

## Citizen Institute for Natural Areas Planning and Management

**Philadelphia Parks & Recreation** is recruiting participants for a new program to involve citizens in the planning and management of natural areas in the park system. Community partners will participate in a series of classes through the [Wagner Free Institute of Science](#) to foster ecological understanding and increase their knowledge of ecology, land management and experimental design. These partners will help to guide the management approaches for the sites, and will assist with long-term monitoring of the sites. This course will provide knowledge, skills and abilities that will be needed for full engagement in this process.

The objective for this project is to restore 25 acres of degraded forest in the largest area of core forest in Cobbs Creek Park, developing and implementing a variety of restoration techniques and carefully monitoring the results and documenting costs for each technique. This effort will be structured on a collaborative process engaging technical experts, land managers and community partners in a participatory research process, applying all of our skills, knowledge, and expertise to real-world problem solving. Using the Cobbs site, we will develop project goals, treatment options, and variables to monitor and measure. We will debate issues, raise and answer questions, establish priorities and ultimately set goals for our urban forests that will serve as management guidance for restoration work into the next century.

To attend the free course, you must enroll as a student through the Wagner Free Institute of Science. Class is limited to 30 participants. Lectures will be held Wednesday nights, April 30 to June 4, at the Haverford Branch Library, 5543 Haverford Avenue. For more information, contact Joan S. Blaustein, Director of Urban Forestry and Ecosystem Management at [joan.blaustein@phila.gov](mailto:joan.blaustein@phila.gov).

