

LaBarque Creek Watershed Conservation Opportunity Area



LaBarque Creek is one of Jefferson County's healthiest streams.

The LaBarque Creek Watershed features a high-quality Ozark stream and rugged sandstone terrain surprisingly close to St. Louis. A combination of diverse natural communities and development patterns make the watershed an excellent candidate for conservation efforts.

The 13 square mile, mostly wooded watershed lies in northwest Jefferson County and enters the Meramec River in LaBarque, Missouri. Though it contains about 1,300 residents, they live on only 20% of watershed lands. The low level of watershed disturbance produces a high-quality mosaic of animals, plants and landforms. LaBarque Creek provides over

six miles of permanently flowing stream which supports over 50 species of fish, including black bass and sunfish. The level of stream diversity and richness can be found nowhere closer to St. Louis.

The Conservation Opportunity Area's underlying diverse geology produces dramatic landscapes. Flowing water carves cliffs, waterfalls, bowls and overhangs in soft sandstone bedrock. Resulting deep sheltered, moist canyons and ravines contain several state-listed plants which are found in only a few Missouri sites. Dense oak/hickory woodlands and forests contain numerous sandstone and limestone glades.

LaBarque Creek Watershed Conservation Strategies

- Conserve animal, landform and plant quantity and quality.
- Conserve habitat connectivity.
- Engage residents and other stakeholders as partners in conserving the watershed.
- Where development occurs, encourage conservation design.
- Permanently conserve watershed integrity and quality through best management practices and permanent land protections.



Priority Tasks

- Implement watershed conservation plan (signed 2009).
- Develop appropriate methods and standards to test water quality and quantity.
- Investigate effects of watershed septic systems, roads and bridges on stream health and develop best management practices.
- Find private funding sources.
- Monitor stream and watershed health through animal and plant community diversity sampling.
- Encourage permanent land protections.
- Maintain/improve residential quality of life.

Conservation Partners

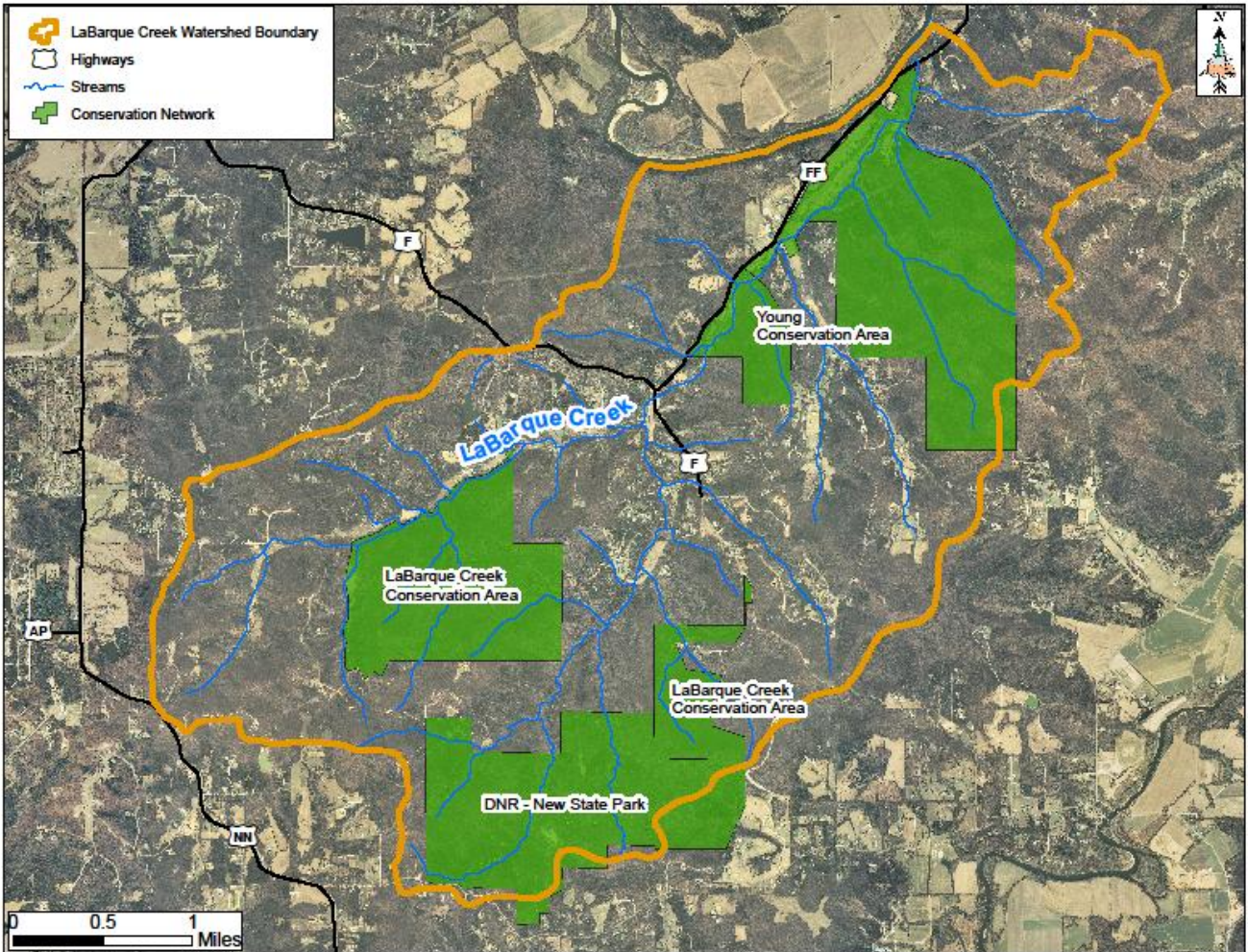
Audubon Missouri, East-West Gateway Council of Governments, Friends of LaBarque Creek Watershed, Jefferson County Government, Missouri Botanical Garden/Shaw Arboretum, Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation, Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Native Plant Society,



Missouri Stream Team, St. Louis Audubon Society, Stream Team #2991, Ozark Regional Land Trust, The College School,

The Nature Conservancy, The Open Space Council, Trust for Public Land, United States Army Corps of Engineers – St. Louis District, United States Environmental Protection Agency, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Forest Service, Washington University, Webster Groves Nature Study Society.

LaBarque Creek Watershed Conservation Opportunity Area and Conservation Network



Existing Conservation Network

Don Robinson State Park (future), LaBarque Creek Conservation Area, The College School, Washington University, Young Conservation Area

Existing Funding Sources

Conservation Federation of Missouri, EPA Region 7 funds, MCHF Stream Stewardship Trust Fund, MCHF grants, MDC annual budget, MDC Wildlife Diversity Funds, MDC/USFS Forest Legacy Program, Open Space Council, The Nature Conservancy, USFWS





Members of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society and Missouri Native Plant Society inventory native plants on the Don Robinson property, future home of Don Robinson State Park.

Conservation Challenges

The LaBarque Creek Watershed currently demonstrates healthy and fully-functioning natural landscapes can co-exist with careful development and land protections. However, continued long-term conservation success will depend upon increased landowner participation, more numerous long-term land protections, control of invasive and exotic plants and funding/resident support to fully implement the watershed conservation plan.



For more information about the LaBarque Creek Conservation Opportunity Area, please contact:

The Friends of LaBarque Creek Watershed @ www.friendsoflabarquecreek.org