

Romney Elementary- Potomac Center CommuniTree Planting

In an effort to improve the community and the water quality of the South Branch of the Potomac River, the third and fourth graders of Romney Elementary, along with the South Branch Watershed Partnership, with help from the WVCA, planted 150 trees on Monday, April 23 and Saturday, April 28 at the Potomac Center, a home for developmentally disabled youth and adults, in Romney, WV. Along with this tree planting, the students were also involved in water quality monitoring of Big Run, a tributary to the South Branch. Despite the rain, several agencies and volunteers came to help out, including the Cacapon Institute, the WV Division of Forestry, the WV Department of Agriculture, WV Department of Environmental Protection, and the WV Conservation Agency.

The tree planting was made possible by a grant from Project CommuniTree, which is a program that promotes tree plantings on public lands for communities to enjoy. Romney Elementary applied for large stock diversity tree kit, including several species of trees such as sycamores, black cherry, white pines, and crabapple trees. This kit was chosen for the purposes of not only beautifying the campus of the Potomac Center, but also to help address the storm water runoff from the parking lot of the Potomac Center which drains near the neighboring Big Run stream.

This tree planting kicked off a five-year evolving project for the students of Romney Elementary, focused on helping the students learn about the watershed as they grow through middle school and into high school. Each year, the students will be able to assist in the maintenance of the trees as they grow, carry out more detailed analysis of Big Run, and have a say in initiating more projects that focus on improving the local watershed in their community. This tree planting was just the beginning in an effort to involve Romney and the rest of Hampshire County in conservation efforts for their local watershed and natural resources.

