

## Environmental science students examine Coe Creek

Written by [Kevin Kelley](#) on September 26, 2014 — [Leave a Comment](#)



Fairview High School student Max Kolman assists Jared Bartley of the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District collect samples from Coe Creek.

**By Kevin Kelley**

*Fairview Park*

Sept. 17 was field trip day for Colleen Sliwinski's environmental science students at Fairview High School. But their destination – Bain Park – was just a block or so away.

The purpose of their excursion was to study Coe Creek, which is the subject of a \$66,000 grant from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. The Coe Creek Streambank Restoration Project involves restoring 170 linear feet of the creek's banks. Two hundred trees and shrubs will be planted across one-third of an acre as well.

The high school students assisted employees of the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District in analyzing the health of the creek. With Jared Bartley, the agency's Rocky River

watershed coordinator, they collected water samples in a search for macroinvertebrates, or creatures without backbones that can be seen without a microscope. They found leeches, indicating the creek is healthy enough to sustain life.

Students also observed as Megan Smith, a watershed program intern, measured water samples for the pH level and phosphates. And Elizabeth Hiser, a watershed specialist with the agency, explained how environmental specialists measure the threat of erosion.

Students are now analyzing the data, Sliwinski said, and intend to write a summary report for Mayor Eileen Patton on the condition of Coe Creek before the restoration project.

Sliwinski's students will join the Fairview Park Green Team and community members in planting trees in Bain Park, an activity currently planned for the morning of Nov. 1. Students will report their research findings to members of the Rocky River Watershed Council, who will hold their quarterly meeting at Bain Park Cabin at 6 p.m. Oct. 22. Also, environmental science and art students at Fairview High School will collaborate to create signs at Bain Park that will explain the project.

In addition to the installation of trees and shrubs, the project involves reducing the slope of the creek bank near Bain Park Cabin to reduce the rate of erosion, which threatens to reduce the amount of park space over time.

The goal is to complete the project by Thanksgiving, said Matt Hrubey, the city's development administrator, who wrote the grant application.

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