

FOSC Water Quality Blog

From Pretty Lean to Pretty Green: The Bradford Road Seep

FOSC Water Quality Team

Time for a quick update on Sligo Creek's newest wetland seep, a long swale running along Sligo Creek and Sligo Creek Parkway, between Piney Branch Road and Wayne Avenue, near Bradford Road and Fleetwood Terrace. When it was first completed during the summer, it looked a bit bare – not the kind of place you'd expect wildlife to come flocking to.



But in just two months, this seep has greened out and filled up...



...enough so that one of its new vertebrate residents – a Red-eared Slider turtle – was recently spotted sunning itself on the end of a log....



The water filling the Bradford Road Seep appears to be a combination of runoff from the stormwater outfall draining the Goodacre Knolls neighborhood, and base flow from the groundwater that keeps Sligo Creek flowing year round. FOSC's Water Quality team will be sampling inflow and outflow of the seep system to help determine if and how this wetland affects the quality of the water it contributes to Sligo Creek. M-NCPPC (Parks) Aquatic Ecologist Matthew Harper and his colleague Annaly Galeas recently toured the seep to gauge its development, accompanied by Environmental Science and Policy MS candidate Susan Robinson and her support team.



As part of her academic program, Robinson will begin periodically surveying the Bradford Road seep to see which animals and plants are colonizing this new ecosystem, how quickly and in what numbers. Harper has already seen fish in the seep, most likely Blacknose Dace, and believes Creek Chub could also find it to be an appealing home. And if all goes well, next spring we may see and hear other new residents in this nascent wetland, including Dusky or Eastern Mud salamanders, Wood Frogs and Eastern Box Turtles. So if you happen to be heading by the Bradford Road seep this fall, take a stroll around it to see who else has taken up residence in this new floodplain wetland. And if you get a picture you'd like to share, please feel free to post at the Friends of Sligo Creek *Sightings* page -- <http://www.fosc.org/sightings.htm> See you by the Creek!