

# The Landfill

Long before becoming a park, 52 acres of the property was used as a landfill for Raleigh's household trash. While operations ended in 1972, dumping continued with excess soil from the Western Boulevard extension in 1998 and construction fill from building the Raleigh Convention Center in 2006.

## Landfill to Park

Parks all over the world are located on old landfills. Once closed, landfills are capped with soil, planted to prevent erosion and wells are placed deep in the ground to monitor the waste. Now safe for recreation, these areas are perfect for trails, sports fields, and open green space.

## What is next for this landfill?

Dix Park has engaged soil scientists and engineers to identify the landfill's boundaries, the material within, and options for this area as the park evolves. Possibilities include recreation fields, trails and of course, Raleigh's iconic sunflower field.

To restore the floodplain of Rocky Branch, selective removal of landfill material is being explored. A wider floodplain would improve ecology in the park and reduce flooding for downstream communities. Any projects in this area will ensure the landfill is well contained and pollutants do not escape into ground water or Rocky Branch.

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# Walnut Creek Watershed

A watershed is an area where water drains or “sheds” into a body of water. Rocky Branch and its watershed feeds into the Walnut Creek Watershed, which drains approximately 39 square miles. As part of the Neuse River Basin, this watershed drains into the Neuse River and eventually out to the Atlantic Ocean.

The health of the Walnut Creek Watershed is a critical in mitigating local flooding and delivering safe drinking water throughout Eastern North Carolina via the Neuse River. To learn more about Walnut Creek, its watershed, and wetlands, visit the Walnut Creek Wetland Center which is a quick bike ride or drive from Dix Park!

## Stormwater Systems

In the built environment, stormwater systems help rainwater find its way into a waterway. Culverts, pipes, and drains safely collect and carry stormwater runoff into streams and creeks when it rains. Often, water flows through these systems under roads, driveways, and bridges before it reaches a natural waterway.

Rocky Branch’s watershed covers a little over three square miles and there are over 85 miles of stormwater pipes in the Rocky Branch watershed! Approximately 34 miles are maintained by the City of Raleigh. The remainder are located on state, county, or private property.



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# Rocky Branch



A “branch” is a very small stream in a connected waterway system. Rocky Branch creates the eastern border of Dix Park, and as part of the Walnut Creek Watershed, its waters flow all the way to the Neuse River.

Following the paths of Rocky Branch, Walnut Creek and their tributaries, miles of greenway trails connect neighborhoods and parks across the city.

## Restoring the Rocky Branch

In 1978, Rocky Branch was classified as one of the state’s most polluted urban streams. Decades of Raleigh’s growth channelized the stream and filled it’s floodplain causing the Rocky Branch to become narrow and deep with severely eroding banks.

Upstream from Dix Park, successful restoration has occurred at NC State University’s campus. Building on this work, Dix Park aims to enhance ecosystem functioning and aquatic habitat, showcase regional ecology, and create a nature escape in the heart of the city – all while keeping impacts to our downstream neighbors top of mind.

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