



NEWS RELEASE

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Muddy Branch Alliance to Lead “Lands Green, Waters Clean” Initiative

Local Nonprofit Taking Over Izaak Walton League Program To Improve Water Quality in Montgomery County

Gaithersburg, MD – Our country has made great progress improving water quality in local streams and rivers. However, our pollution problems have not been solved – they have evolved. The greatest threat to clean water today is polluted runoff from farm fields, parking lots, industrial sites, and backyards across the state. The Muddy Branch Alliance is tackling water pollution in Montgomery County by launching the next generation of the “Lands Green, Waters Clean” initiative.

“Lands Green, Waters Clean” focuses on helping homeowners reduce runoff from their yards, driveways, and houses. Homeowners can take simple steps to treat the rain and snow melt running off their property and reduce the amount of pesticides, fertilizers, and pet waste that enter our waterways, which protects water quality, improves habitat for birds and fish, and makes streams safer for families. A common approach – known as conservation landscaping – is to remove small areas of turf grass, which does not effectively absorb water during heavy rains, and replace it with more permeable soil and native plants, shrubs, and trees. These projects can make yards beautiful *and* help the environment.

The Izaak Walton League of America launched “Lands Green, Waters Clean” in 2012 to address the everyday pollution most people don’t recognize: runoff from yards and other residential areas. Through this initiative, the League evaluated 67 yards and installed conservation landscaping at more than 20 homes, transforming a combined 20 acres of turf grass into water-retaining landscapes. And the homeowners are working to educate their neighbors about clean water in the community



The Muddy Branch Alliance is now taking leadership of the “Lands Green, Waters Clean” initiative, continuing the work started by the League. “The Muddy Branch Alliance has been a partner in this effort since the very beginning and is well-positioned to lead it going forward,” says Scott Kovarovics, Izaak Walton League Executive Director. “The Alliance is a proven leader on projects that improve water quality, address invasive plants, and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the Muddy Branch watershed.”

“The Muddy Branch Alliance is committed to improving local water quality, which affects drinking water sources and the health of the Chesapeake Bay,” says Tracy Rouleau, Muddy Branch Alliance Board President. “We are excited to expand the footprint of this program and help homeowners establish gardens that attract birds and butterflies *and* keep our waters safe and

clean. Homeowners can also save money on their tax bills through credits and rebates – a win-win for homeowners and the environment!”

“The League is proud to have developed and led this initiative, and we are equally excited to transition leadership to the Muddy Branch Alliance,” Kovarovics says. “Homeowners can play a critical part in improving water quality. And it doesn’t hurt that these solutions look great too!”

For more information about the “Lands Green, Waters Clean” initiative and efforts to keep Montgomery County streams safe and clean, visit <https://muddybranch.org/get-involved/lands-green-water-clean> or contact Tracy Rouleau, Muddy Branch Alliance Board President, at muddybranchalliance@gmail.com.