
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Executive Order 90 (2005)

IMPROVING STREAM HEALTH AND WATER QUALITY BY RESTORING STREAMS THROUGHOUT THE COMMONWEALTH

Stewardship of rivers and streams is essential to meeting the goals of restoring water quality throughout the Commonwealth. Improving stream channel function and structure through stream channel restoration is a critical component for the continued health of rivers and streams throughout the Commonwealth.

Virginia is experiencing diminished stream health due to incompatible practices on land or changes in land uses. These impacts to stream health can be mitigated through stream channel restoration, preservation and enhancement of streams and their riparian buffers. While mitigation is required for permitted impacts to streams, currently there is no formal inter-agency arrangement within the Commonwealth to track and identify both regulatory and non regulatory losses, as well as areas of opportunities for stream mitigation.

The range of possible stream restoration activities include in-stream engineered practices to rehabilitate unstable stream segments, stream bank stabilization practices to minimize bank erosion, improvements to fish and aquatic habitats, maintenance of healthy riparian corridors, and storm water retrofits and watershed management to minimize flood damage.

The Chesapeake 2000 agreement called for stream restoration under the Water Quality Protection and Restoration, Vital Habitat Protection and Restoration and Sound Land Use commitments.

The Chesapeake Bay Program's Forestry Work Group, under direction from the Chesapeake Bay Nutrient Subcommittee, crafted a new goal for establishing riparian forest buffers and stream restoration utilizing federal, state, and local government as well as non-government expertise. The Chesapeake Executive Council signed Directive 03-01 on December 9, 2003.

The following programmatic and policy goal regarding stream restoration is included in the signed Chesapeake Executive Council Directive 03-01:

...seek to increase contiguously forested stream corridors, protect headwater streams, target high nitrogen source areas, and *integrate forest buffer restoration with fish passage, stream restoration, and living resource objectives.*

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor under Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and under the laws of the Commonwealth, including but not limited to Title 2.2 of the *Code of Virginia*, and subject to my continuing and ultimate authority and responsibility to act in such matters, I hereby establish the Stream Restoration Initiative to actively promote and coordinate stream restoration in the Commonwealth and reduce stream corridor degradation through proper watershed planning and targeted restoration activities.

[The Virginia Stream Alliance](#)

As part of this initiative, I hereby create the Virginia Stream Alliance (hereinafter called the Alliance) to formalize and coordinate a Stream Restoration Initiative for the Commonwealth of Virginia. This Alliance is created to facilitate cooperation among both government and non-government entities to effectively promote stream restoration activities at the state and local levels.

[Composition of the Virginia Stream Alliance](#)

The Alliance shall operate under the direction of the Secretary of Natural Resources in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, Secretary of Transportation, and Secretary of Commerce and Trade. The Chair of the Alliance shall initially be appointed by the Secretary of Natural Resources from a participating state agency. The Chair shall then rotate annually among the other state agencies represented on the Alliance as determined by the Alliance and approved by the Secretary.

The Alliance shall consist of staff from the following state agencies and institutions:

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
The Department of Conservation and Recreation
The Department of Environmental Quality Division of Water Quality

The Department of Forestry
The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
The Department of Mines and Minerals
The Institute of Marine Science at the College of William and Mary
The Marine Resources Commission
The Virginia Department of Transportation
The School of Agriculture, Science and Technology at Virginia State University
The College of Natural Resources at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Virginia Commonwealth University Center for Environmental Studies

In response to letters from the Secretary of Natural Resources requesting staff representation for the Alliance, the heads of these Commonwealth's agencies and institutions shall appoint members of their respective staffs to serve on the Alliance.

In addition, the Secretary of Natural Resources may invite representatives from the following agencies and institutions to participate in the Alliance:

United States Fish and Wildlife Service
United States Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District
United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service
United States Forest Service
Virginia Cooperative Extension Service at Virginia Tech and Virginia State University
Region III of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, including the Chesapeake Bay Program

Furthermore, owing to the collaborative nature of this effort any local government or non-governmental entity participating in stream restoration efforts may be invited by the Secretary of Natural Resources.

I authorize state agencies to consider lands under state management for appropriate stream restoration, identify impacted stream segments, and implement restoration activities with resources provided by the respective agency, the Alliance, or other available sources.

The Alliance shall report to the Governor yearly by November 1 through the Secretary regarding the Commonwealth's statewide progress and, in particular, improvements in the process of identifying impacted stream segments, the methodology for instituting restoration activity, and the number of miles of streams restored in the Commonwealth. All agencies directed by this Order will cooperate to provide technical assistance to local projects, as appropriate and practicable, and to direct available financial resources to such projects.

This Executive Order shall become effective upon its signing and shall remain in full force and effect until December 31, 2010, unless amended or rescinded by further Executive Order.

Given under my hand and under the seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia on this 14th day of July 2005.

Mark R. Warner, Governor

Attest:

Secretary of the Commonwealth