

# Fall 2021 Walnut Creek Watershed Learning Network – Module 2

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## *Wake County Big Sweep*

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Citizen volunteer effort to make our environment litter-free. Wake County focuses on watersheds, coordinating cleanups of streams, lakes, and wetlands.

### **Introduction**

Walnut Creek Watershed Learning Network (WCWLN) participated in the Wake County Big Sweep on Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, at the Walnut Creek Wetland Park in Raleigh. Walnut Creek Wetland Park staff coordinated this event, inviting other volunteer members of the park and other agencies. Each group had a park employee to help them navigate and assist participants during this clean-up mission. All the participants received gloves, grabbers, trash bags, and orange vests. Other groups that were picking up litter along the creeks and streams had the option to use waders, buckets, and insect spray. Stacie Hagwood, park manager, welcomed everyone to the event and expressed gratitude for everyone's time and help. The park offered snacks, water, tea, hot chocolate, t-shirts, and koozies.



Image 1. WCWLN participants, park employees (lime green shirts), mentors, and members of PEJ pictured. All Photos Courtesy of Aniya Bourne.

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*Partners for  
Environmental  
Justice*

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The mission of Partners for Environmental Justice (PEJ) is to advocate for the equitable treatment of both the human and natural communities in Southeast Raleigh.

## Keep calm & keep the earth clean

We had a great turn out with our six participants, four PEJ members, and two WCWLN mentors. WCWLN participants were assigned to pick up litter along Garner Road south to Bailey Drive/Waller Place/Darby Street. As a group we collected nine bags of litter, while we entered a few locations into the Walnut Creek Watershed Action Plan using the Trash Surveyor application. This application was used to scout potential streams or land-based cleanup areas. Our team leader and mentors were very informative of the surrounding flora and fauna, pointing out interesting vegetation. As a result, we collected pounds of litter near the Trimart Gas station on Garner Road near the entrance to the Rochester Heights community (Image 4).



Image 2. WCWLN Participants picking up litter along Waller Place.



Image 3. Participants collecting kitchen litter near the vegetation.

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Image 4. WCWLN group picking up litter near the Trimart Gas station.



Image 5. WCWLN participant collecting litter along Waller Place.



Image 6. WCWLN group at the junction of Peterson Street and Garner Road.

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## NKM Reflections from Module 1

NKM Reflections address the following questions, 1) What did you NOTICE today?, 2) What are you KEEPING? and 3) What will MOTIVATE you to continue the journey? Each WCWLN participant fills out these reflections after each module. Below are some of the reflections from our participants.

### What did you NOTICE today?

- “There are lots of great programs/people in place to help better the environment. Many groups are very passionate about keeping the environment clean and have been super successful about implementing sustainable systems just like the WCWLN”.
- “It was nice seeing a practical demonstration of the program goals/methods and motivational/inclusive communication. The citizen/community experience was a good introduction to summarize all of that”.

### What are you KEEPING?

- “All of the information I have learned today will be what I am keeping. I enjoyed walking on the tour and learning about the creek. Since I’m not the most educated on watersheds and watershed management, I found it intriguing and useful!”.
- “I need to keep better tabs on local programs and engagement opportunities”.

### What will MOTIVATE you?

- “Having a clean environment to live in and trying to preserve that environment is what motivates me. I want to live in a clean environment that will be around for years to come”.
- “It was nice seeing government programs being directed bottom-up by documented local input”.

### Next Module:

**Topics:** Watershed Basics & Urbanization, Floodplain Management Strategies, and Green Infrastructure Overview & Tour

October 9, 2021 at the Walnut Creek Wetland Center 950 Peterson St, Raleigh, NC 27610

10:00 am – 1:00 pm