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Profile of a Conservationist **Aileen Craig, PE** **Stormwater Project Manager**

Aileen Craig serves as the Stormwater Retention Project Manager, leading the Maryland/DC chapter's green infrastructure and projects throughout Washington, D.C. In her role, Aileen engages property owners to negotiate use of their property to design, construct and maintain green infrastructure projects for the D.C. Department of Energy & Environment's Stormwater Retention Credit Trading Program.

The core objectives and outcomes are to improve water quality—both locally in the Potomac and Anacostia watersheds, and ultimately downstream in the Chesapeake Bay—and to expand habitat and green spaces for people and nature within the city landscape.

"I've always been passionate about urban conservation and ecology," says Aileen. "I love the intersection of people and nature and believe the two must strike a balance for both to thrive." Learn more about Aileen's latest project here. —>

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A new stormwater infrastructure project at the Knollwood Life Plan Community in Northwest D.C. captures 3 million gallons of stormwater annually before it runs into Rock Creek. © Matt Kane/TNC

Working Toward a Great Green City

New Green Stormwater Project Complete in Northeast D.C.

A large, three-phase green stormwater infrastructure project at Mt. Olivet Cemetery was The Nature Conservancy's successful first foray into Washington, D.C.'s innovative stormwater retention credit market, implemented through its subsidiary, District Stormwater LLC. As of this past summer, we have new stormwater project to celebrate.

Through District Stormwater LLC, TNC and the Knollwood Life Plan Community have collaborated on a new green infrastructure site and rain garden. Located in northwest Washington, the Knollwood property sits directly next to Rock Creek Park, one of the city's most beloved landmarks. The new garden will collect stormwater runoff from the facility's parking lots—an estimated 3 million gallons annually—to help slow and clean the runoff before it flows into Rock Creek and ultimately into the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay.

The Knollwood community is home to some 300 residents, most of whom are retired military personnel and their families. Its proximity to Rock Creek Park with its miles of hiking trails is certainly one of the neighborhood's biggest draws, and through this stormwater project, Knollwood is doing its part to help improve the health of Rock Creek. Jeanne Braha, Executive Director of the Rock Creek Conservancy, and close partner with TNC, explains the value of these types of projects:

"As climate change increases heavy precipitation events, we all must be more creative in finding ways to keep stormwater pollution out of Rock Creek. The Rock Creek community sees (and often smells) the impacts of these large flushes on our creeks, the stream banks, wildlife, and the park's recreational resources. Thank goodness for smart incentives to drive effective partnerships like this one."

To learn more, visit: nature.org/CitiesMDDC

New Boardwalk
at the Nassawango Creek



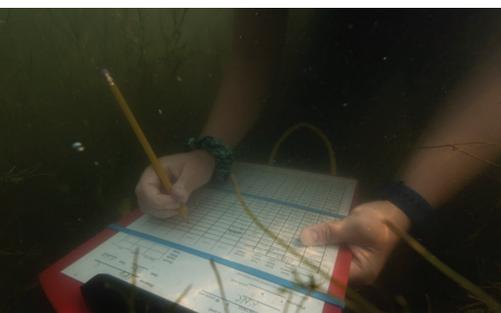
Nassawango boardwalk © Chase McLean/TNC

The Nature Conservancy's Nassawango Creek Preserve on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland is a true spectacle of wild beauty. The preserve is not only home to a diversity of wild-life and native flora, such as river otters, red-shouldered hawks and pitcher plants, but it is also open for public exploration.

The Nassawango Stewardship Committee, TNC's longest-serving volunteer group, first constructed and installed a 600-foot boardwalk as part of the Paul Leifer Trail in 1989 so that visitors could better admire all that Nassawango has to offer. A total renovation of the boardwalk was recently completed, and now, we are excitedly encouraging nature lovers and birdwatchers alike to visit the majestic cypress swamp.

Nestled in the historic Furnace Town, the Paul Leifer Trail at Nassawango Creek Preserve provides guests an opportunity to explore this ecologically important region without getting their boots too muddy.

To plan your trip, visit, [nature.org/explore](https://www.nature.org/explore) to view daily admission rates.



Clockwise from top left: TNC Coastal Scientist Jackie Specht; Jackie Specht deploys an underwater drone; Franklin Point State Park is one of the study sites; Underwater data recording ; GMU Associate Professor Celso Ferreira; © Jay Fleming

Studying the Ecological Effects of Sea-Level Rise

Thanks to the NOAA Ecological Effects of Sea Level Rise Program, we are working alongside George Mason University (GMU) and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to better understand how marshes can mitigate flooding in coastal communities. This new study expands on our preliminary research at Deal Island, which indicated that marshes can reduce wave energy by up to 90 percent. Results from this new phase of coastal research will help direct protection, restoration and management of the Chesapeake Bay region's coastal habitats to enhance community resilience. The team of TNC and GMU researchers spent several days in the water last summer collecting data from our three study sites.

Learn more at [nature.org/MDCoastal](https://www.nature.org/MDCoastal)