


Stream Health Initiative: DEFINE

MOVE 

FILTER BY SEGMENT 
Project engagement

OPTIONS    

VIEWS

193

RESPONSES

216

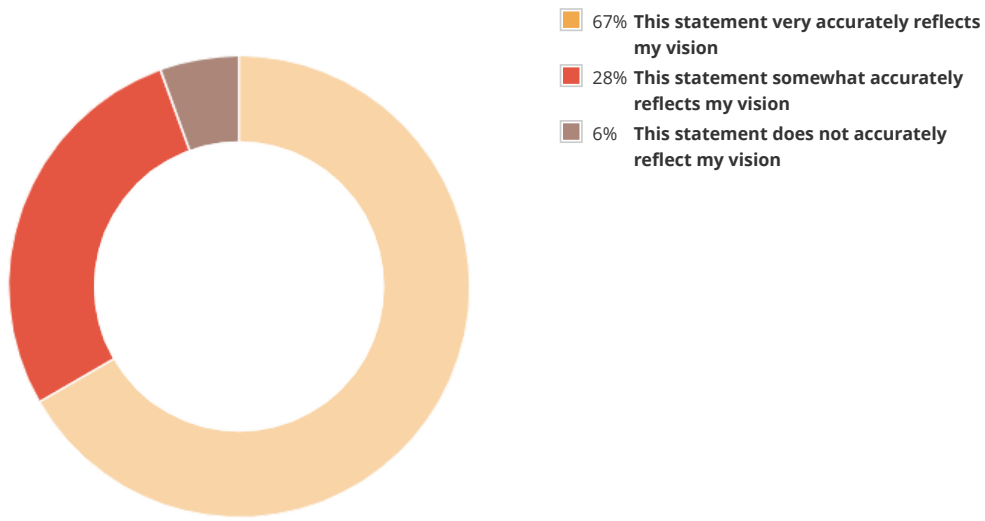
PARTICIPANTS

38

COMMENTS

75

Albemarle County will have clean, healthy stream systems that allow for safe utilization and support a diverse and resilient natural environment and a thriving rural economy. The quality of the water and riparian areas will safely allow for recreational uses such as swimming, boating, and fishing; maintain healthy and diverse aquatic and terrestrial habitat; support agriculture and other rural industries; and provide important benefits such as erosion and sediment control, flood mitigation, drinking water protection, climate resilience, protection of biodiversity, and scenic beauty.



36 respondents

The elements are good, but their priorities are listed exactly backward, in my opinion. Recreation should be last, resilience first, and industries in the middle,

19 days ago

[3 Agree](#)

I would suggest expanding the "support agriculture" goal to read "support environment-friendly agricultural practices".

14 days ago

[1 Agree](#)

I agree that the order in which the priorities are listed could be improved. Drinking water protection should be listed first.

18 days ago

[1 Agree](#)

These priorities should be ranked in some way. For instance, agriculture run-off is a leading contributor to unhealthy water. How do you plan to mitigate that? Industrial run-off as well. Unless there is a total community "buy-in" for these goals, we may not see them fully fulfilled.

18 days ago

[1 Agree](#)

The county has too much development and deforestation going on. The animals are being forced into smaller and smaller areas on private land. The wetlands, which support the creeks, are drying up. There needs to be more land put in greenbelt. It is going to dry up here, much like CA, with continuous drought from deforestation. The focus should not be on motorized recreation but protecting habitat for migrating animals and the ones already here. The birds are having a very hard time migrating through this area. I am shocked at the level of development. I just had 4 geese, 2 pairs nesting on our creek front. One was completely killed by hungry crows in the heat yesterday. That is one mom and 2 chicks gone forever. Then there is the vineyard up creek. They are dumping so much herbicide on their hillside property and it all goes down the watershed to the creek. I think our water needs testing, not only to protect the birds, but the fish. I just kicked a man out of the creek yesterday. He was drunk at 10 AM and had taken his pickup truck about 300 feet up the creek bed. He was looking for the same thing: a quiet place to go, which is now a major competition for the beautiful animals, just trying to survive a treacherous journey to get here. Shortly after that, the crows descended on the geese. I think the massive noise of his pickup was a problem not to mention the complete lack of knowledge for a stream. He was screaming at me that I was a bitch and I didn't own the creek. Unless stricter measures and education are implemented, perhaps with some do not drive in the creek sign.. I am not feeling too optimistic about humans. Why don't you model yourselves after some of the more aggressive greenbelt counties in the nation? At this point the creeks may dry up anyway, as we appear to be a some sort of tipping point. The commissioners need to take this a lot more seriously. Greenbelts should be a number one priority, bought up and protected. The county should be buying up open space properties.

8 days ago

I agree that the list should be reordered. Drinking water is first.

11 days ago

Change the order of the list of uses, prioritizing "maintaining healthy & diverse aquatic terrestrial habitat", then "benefits such as erosion & sediment control, etc". Boating should exclude motorized boats, which contribute to both water and air pollution.

16 days ago

I believe that a substantial portion of our streams should be of a quality where you could directly drink the water from the stream. This might not apply downstream from pastures, but could apply elsewhere.

18 days ago

Does not strongly address the economic impact of ambiguous vision. How does this vision impact the financial health of residents?

19 days ago

This statement is on such a level of please-everybody generality that it fails to give a reasonably specific idea of the priorities that will apply. Chiefly, a river system cannot both "support agriculture and rural industries" and at the same time remain a "healthy and diverse ...habitat". -- without some limits being placed on agriculture and industry. Otherwise, it's implicit that habitat quality will have to be compromised so as to serve agricultural and industrial interests. For example, up the Lynch River from my property was, not long ago, a highly polluting turkey farm. Is the river meant to serve such industries at the expense of being a healthy habitat? If it were up to me, I would specify that a river system has to be a healthy and diverse habitat first, and a resource for agriculture and industry only to the extent compatible with being such a habitat.

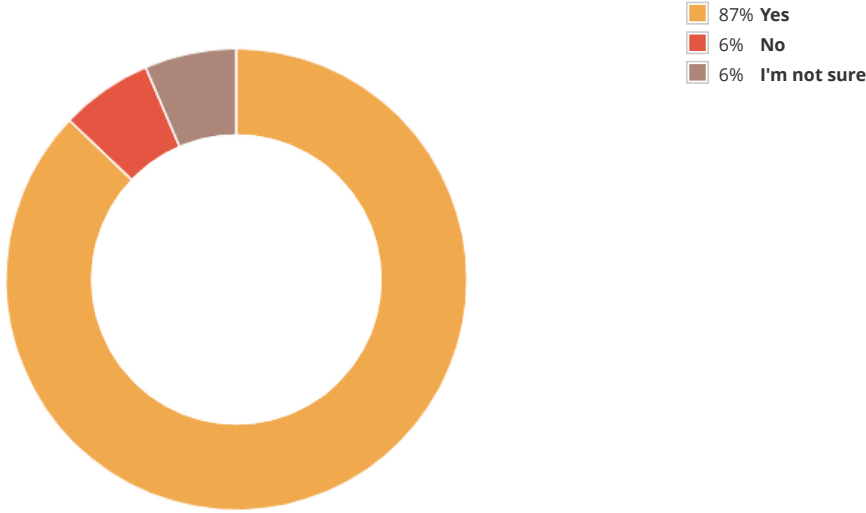
Also, I would prefer something more specific than "flood mitigation." What does this mean? I would prefer to specify something more like "flood mitigation through 'rewilding' wherever feasible of stream banks and beds." In many countries, "rewilding" projects correct misguided efforts from long ago to straighten out waterways, clear away natural obstructions such as boulders, fallen trees, sand and pebble banks etc., all of which slow down and disperse otherwise destructive flooding. My understanding is that the Corps of Engineers was responsible for bulldozing many waterways into straight channels down which flood waters now rush.

19 days ago

I live on Whiskey Ridge farm with a wooded area that slopes steeply down to the river. I protect the river by keeping the forest healthy by cutting only dead or downed trees. I am an artist and do paintings of the river, and I walk, ride my horse beside the river and I canoe on the river.

19 days ago

Goal: Maintain and improve local conditions to ensure that our streams and rivers are meeting or exceeding the state water quality standards. Do you believe this should be one of our community's goals for stream health?



31 respondents

I don't know what the state standards are. Perhaps we should be setting higher standards.

18 days ago

[2 Agree](#)

Provide tax breaks and incentives to property owners who maintain and upkeep stream buffer zones on their property.

19 days ago

[1 Agree](#)

Very broad. Clarify "maintain and improve"

19 days ago

How might we address this goal?

We need a systematic testing program whose results are published.

18 days ago

[3 Agree](#)

I live on the S Rivanna Reservoir below Earlysville Rd. It is distressing to see how much sediment flows into the impoundment behind the dam after every rainstorm. Determining and stemming the sources of this sediment is essential to achieve the goal.

19 days ago

[2 Agree](#)

Water testing for the vineyards. Those herbicides and pesticides are a big problem.

8 days ago

Work with cattle farmers to fence cattle out of streams. Permitting cattle to access streams contributes to both stream sediment issues as well as pollution from cattle wastes. I have dealt with a small upstream cattle operation at my home here in Albemarle County for number of years and see the problem first hand.

14 days ago

Encourage landowners, including county government, to restore waterways edges with native species which will both slow the flow of water as well as support wildlife

16 days ago

Invest in riparian parkland. There's only so much the local govt can do to regulate private land, but if the local govt (i.e., its citizens) prioritize riparian areas, then perhaps the local govt should acquire and manage that land in accordance with best management practices. Incidentally, riparian land can also be a good place for bikeways, due to the naturally gentle gradient when walking parallel with the stream. While building bikeways parallel to big highways (i.e., 29, 250, etc) is good for connecting people to residential and commercial areas, bikeways built parallel to streams can go places highways can't, and allow people to move in harmony with the natural environment, rather than slicing across it with big changes in grade.

16 days ago

Address the farming and continued mowing that occurs along the shores of the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir.

18 days ago

Break-water type concrete or aggregate steps along vulnerable banks of the river. Is the current drainage infrastructure up to standards?

18 days ago

Control run-off!

18 days ago

What is meant in the phrase "improve local conditions"? I would prefer reading, "Maintain and improve local conditions by doing _____ to ensure....."

19 days ago

[1 Agree](#)

Stream health programs must start with care for small streams and their banks.

19 days ago

Agricultural practices such as limiting chemicals in fertilizers and weed control. Incentivize no till agriculture.

19 days ago

See above comment. Improving local conditions means regulating what agriculture and industry discharge into streams and rivers. Mitigating the effects of past projects to straighten out waterways in the manner formerly favored by the U.S. Corps of Engineers is also necessary, which means serious "rewilding" projects.

19 days ago

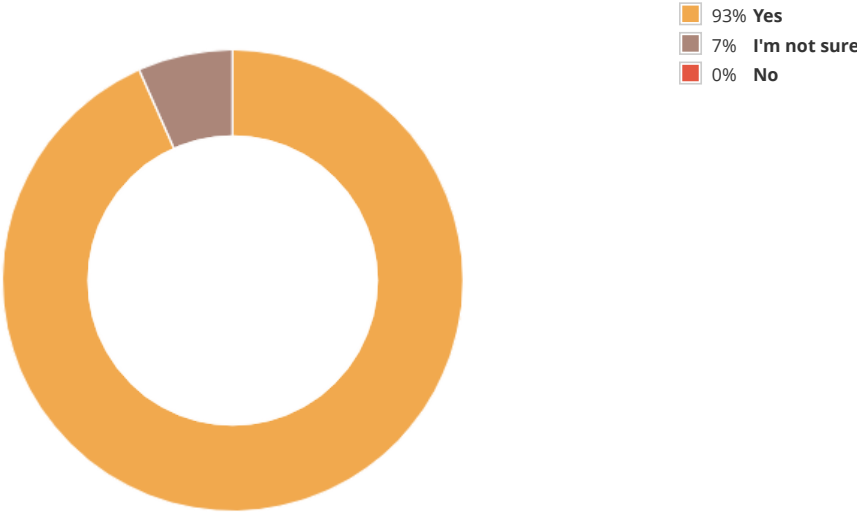
Balance the ecological/environmental with social justice.

19 days ago

Protect the forest and fields that are beside the Rivanna River.

19 days ago

Goal: Increase our understanding of the status and needs of our waterways through monitoring and assessment within our watersheds. Do you believe this should be one of our community's goals for stream health?



30 respondents

It seems that DEQ and local watershed groups already collect data. I don't know if those efforts provide insufficient data to assess local water quality status.

17 days ago

[1 Agree](#)

How might we address this goal?

Bring in outside groups to help with this. The local govt can only do so much, and long-term, I'm not sure if this is an area that we want to spend a lot of money on, especially if we can get groups of "citizen scientists" or other interested parties to help for free.

16 days ago

[⊕ 1 Agree](#)

Make sure that budget is sufficient for studies and monitoring.

18 days ago

[⊕ 1 Agree](#)

Enlist a cadre of environmental activists to go around monitoring streams and reporting to stay on top of good and unhealthy places and providing advice to landowners. Build this into

19 days ago

This is self-evident. Without monitoring and assessment, you know nothing about problems that need solving. It also seems to me that some education of the public is needed regarding livestock grazing in or near streams and rivers, and also removal of downed trees along river banks, which some feel obliged to do, mistakenly in my opinion.

19 days ago

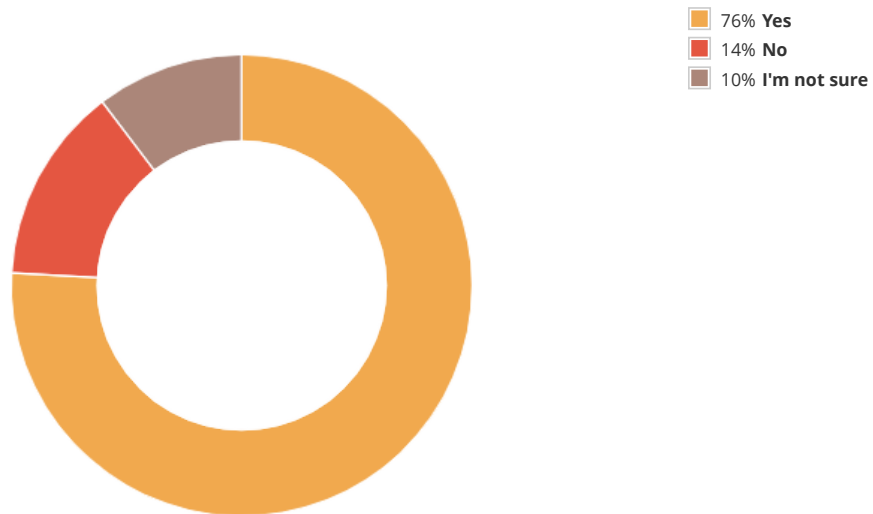
Avoid additional tax breaks...which will only benefit the large land owners and the upper income.

19 days ago

Encourage canoers, kyakers and bikers to not drop trash in the river and pick up any that they see and take it away.

19 days ago

Goal: Strengthen programs, policies, and enforcement mechanisms to have clear, effective, and enforceable measures. Do you believe this should be one of our community's goals for stream health?



29 respondents

Enforcement is negative. Incentivize landowners to upkeep stream health. Don't make streams a liability. Make them an asset

19 days ago

[+ 2 Agree](#)

Enforceable is key. If it's not enforceable, then there's no point in writing the ordinance...it may end up costing more in court battles, etc. And I also agree with the other commenters -- if our approach is heavy on rules and enforcement, but light on education, incentivization, gamification, or synergy, then this initiative would probably lose support, and fail to capture the imagination of the public at large.

16 days ago

[+ 1 Agree](#)

I agree with the comment below that enforcement is negative. Incentives are better. Living beside a stream should not be a liability.

19 days ago

[+ 1 Agree](#)

I like strengthening programs and policies, especially to incentivize positive action, provide cost share/grants for implementation. Enforcement should be reserved for permitted sources.

17 days ago

Align policy and enforcement with proven results and enforce current policies resulting in effective change

19 days ago

[+ 1 Agree](#)

I'm still not convinced there's anything wrong with our waterways.

19 days ago

How might we address this goal?

Incentivize waterway health. Provide tax breaks and tax incentives to keep waterways at peak health. I dont need the gov penalizing me. I need the gov to incentivize and support my unusable land protected by the stream buffer ordinances

19 days ago

[⊕ 1 Agree](#)

Start buying up the open land for sale for greenbelts.

8 days ago

This goal will best be achieved with careful legal study. I advise routing any proposed programs, policies, or enforcement mechanisms through an internal (local govt) and external (opposition perspectives) legal review. Ultimately, the BOS will have to make a judgement call if the final proposals lack a sound legal backing.

16 days ago

[⊕ 1 Agree](#)

Walk the talk as to enforcement.

18 days ago

Standards and policies should be developed by a committee of local experts. They could propose both positive and negative enforcement measures, that should be considered and adopted by the BOS.

19 days ago

[⊕ 1 Agree](#)

This should apply not just to agriculture and industry, but to all owners and users of property alongside streams and rivers.

19 days ago

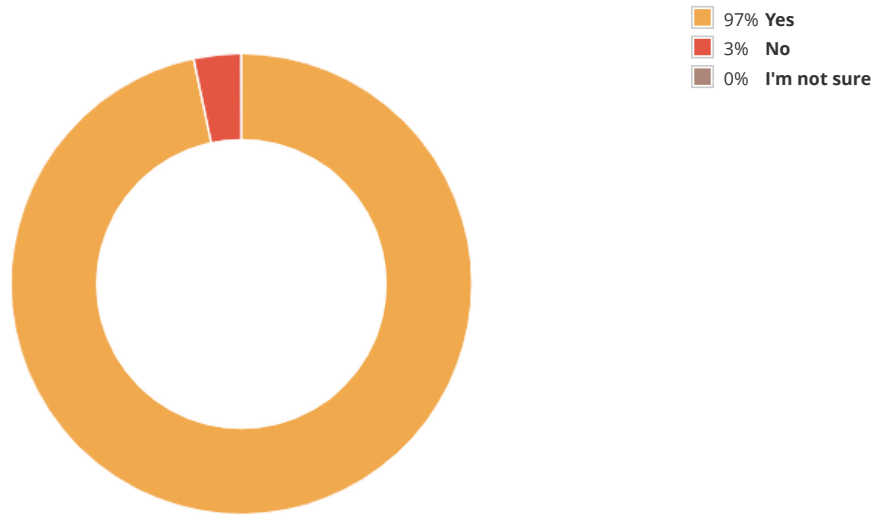
Expand the decision making role via participation of the low income, very small (i.e. lot) owners in a meaningful manner.

19 days ago

Incentives are preferable but you know there will be jerks who require something additional.

19 days ago

Goal: Increase and promote incentives and voluntary measures that protect stream health. Do you believe this should be one of our community's goals for stream health?



30 respondents

You don't need to say "increase ". Just promote

19 days ago

How might we address this goal?

Discount land taxes currently protect under stream buffer ordinances.

19 days ago

[1 Agree](#)

Bring the children to the creeks and teach them about stream health. There are a few creeks on state property that they could study but overall, we need more greenbelt areas.

8 days ago

Incentives sound good, but if we're talking about tax rates, development rights, etc, then bear in mind that incentivizing group "A" will be perceived as essentially penalizing group "B". (Runs the risk of turning into another "rain tax" fiasco. While the underlying logic - that land cover is a pretty good correlate for runoff generation - is sound, the public perceived the stormwater utility fee as effectively imposing a new tax on rural areas.)

16 days ago

This would contribute to community "buy-in."

18 days ago

incentives are fine, but we really need clear rules and strong enforcement.

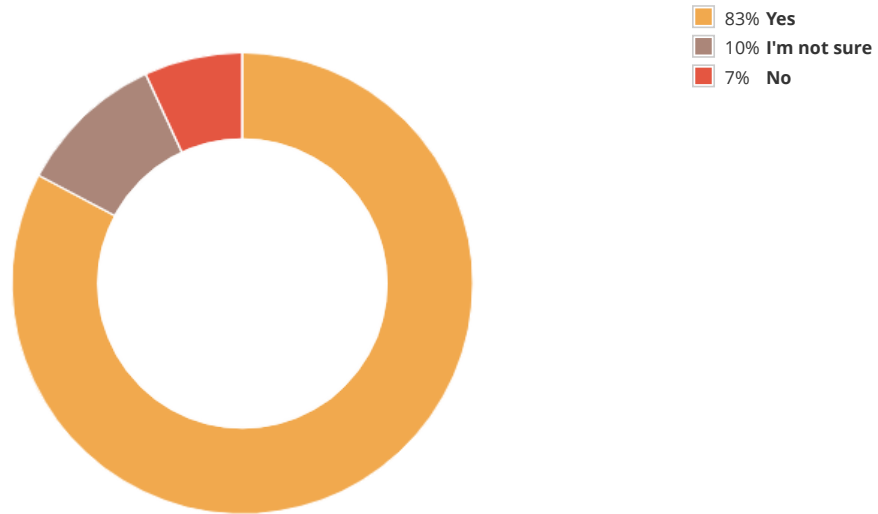
18 days ago

Minimizing erosion and runoff should be a landowner responsibility. Short term incentives to offset modification costs are ok but in the end, it should be a requirement.

19 days ago

[1 Agree](#)

Goal: Protect and restore riparian systems to maintain and enhance the benefits they provide to people and the natural environment. Do you believe this should be one of our community's goals for stream health?



29 respondents

Depends on the impacts on my rights.

18 days ago

Ambiguous. Define how this action will impact residents. Specially the economic impact

19 days ago

Once you open the topic of "systems" you start to control all the land and not just the water. This is concerning. What happens to property rights?

19 days ago

How might we address this goal?

Engage nonprofits (ducks unlimited, friends of the watershed,) to replant or repair waterway areas.

19 days ago

[3 Agree](#)

Expand and target long range educational programming to involve youths to value and participate in protection of streams.

19 days ago

[2 Agree](#)

You need a grant to supply creek front owners with plants or a place to buy cheap affordable native stream bank plants.

8 days ago

Ensure that county-owned land is being managed responsibly.

16 days ago

[1 Agree](#)

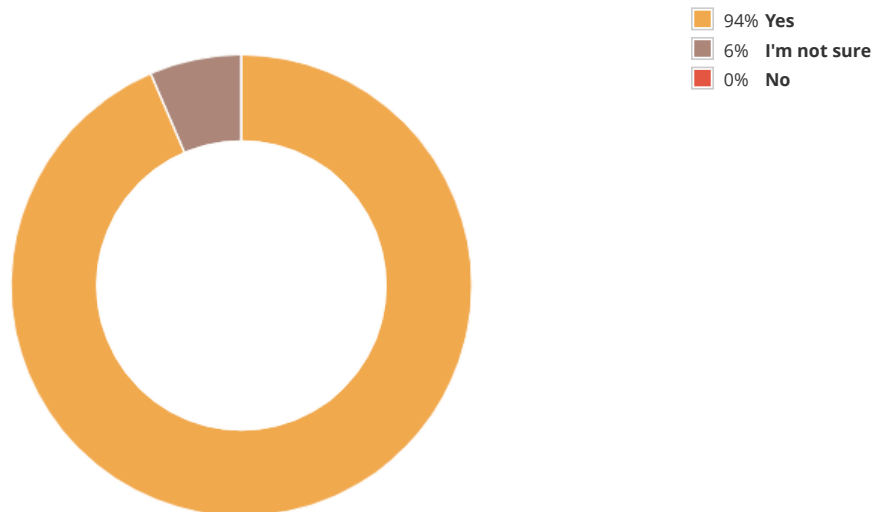
Again we need to ensure proper budgeting is in place.

18 days ago

Please see above comments about "rewilding" projects for streams and rivers. You might look to Sweden for example of this done on a serious scale, the goal there being to make a better habitat for fish, specifically salmon. This, of course, is a major benefit to be derived from riparian systems. Rivers in Albemarle County used to be stocked with fish, but it seems this is no longer the case. My guess is that fish had nowhere to shelter, especially from the onrush of floods.

19 days ago

Goal: Foster a well-informed and educated public that understands the importance of stream health, local policies, best management practices, and individual actions that can affect stream health. Do you believe this should be one of our community's goals for stream health?



31 respondents

How might we address this goal?

See my comment in the immediate above.

19 days ago

[⊕ 2 Agree](#)

Yes, but also educate people about the importance of not having over development and the importance of creating an extensive map of greenbelt areas. If you were able to tax UVA for all their free commercial space in town, you could generate revenue for buying greenbelt areas.

8 days ago

Community out-reach programs that can be presented to Ruritan Club members, Elks Lodge members, etc. Scout club meetings.

18 days ago

If there is a way to list the properties that include or border streams, that list would provide the population that it is most important to reach - a substantial subset of the county's population. (The owners will change over time, and the properties will be constant.) The county would have a list of mailing addresses to periodically send educational materials.

19 days ago

[⊕ 1 Agree](#)

Positive articles in local newspapers, posters or flyers can be helpful.

19 days ago

Is there anything else related to the Stream Health Initiative you'd like to share with the project team?

Make available a service which, on request, would analyze the health of the stream on a landowner's property.

Also, pay attention to waterways as a conduit for the spread of invasive plants and address the issue of streamside protection to avoid spreading invasive plants downstream and infecting other landowners' properties.

18 days ago

[⊕ 2 Agree](#)

Be very careful how a program affects landowners (especially Farmers) and what the staff and tax or fee implementation will be.

11 days ago

Focus on the balance between economic impact and environmental issues.

19 days ago

The Stream Health Initiative is a good way to spread the word. Thank you.

19 days ago
