

## Ellicott City– Soak It Up Campaign

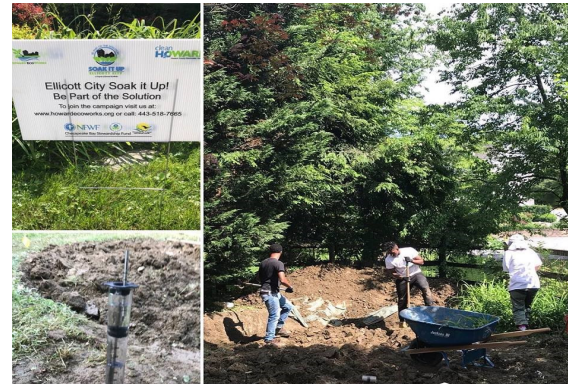
<https://mostcenter.umd.edu/casestories>

### Problem:

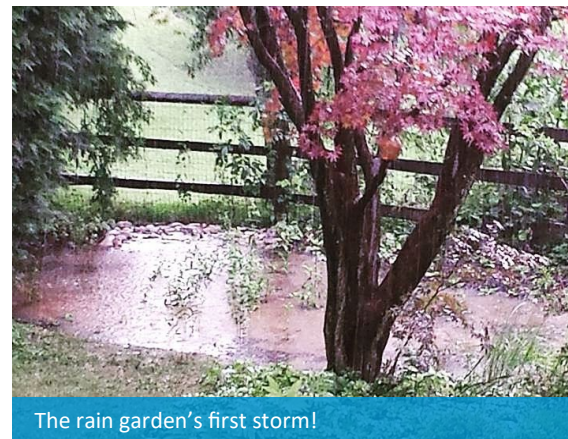
During major storm events, an Ellicott City neighborhood located along Hunter Road experienced significant flooding. The stormwater drained into the city’s historic district, and the flooding was exacerbated by the uphill funneling of runoff into the community and Main Street located downstream. Private residential neighborhoods were seeking solutions to help manage the stormwater runoff, and the Howard County government responded by making projects easier and more affordable.

### Solution:

With the help and guidance of Howard EcoWorks, residents engaged in educational seminars, volunteered for projects, and helped create water management structures, including beautiful rain gardens. Rain gardens clean dirty water and hold it during storms, allowing the water to soak back into the ground and slowly return clean water to areas downstream. Property owners participating in Soak It Up paid 25% of the cost of the projects with the remaining portion covered or reimbursed.



First rain garden installation near the New Cut Branch stream which drains down to historic Ellicott City



The rain garden’s first storm!

Photo Credit: Lori Lilly



The Soak it Up Campaign won 2nd place in the 2019 “BUBBA’s” awards.

### Key Project Facts

**Project Location:** Ellicott City, MD

**Type of Project:** Rain Garden (bioretention)

**Project Size:** 250 square foot garden

**Long-term Goal:** Replace 700 acres of turf grass with deep rooted plants

**Partners:** Howard EcoWorks, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Howard County Government

**Funding Sources:** Chesapeake Bay Trust; National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; Howard County Government Watershed Protection and Restoration Fund; Private homeowners

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**Howard EcoWorks:** [buff.ly/2KtllBw](http://buff.ly/2KtllBw)

**BUBBA Awards:** [buff.ly/2P2m0wO](http://buff.ly/2P2m0wO)

### What is Polluted Runoff?

The growth of our cities has resulted in too many paved surfaces, which prevent rainwater from being absorbed by the ground. Instead, the water runs off streets and buildings, collecting trash and dangerous chemicals on its way. This contaminated water overflows into our streams and rivers, creating public health hazards and toxic waters.

Stormwater projects create safe paths for polluted runoff to be captured and filtered before it reaches our waterways. It keeps communities healthy and the environment clean.

**When communities and their local governments work together to solve big problems like stormwater runoff, that’s a story worth telling!**