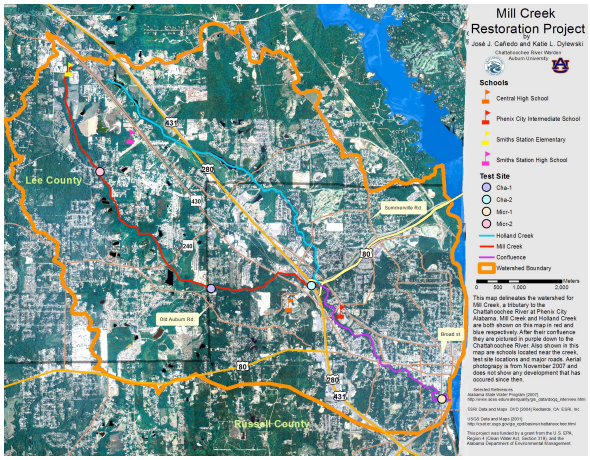
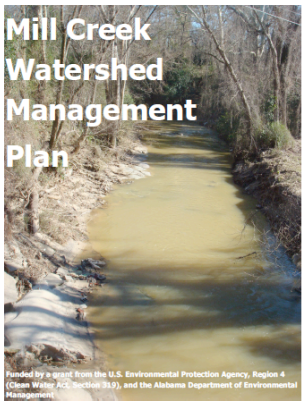
# *Mill Creek Watershed Project*

Mill Creek, a major tributary to the Chattahoochee River, flows through the Cities of Smiths Station and Phenix City within Lee and Russell Counties of Alabama. The Mill Creek Watershed, with a drainage area of approximately 24.8 square miles, is an increasingly urbanized watershed. Development throughout the watershed has resulted in increased volumes of stormwater runoff from impermeable surfaces, which has lead to flashy hydrology, loss of natural wetlands and riparian areas, inadequate natural floodplains, and threats to aquatic habitat. Intense stormwater runoff volumes and velocities continue to degrade streambanks, exacerbate erosion and sedimentation, and contribute to other water quality impairments. In 2008, Mill Creek was first identified on the State of Alabama's 303(d) List of Impaired Waters for organic enrichment resulting from this increased urban stormwater runoff. A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is currently scheduled for completion in 2018.




## *Developing the Plan*

In 2010, a watershed management plan was developed for Mill Creek through funding provided by a Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source grant through the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM). The Plan identifies sources of water quality concerns as well as practices that will serve to reduce pollutant loadings to the stream. It also provides focus and direction for stakeholders to effectively and efficiently mitigate pollution from stormwater runoff and protect water quality using a dynamic watershed management approach.




## *Implementing the Plan*

The Mill Creek Watershed Project will serve to implement components of the Mill Creek Watershed Management Plan through a cooperative effort between ADEM, Auburn University, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES), and other local stakeholders. This project will install best management practices to protect water quality, provide education to watershed community members that focus on water quality protection, and provide outreach to local citizens, students, municipal officials, and city employees throughout the watershed. Site selection for BMP implementation will primarily target public properties, such as local government and school properties in the Mill Creek drainage area of Lee and Russell counties. Local partners of the Mill Creek project currently include the City of Phenix City, the City of Smiths Station, the Lee and Russell County Commissions, Smiths Water and Sewer Authority, Chattahoochee-Chipola Clean Water Partnership, Keep Phenix City Beautiful, Consolidated Resources, Help the Hooch, Alabama Water Watch, and Central High School.

## *Project Funding*

The project is being funded in part by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management through a Clean Water Act Section 319(h) nonpoint source grant provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Region IV. Auburn University will be administering the grant, which will provide 60% of the overall project cost. The remaining 40% of project cost will be supplied by "in-kind" matching services from local government, volunteers, ACES, and Auburn University. The project will provide $239,597 in federal funding, to be matched by $165,385 in local and in-kind funding. The Section 319(h) Program is a non-regulatory program that relies on local project partners to address impaired streams, with the ultimate goal of improving water quality.

## *Project Web Site*

The Mill Creek Project web site provides Section 319(h) and other nonpoint source pollution related information pertaining to the watershed. Upcoming workshops, tours, trainings, trash cleanups, and many other activities will be posted to this web site as they are planned. Additionally, the web site provides up to date photos of the watershed, watershed boundary maps, water quality data through Alabama Water Watch, and a copy of the watershed management plan. Please visit our web site at: ***www.aces.edu/millcreek***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