

Meeting notes
Rivanna River Basin Commission Monitoring Subcommittee
September 8, 2009

Attendance: Jeff Sitler, Greg Harper, Dan Frisbee, Leslie Middleton, Joanna Curran, John Murphy

Decisions

1) We will proceed with implementation of the monitoring component of the NFWF-funded BMP program. Implementation will be carried out in phases, allowing us to adapt according to lessons learned along the way. The first phase includes a) biomonitoring, habitat assessments, and stream morphology characterization and monitoring at Fluvanna High School and b) measuring stormflow attenuation and nutrient removal at the Charlottesville High School bioswale.

2) The Chesapeake Bay Program RFP will be pursued by UVA Engineering Department (Joanna Curran). If the application is successful, the grant will probably fund the collection of stream stormflow water quality data (e.g. stormflow TSS). These data could be quite useful to the RRBC in its quest to develop “best possible” management recommendations.

Discussion:

We reviewed the history of the TAC’s decision to focus on altered hydrology and associated sedimentation, and re-acknowledged the need to design long-term monitoring to address this focus. Greg Harper reminded us that most (~85% in Albemarle County) stormwater flowing from altered land surfaces (deforested, impervious, etc.) is not treated by any kind of BMP. We reminded ourselves that current and future stormwater management requirements will not necessarily address the legacy landscape, and we discussed the need to perform monitoring and studies that put this problem into perspective. That is, to what extent do we need to treat/restore whole watersheds (as opposed site-scale restorations and BMPs) in order to achieve hydrological conditions similar to those encountered in undisturbed watersheds (*i.e.* mimic the native forested condition).

We listed numerous potential components of a long term monitoring program and recognized the need to prioritize these and other components and to graduate from the “shopping list” to a carefully designed long term program:

1) *Database/repository of studies and reports*, 2) *geographic information system* (to make use of historic data, to organize data and information and to facilitate analyses), 3) *BMP inventory* (to facilitate assessment of BMP effectiveness), 4) *sediment cores*, 5) *sediment fingerprinting* (to better understand watershed history, legacy land use effects, and sediment sources), 6) *stream gages* (for more flow and stormflow data), 7) *stream surveys* (for characterization of riparian condition)