Local Streets Slated for Storm Drain Stenciling

Swain County Youth Council members have coordinated with local government to paint specific storm drains and catch basins. They have mapped out the streets and communities they plan to stencil and have agreed to follow strict safety guidelines. Youth will clean up litter near storm drains and make posters with this litter to hang up in school for display. They will also record what they find. Their records will be returned to the Center for Marine Conservation and filed in a national database.

Why Stencil Storm Drains? Storm drains, in effect, are pollution gateways from local streets to the Tuckaseege River. In towns and cities throughout North Carolina, rainwater washes along neighborhood gutters into storm drains, flowing into nearby streams, rivers, lakes, sounds, estuaries and eventually, the ocean. Stormwater does not go to a treatment plant. Instead, it carries trash that is dumped onto streets, gutters or storm drains directly into our waters. Every year, antifreeze, motor oil, cigarette butts, paint, plastic and yard wastes take this path into waterways, spoiling them for people and wildlife.

By painting these storm drains, youth volunteers are doing their part to alert the public that only rainwater belongs in storm drains. The stenciled messages will continue to remind people that they can play a role in protecting North Carolina’s water resources.

Go to: www.bae.ncsu.edu/bae/programs/extension/wqq/smp-18/stormdrain/ for more information about the North Carolina Storm Drain Stenciling Project and the statewide effort.