

## Friends of Stoner Creek launch tree planting project

by Pat Conley/Citizen staff

PARIS, Ky (November 1, 2015)--A Friends of Stoner Creek tree planting committee has big plans to stabilize eroded creek banks along the Stoner Creek channel in Bourbon County.

Earlier this month a small group of FOSC volunteers spent an afternoon planting a variety of native trees alongside Stoner Creek near Spears Mill Road.

According to FOSC president Marium VanMeter, the Spears Mill Road property was one of 16 priority sites identified in a comprehensive survey conducted last year by BSA Troop 67 Eagle Scout Jesse Bass. The survey cataloged areas of the Stoner Creek watershed heavily impacted by various factors including topsoil removal, heavy motor boat traffic, livestock access, and natural erosion intensified by lack of vegetation such as bushes and trees.

FOSC tree planting committee co-chair Cynthia Criswell said future reforestation plans will concentrate on, but not be limited to, Middle Stoner Creek. FOSC board member Wayne Estes, a professional arborist, cites Mary Clay, owner of Fairfield Farm off U.S. 27, as an outstanding proponent of environmental stewardship. Estes praised impressive tree plantings Clay has already completed in the Lower Stoner Creek watershed. Estes added that plans are underway for creek bank tree planting on the farm of Bill and Vanessa Dickson on Thatchers Mill Road in the Upper Stoner Creek watershed; the Upper Stoner project will be directed by BSA Troop 67 Eagle Scout candidate Mason Malin.

"We hope landowners up and down the creek corridor will get behind this effort," said VanMeter. "We hope to preserve and improve habitat and water quality, as well as the natural beauty of Stoner Creek," she added. FOSC member Steve Stewart of Hunterton Farm at Stoner Creek points out that legendary horsemen A.B. "Bull" Hancock of Claiborne Farm and Stoner Creek Stud founder John D. Hertz once planted hundreds of trees, including many still-standing sycamore trees, in the Stoner Creek watershed. "Mother Nature will reforest some of the area," VanMeter said, "but sometimes Mother Nature needs a little help."

Trees for the FOSC effort are being funded with a Kentucky American water grant.

FOSC is a grass roots, all-volunteer group dedicated to maintaining and improving Stoner Creek as a natural resource and recreational asset. For more information, check out FOSC's website at: [www.stonercreek.us](http://www.stonercreek.us)

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