

Brooklyn Intermediate School students take scientific field trip to Stickney Creek



On Sept. 29, Brooklyn Intermediate School's 7th grade students studied water samples and macro-invertebrates along Stickney Creek in Brooklyn's Memorial Park. (Photo courtesy of Big Creek Connects)

By John Benson, special to cleveland.com, Oct 2, 2017

http://www.cleveland.com/brooklyn/index.ssf/2017/10/brooklyn_intermediate_school_s.html

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BROOKLYN, Ohio - Brooklyn Intermediate School 7th grade science students recently took a walking field trip to Brooklyn's Memorial Park where they spent the morning testing water and searching for water bugs in Stickney Creek.

The stream monitoring event, which was presented by Big Creek Connects in partnership with General Motors - Parma Metal Center and attended by Brooklyn Mayor Katie Gallagher, centered around watershed stewardship and related career opportunities.

"This is an example of the school integrating geography with chemistry and biology," Big Creek Connects Executive Director Bob Gardin said. "It's a good hands-on project. They learn about phosphorus and nitrates, and what these things mean in the field. How it relates to the water quality and the habitat.

"Part of our mission at Big Creek Connects is to educate the public and to get them to understand what the decisions we make with our land use, how it impacts our streams, our rivers. Stickney Creek is a tributary to Big Creek, which drains into the Cuyahoga River and then Lake Erie."

More than 110 science students participated in what Gardin described as a STEM program. Brooklyn Intermediate School 7th Grade Science and Pre-Algebra Teacher Lisa Ann Krall said the benefits of the field trip are twofold.

"The activity itself reinforces many of the 7th grade Ohio Science Standards, such as how specie populations change based on disruptions in the ecosystem, as well as the natural cycling of resources," Krall said.

"Secondly, this is a hands-on learning experience in the students' community. They are testing the water that flows in their very own community and in the park they play in, which is not only kinesthetic learning but meaningful."

The fourth annual stream monitoring event does include a new element. Gardin said later this year the students will take another field trip to the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District lab.

"We'll be going to see how the professionals do testing," Gardin said. "Then in the springtime, we'll go back to Stickney Creek and plant willow and dogwood saplings. That helps prevent erosion, helps root structure for the stream and shading for the stream."