neshaminy Creek) on Heritage Conservancy's Bellwood Preserve and to help stabilize approximately 900' of riparian corridor. Additional goals included invasive species removal, caging 100 various naturally regenerating seedlings (while tracking seedlings' survivability rate and comparing with planted nursery stock to determine which is more successful), and replace any trees or shrubs that did not survive were also planned portions of the project.

Heritage Conservancy was able to restore the Bellwood Preserve's Mill Creek stream bank by removing over an acre of invasive species and planting 254 native trees and shrubs along with protecting 100 naturally regenerating trees and shrubs from deer. Heritage Conservancy was able to plant more trees and shrubs than originally planned. This increased the length of restored stream bank to roughly 1,250 feet with an average width of 50 feet. Planted species included swamp white oak, pin oak, hackberry, musclewood, and honey locust.

**Project Partners:** Bucks County Conservation District, Master Watershed Stewards, Cooks Creek Watershed Association, PA Fish and Boat Commission

**Pollutant Load Reductions:** The trees and shrubs planted along Mill Creek will help to shade the stream, reducing thermal pollution and allowing for better water quality and habitat for aquatic organisms.

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### **Project Pictures**



Before (left): Undercut banks along Mill Creek show the amount of erosion that was occurring.

After (right): Downstream tree planting along Mill Creek after knotweed removal with a wood duck nest box.