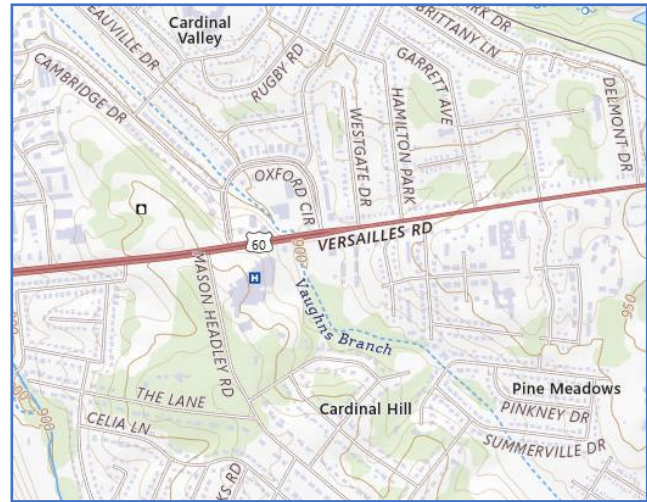


For years, bush honeysuckle and other invasive plant species have overwhelmed Vaughn's Branch, a tributary of Wolf Run. Invasive species are organisms that are not native to an ecosystem, and once introduced can aggressively spread, causing harm to the surrounding environment. Thanks to a grant to Friends of Wolf Run from the LFUCG Stormwater Quality Projects Incentive Grant Program, the spread of invasive plant species has been combatted in this area by employing 15 of nature's best plant exterminators – goats. The farm animals have become an important part of cleaning up Vaughn's Branch.



Vaughn's Branch

LFUCG's Stormwater Quality Projects Incentive Grant Program provides money to groups who implement projects that improve water quality, reduce stormwater runoff, and educate residents about our community's stormwater and water quality issues. The Goat Project, as it has been coined, received a \$12,500 grant from the program.



Senator Reggie Thomas handles a goat

The arrangement is a win-win for the goats and the stream. Exploring new areas and foods provides enrichment to the goats' lives. The clearing of underbrush will also allow more sunlight to reach the stream without the use of heavy machinery or pesticides. This is important for the health of the stream and for future native plants that will be planted in the area. Waste created by the goats will act as a natural fertilizer when the native species are planted. It's safe to say, the goats have absolutely no complaints about going to work on Mondays.

There is booming support from the community as the goats do their part as natural invasive plant exterminators. On Saturday, June 10, Pastor Ken Menefee of Harvest Worship Center Church was invited to bless the goats before being released to the buffet of plants. Additionally, Senator Reggie

Thomas made a trip out to meet the goats. All members of the community were invited to attend the opening day and see the goats at work. While on the job site, the goats are surveilled by “Goat Wranglers,” volunteers assigned to make sure the little guys stay out of trouble.

Each fall and spring, the goats will return to ensure all unwanted plants have been eaten. If you are interested in keeping up with the goats, you can follow the “The Goat Project – Vaughn’s Branch at Oxford Circle” page on Facebook for event announcements and volunteer opportunities.

For more information on the Stormwater Quality Projects Incentive Grants Program, including a [map](#) of past grant project recipients, visit <https://www.lexingtonky.gov/stormwater-incentive-grant-program> or contact Frank Mabson (fmabson@lexingtonky.gov), Grant Program Manager.



David Neville, Goatherd Contractor, of Capstone Farm shows off one of the working goats