

**LDW&S 2023 Mini-Grant Final Report
Tinicum Township Community Park
Wetland Enhancement Project**

Description of Work Accomplished

Tinicum Township is pleased to report the work in connection with the 2023 mini-grant award from the Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River Management Council has been completed on time and on budget. While the original intention was to have the most challenging aspects of Phase 1, site preparation, take place during a period of hard freeze in the winter months to minimize disruption to the existing wetland, due to the mild winter, this work was undertaken in April when conditions on the ground were deemed appropriate.

Over five days in April, the entire Tinicum Township's Public Works Department worked to remove all of the man-made materials adjacent to the existing wetland in the Tinicum Township Community Park, including the removal of 23 telephone poles, and approximately five tons of plastic netting and heavy, metal cable which had never been removed after the former driving range became a Township-owned park many years ago. The removal of the man-made materials in and of itself made a significant improvement to the natural habitat and created a more beautiful backdrop for the wetland enhancement and installation of a wetland buffer.

The removal of invasives in the designated planting area was accomplished in the end of September. A couple of individuals donated their time, tools and expertise to remove the larger invasives by hand, and the smaller invasives were suppression-cut just before the natives were mass-planted on October 7, 2023.

The day before the big planting, John Courtney of Kind Earth Grower delivered the flats of native plants and placed them throughout the planting area. On the day of the planting, volunteers from Tinicum Township's EAC, Township residents, the Tohickon Garden Club, and employees of Kind Earth Growers began to arrive at 8am and the planting was in full swing by 9am. Volunteers were focused, cooperative and determined to finish the planting within three hours' time (and ahead of a rainstorm). In fact, volunteers were so focused on drilling holes and popping the plants into the ground that we forgot to take more than a handful of pictures, and by the time we remembered to take a group photograph half of the volunteers had already gone.

In the span of three hours, Tinicum Township community volunteers and community partners and friends drilled holes for and planted all of the following native plants:

Botanical Name	# Planted
Acorus americanus	150
Calamagrostis canadensis	100
Asclepias incarnata	100
Deschampsia cespitosa	50
Hibiscus moscheutos	50
Juncus effusus	100

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Eupatorium dubium	150
Phystostegia virginiana	50
Verbena hastata	100
Solidago rugosa	100
Symphotrichum novae-angeliae	100
Chasmanthium latifolium	100
Pyenanthemum tenuifolium	100

Photos of the Project

Phase I – Preparation of the Site



Public Works employees using a backhoe with a “thumb” to pull down netting, cables and to bring down telephone poles.



The old, plastic, heavy-duty netting made an excellent trellis for invasives.



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The netting strung between telephones poles with the park's tree line adjacent to the wetland made a for a very strong trellis for climbing invasives and obstructed the natural movement of birds and wildlife.

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Larger invasives were dug out by hand and multiple piles of plant debris were removed.



Volunteers were careful to not harm beneficial insects living in the park.

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Financials

\$675.00	45 Volunteer Hours at \$15.00/ hr Tinicum Township Public Works Department cost for Labor and Equipment
\$6,961.46	for removal of man-made materials from Community Park.
\$2,237.50	Kind Earth Growers, consultation, layout and plants
\$1,250.00	<u>Donated Contractor Services (Kind Earth Growers)</u>
\$11,123.96	TOTAL PROJECT VALUE (plus ongoing volunteer monitoring time)

Unexpected Challenges

The volume and weight of the netting removed from the tree line was vastly underestimated, and was more cumbersome for the Public Works Department to dispose of than originally contemplated. The mini-grant proposal contemplated 20 hours of work for the PWD, and the actual time incurred was 112 man hours and 100 equipment hours.

Unexpected Benefits

There was an immediate appreciation expressed by members of the public for the improvements being made to the park. Before and after the planting, members of the public using the pavilion and walking path remarked how wonderful it is to see the park being cared for and offered to keep an eye on the plantings when they use the walking path that passes nearby the planting site.

As the Township considers possibilities for next year, we are delighted to have the enhanced wetland area in the Tinicum Township Community Park and plan on using it as a demonstration site for community educational programming in the years to come.

Description of Changes to Timeline, Funding Needs or Other Pertinent Changes

Phase 1 was completed somewhat behind the projected schedule but in time to allow the planting to take place in accordance with the projected schedule.

The total mini-grant award was for \$3,579.80 which was sufficient to fund Kind Earth Growers design Option 1 which had a planting density of 18" on center for 2,613 plants. However, in consultation with Kind Earth Growers, the layout for the wetland buffer installation ultimately selected was closer to Option 2 with a planting density of 24" on center for 1,250 plants. Therefore the invoice from Kind Earth Growers only came to \$2,237.50 leaving an excess of \$1,342.31 from the 2023 mini-grant award.

Copies of All Publicity and Acknowledgements.

- Links to the corresponding Board meetings with time stamps are attached.
 - 02/07/2023 BOS meeting <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jK7iYG6t13w>
(at 12m2s)
 - 10/17/2023 BOS meeting <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpDwpj8tLfw>
(at 7m5s)