

State to improve estuary behind Hertford Grammar School

MARGARET FISHER

State environmental officials working on Jenny's Gut at Perquimans County High School have brought in other environmentalists to improve the drainage behind Hertford Grammar School.

Officials from the N.C. Department of Environmental and Natural Resources' Ecosystem Enhancement Project are going to restore 2,500 feet of Jenny's Gut

from its beginning just beyond the back side of Hertford Grammar to Edenton Road Street across from the high school.

EEP will be taking out all the non-native trees and shrubs and restoring the land back into its natural state, said Dwayne Stallings, schools assistant superintendent. That will include adding native plants for wildlife habitat and erosion control. Recently, EEP was studying the insect population there and put up markers around

the site, he said.

The Jenny's Gut stream restoration project will include expanding the waterway to correct drainage flow and creating a natural stream that will provide drainage flow and supply nutrients and sediment for wetlands during occasional flooding, Tracy Morris, project manager, wrote in an email.

"Basically dredged streams can't work the way natural streams do," Morris wrote. "We're hoping to look in the area for a

natural 'reference' stream to show us how a stream that size should look and then build a new stream that will act like a natural stream does."

Like a natural stream, the man-made stream will have varied depths, widths and plantings. By the end of the project, nearly half a square mile will be restored.

EEP is currently seeking permanent conservation easements rights and parcels from private property owners.

The state will also continue to maintain the area to protect water quality and wildlife habitat once the restoration is complete. Stallings said that school

officials hope to eventually create a walkway as part of the Blueway/Greenway project that will connect the grammar and high schools.



PHOTO BY MARGARET FISHER

The area of Jenny's Gut that begins across from the high school and extends past the rear side of Hertford Grammar School is going to be improved for drainage and restored back to its natural condition through the state's Ecosystem Enhancement Program.

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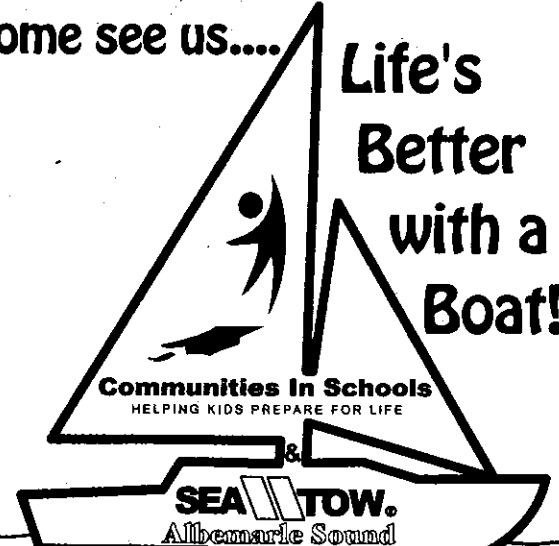
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