Photos provided by the Conservation Fund

To learn more about the Proctor Creek watershed, visit EPA's Urban Waters Proctor Creek webpage.

Proctor Creek Watershed Story Map:
The Intersection of Green Infrastructure and Health
The Story of Atlanta's Proctor Creek Watershed

What is the Proctor Creek Watershed Story Map?

The Proctor Creek Watershed Story Map is an easy-to-use interactive online tool that combines maps with narrative text, images, and multimedia content to convey information as a story and inform and connect with viewers. This community-driven Story Map shares important information about the Proctor Creek watershed in Atlanta, Georgia and the role that green infrastructure can play in the community.

Why did EPA create the Proctor Creek Watershed Story Map?

Part of EPA's mandate is to restore and maintain watersheds and their aquatic ecosystems to protect human health, support economic and recreational activities, and provide healthy habitat for fish, plants and wildlife. However, it takes coordination and informed decisions and actions at the local and state levels to ensure this success. The Story Map was developed as a community-led collaboration with Proctor Creek residents and stakeholders along with EPA Region 4 Office and Office of Research and Development in an effort to: 1) provide the Proctor Creek community information in a meaningful way to engage them as stewards of their watershed, and 2) aid the community in future decision-making that will protect this watershed.

Why focus on the Proctor Creek Watershed?

Proctor Creek is an impaired waterway that experiences several overlapping environmental issues. The watershed has been troubled by frequent flooding, erosion, stormwater runoff, and pollution from illegal dumping. In addition, sewer overflows from the city's combined sewer system, which carries both sewage and rainwater, and its sanitary sewer system, designed to carry sewage only, have impacted the creek. The Proctor Creek watershed is home to more than 38 neighborhoods, including some of the most economically-disadvantaged and underserved areas in Atlanta. Residents and stakeholders are taking action to turn around decades of neglect and disinvestment and to help restore the watershed and protect its residents.

What information is featured in the Story Map?

This Story Map explores community-identified concerns, such as flooding and water quality, urban heat islands, mosquitoes, and health, and considers the potential for green infrastructure to address those concerns. The Story Map examines the proposed expansion of green infrastructure throughout the Proctor Creek watershed, evaluates the potential impacts of this expansion on environmental and public health, and highlights areas in the Proctor Creek community that may benefit from green infrastructure practices (Figure 1). In addition to examining the intersection of green infrastructure and health, the Story Map also provides resources about demographics and health in Proctor Creek and addresses additional concerns raised by the community, including illegal dumping of trash and tires, toxic releases to land, and brownfields.

| Instructions & Contributors | Introduction | Watershed Tour | Flooding | Heat | Mosquitoes | Green Infrastructure | Green Infrastructure Spotlight | Green Infrastructure Tools & Resources | Other Resources | Glossary |

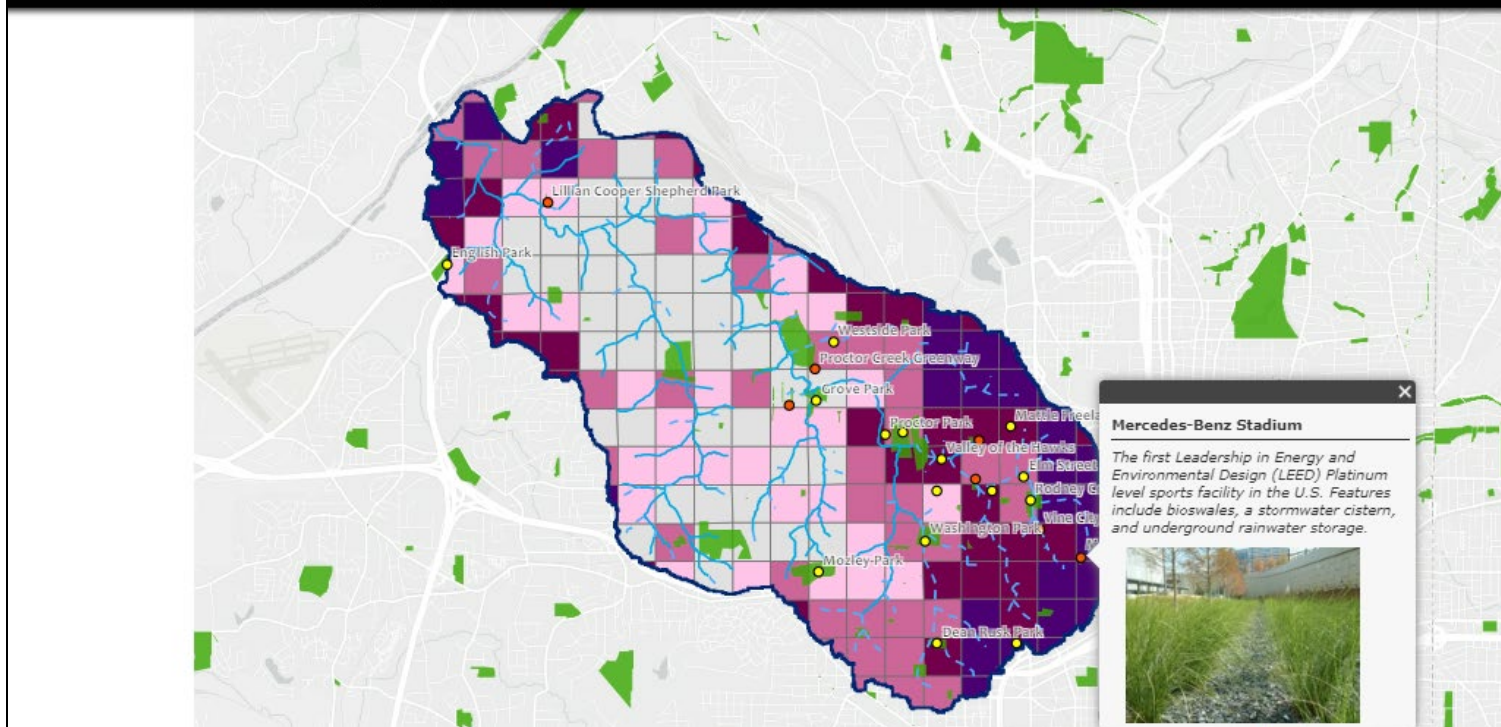## Green Infrastructure Spotlight

Figure 1. Screenshot from the Proctor Creek Watershed Story Map. The Green Infrastructure Spotlight highlights a number of completed, in progress, and planned green infrastructure projects in the Proctor Creek watershed. The projects are displayed over a map, which shows a grid illustrating, in darker purple, the locations in Proctor Creek where green infrastructure could best serve as a solution to flooding and urban heat island effects. To learn about each green infrastructure spotlight, users can click on the point in the map.

For more information on green infrastructure and its benefits:

- **EPA's Green Infrastructure website**
- **EPA's Healthy Benefits of Green Infrastructure in Communities fact sheet**
- **EPA's Enhancing Sustainable Communities with Green Infrastructure Guide**

Visit the
Proctor Creek Story Map

What is Green Infrastructure?
Unlike the gray infrastructure that is often used to manage stormwater (pipes, storm drains, and treatment plants), green infrastructure is a practice that uses plants, soils, and other natural features to manage wet weather impacts, reduce and treat stormwater at its source, and create sustainable and healthy communities. Green infrastructure can include features such as: rain gardens, bioswales, planter boxes and planting strips, urban trees (tree canopy), natural areas (such as parks and wetlands), permeable pavement, green streets, green roofs, and rain barrels.

How Can Green Infrastructure Affect Your Health?
Green infrastructure does not only help manage stormwater, but can also provide other environmental, social, and economic benefits. Green infrastructure can increase exposure to the natural environment and reduce exposure to harmful substances and conditions (such as water pollution, flooding, air pollution, heat, and noise). Green infrastructure can also provide opportunity for recreation and physical activity, improve safety, promote community identity and a sense of well-being, and provide economic benefits at both the community and household level.

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