



July 11, 2022

Stream Health Initiative Project Update

Project Overview

In 2017, the Albemarle Board of Supervisors directed County staff to develop strategies for improving stream health in the county; this project is referred to as the Stream Health Initiative.

From 2018-2021, staff conducted extensive public engagement with community stakeholders to identify strategies focused on development-related issues (Phase 1) and Rural Area-focused issues (Phase 2). The results of these engagement phases are now combined into one project moving forward.

In December of 2021, staff presented 14 proposals to the Board, based on a culmination of the community feedback, staff analyses, and input from the Board. The 14 proposals fell into three categories: 1) Regulatory; 2) Incentives and Voluntary Opportunities; and 3) Monitoring, Education, and Partnerships. See Att B (Overview) and Att C (Final Proposals).

During the work session (12/1/21), the Board supported staff recommendation to begin working on several projects with existing staff resources, to submit budget requests for FY23 for a subset of the proposals, and to phase the requests for the remaining proposals in FY24-26.

History of the Project

The following list includes Board of Supervisors meeting dates and links to meeting materials from 2017-present:

- [December 6, 2017](#) – Work Session – Review of County Stream Buffer Regulations
- [January 9, 2019](#) – Work Session – Stream Health in Development Areas
- [July 9, 2019](#) – Work Session – Improving Stream Health in Development Areas
- [November 6, 2019](#) – Work Session – Improving Stream Health in Development Areas
- [July 15, 2020](#) – Work Session – Improving Stream Health in Development Areas
- [November 18, 2020](#) – Consent Agenda – Stream Health Initiative Project Update
- [March 3, 2021](#) – Consent Agenda – Proposed Ordinance
- [April 7, 2021](#) – Consent Agenda – Stream Health Initiative Project Update
- [April 21, 2021](#) – Public Hearing – Board adopted WPTA 2021-00002 Water Protection Ordinance Regarding Stream Buffer Regulations
- [July 21, 2021](#) – Work Session – Stream Health Initiative, Phase II
- September 1, 2021 – WPTA 2021-00002 became effective
- [December 1, 2021](#) – Work Session – Stream Health Initiative Phase II
- [March 16, 2022](#) – Consent Agenda – Resolution of Intent to Amend the Zoning Ordinance to Revise Stream Buffer Regulations

Progress Update

The following summary describes key elements of progress to date on selected projects during the current implementation stage of the Stream Health Initiative (December 1, 2021-present).

- During the 12/1/21 work session, the Board supported staff's recommendation to:
 - 1) Begin work on proposals 3 and 11, immediately actionable with existing staff;
 - 2) Submit for consideration a budget request for FY 23 for resources needed to work on proposals 1, 2, 5, 6, and 13, to be carried forward by Community Development Department (CDD) staff;
 - 3) Submit for consideration a budget request for FY 23 for resources needed to work on proposals 8 and 10, to be carried forward by Facilities & Environmental Services (FES) staff;
 - 4) Return to the Board for consideration of proposals 4, 7, 9, 12, and 14 in FY 24-FY 26.
- Project staff submitted budget requests for resources to work on proposals 1, 2, 5, and 13 (CDD) and 8 and 10 (FES).
- Out of those six budget requests, one project (#2 Restoration and Mitigation Manual) was included in the FY23 budget presented to the Board of Supervisors.

- The following tables provide an overview of the 14 proposed projects and their current status.

Table 1. Proposed projects currently underway with existing staff resources and/or included in the FY23 budget.

Proposal		FY23 budget	Additional Resources needed for project continuation/ completion	Current Status
1	Stream Buffer Overlay District		Yes	A resolution of intent was approved by the Board on 3/16/22. Ordinance drafting is underway. This project involves moving the stream buffer regulations from the Water Protection Ordinance to the Zoning Ordinance, maintaining the exemptions for ag & forestry. A budget request for additional staff required for implementation will be resubmitted for FY24.
2	Strengthen Restoration and Mitigation Requirements	Yes		Consultant will be scheduled to begin work 9/22/2022. Timeline and development of the manual will align with the Proposal #1 ordinance updates.
5	Development Phase Carryover Items		Yes	One element of this proposal (addressing incremental development that cumulatively exceeds 10,000 sq ft of land disturbing activity) is currently underway with existing staff. A budget request for additional staff will be resubmitted for FY24 if warranted.
11	Low Impact Development Study		TBD	FES's Water Resources Program has supported hiring a consultant to complete the initial research component of this project.
13	New Landowner Education Project		Yes	Elements of this project have begun with existing staff and in partnership with the Climate Program, including creation of the County's new Environmental Stewardship Hub .

Table 2. Proposed projects currently being reevaluated or on hold until resources are approved.

Proposal		Current Status
3	Environmental Restoration ZTA	This project is not currently in the CDD Workplan. There may be opportunity to combine it with the ordinance updates in Proposal #1.
4	Sustainable Onsite Sewage Treatment Systems	Reevaluation of this proposal will occur for FY24-FY26.
6	Land Conservation for Water Quality	A budget request was submitted for FY23. Reevaluation of this proposal will occur in conjunction with the ongoing review of the land conservation programs.
7	Riparian Conservation Assistance Program	Reevaluation of this proposal will occur in conjunction with the ongoing review of the land conservation programs.
8	Stability for Agricultural Cost-Share Programs	A budget request was submitted for FY23. Reevaluation of this proposal will occur for FY24-FY26.
9	Leverage Agricultural BMP Incentives	Reevaluation of this proposal will occur for FY24-FY26.
10	Expand Albemarle Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP)	A budget request was submitted for FY23. The program continues to be supported at its current level but has not been expanded. Reevaluation of this proposal will occur for FY24-FY26.
12	Stream Quality Assessment Program	Reevaluation of this proposal will occur for FY24-FY26.
14	Expand Watershed Education in Schools	Reevaluation of this proposal will occur for FY24-FY26.

Next Steps

The Stream Health Staff Team will continue to advance the projects currently underway (Table 1) with the resources available. Reevaluation of projects in both Tables 1 & 2, with continued analysis of staff capacity, budgets, equity impacts, and project timelines will continue. Staff will return to the Board for direction and with periodic updates.