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For Immediate Release

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Fast Facts:

- Three-year grant will advance Smart Growth for Source Water Protection in the Beaver Lake watershed
- Public Forums and Low Impact Development installations will be main efforts
- Urban programming will help protect Beaver Lake, NWA's drinking water source

Grant funding to Advance Smart Growth for Source Water Protection (605 words)

Beaver Watershed Alliance, along with local partners in Northwest Arkansas, are developing a Smart Growth for Source Water Protection program, thanks to a grant from the Arkansas Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Division and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The federal 319 grant, totaling \$523,120 will be matched by local support of \$460,936 for a total of \$984,056 to develop programming for watershed management in urban areas and install three low impact development features within the Beaver Lake watershed area. Smart Growth covers a range of development and conservation strategies that help protect our health and natural environment and make our communities more attractive, economically stronger, and more socially diverse (US EPA). Smart Growth concepts can help bring a suite of tools and practices for any community to voluntarily adopt. Northwest Arkansas is home to Beaver Lake, the drinking water source for 1 in 5 Arkansans.

The Alliance has worked with many communities over the past decade to install low impact development (LID) features, such as rain gardens, bioswales, pervious pavers, and other storm collection features. This grant aims to further increase LID in communities by installing larger low impact development features to not only further demonstrate LID in communities, but also alleviate stormwater challenges on site. Many new technologies have increased the success of local LID installations. Two locations have been selected for LID installations, including the West Fork Library parking lot and a site along Huntsville Ave., in south Fayetteville. A third site will be determined.

In addition to LID installations, the Alliance is working with community partners and Edgewater Coaching and Consulting to host six public forums on Smart Growth concepts. The public forums will be held around the watershed area, are free to attend, and lunch will be served. The first forum, titled "What Do We Want for Our Communities - creating a shared vision for Smart Growth through a lens of ecosystem services," will take place at NWA Regional Planning office in Springdale on April 27, from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. RSVP online at Beaverwatershedalliance.org under the Events Page.

MISSION STATEMENT:

*To proactively protect, enhance and sustain water quality in Beaver Lake and the integrity of its watershed.
Beaver Watershed Alliance | 162 Doolin Dr. | PO Box 762, Elkins, AR 72727 | 479.750.8007*



BEAVER WATERSHED ALLIANCE

Overall, this grant program and partnership will advance components of the Beaver Lake Watershed Protection Strategy by curbing sediment, which is the number one threat to Beaver Lake. The Beaver Lake Watershed Protection Strategy forecasts the change in sediment and phosphorus loading to Beaver Lake from 2006 to 2055 from urban high-density development would increase by 164% and 155%, respectively. Soil erosion from already developed areas and increased drainage volume in urban and suburban streams has already caused massive amounts of sediments to enter streams. These trends highlight the importance of normalizing low impact development practices throughout the watershed.

The Beaver Watershed Alliance is a non-profit organization focused on maintaining high quality drinking water in Beaver Lake and improving water quality within the Beaver Lake watershed by working with a diverse stakeholder group representing agricultural, recreation, conservation, water utility, business, and private landowner perspectives who all work together for the benefit of Beaver Lake and its watershed. To learn more about the Alliance, best management practices for water quality, or how you can become involved in voluntary watershed protection go to www.beaverwatershedalliance.org or contact the Alliance at 479-750-8007.

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