

STREAM HEALTH INITIATIVE

Alignment with other County Plans

Comprehensive Plan
<i>Natural Resources</i>
Objective 1: Ensure clean and abundant water resources for public health, business, healthy ecosystems, and personal enjoyment by preventing shortages and contamination.
Strategy 1a: Continue to apply the Watershed Protection Ordinance throughout the County to help protect and preserve water resources.
Strategy 1d: Educate the public on how they can help with water resource protection.
Objective 4: Protect the biological diversity and ecological integrity of the County in both the Rural Area and Development Areas.
Objective 6: Retain and improve land cover near rivers and streams and protect wetlands.
Strategy 6a: Continue to use the Water Protection Ordinance, critical slopes regulations, and other measures to preserve designated river and stream valleys in their natural state, to protect significant resources associated with river and stream valleys, and to provide buffer areas.
<i>Historic, Cultural, and Scenic Resources</i>
Objective 6: Continue to protect and enhance scenic resources for residents and tourists.
Strategy 6a: Continue to promote voluntary measures to protect for scenic resources.
Objective 9: Protect the scenic quality of Albemarle's streams.
<i>Rural Area</i>
Objective 2: Protect and preserve natural resources, which include mountains, hills, valleys, rivers, streams, groundwater, and continuous and unfragmented land for agriculture, forestry, biodiversity and natural resource protection.
Strategy 2b: Provide information to property owners in the Rural Area on alternatives to subdividing their land, including donating conservation easements and use value taxation.
Strategy 2d: Continue to promote conservation easements to provide a financially attractive way for landowners to protect family farms in Albemarle County and their unique open space resources, to provide an opportunity for landowners to voluntarily sell a conservation easement to a public agency to be held in trust for perpetuity, and to preserve important features of the Rural Area for all.
Strategy 2e: Strengthen the Acquisition of Conservation Easements (ACE) Program by providing a stable dedicated funding source and staff resources for administering the program.
Strategy 2f: Continue to provide staff support to the Public Recreational Facility Authority (PRFA).
Strategy 2i: Encourage connectivity of conservation land wherever feasible.
Objective 7: Provide information to citizens so they are well-informed and understand the cultural, economic, and ecological aspects of the Rural Area.
Strategy 7a: Inform existing property owners, realtors, and prospective property owners in the Rural Area that the Rural Area is not intended for residential development. Instead, emphasis is placed on stewardship of the land, retaining agricultural and forestal activities, protecting natural resources and maintaining unfragmented land to protect biodiversity.
<i>Development Area</i>
Objective 8: Preserve natural systems which are shown for preservation on Master Plan Land Use Plans.
Strategy 8a: Continue to provide detailed information on elevation, steep slopes, streams, stream buffers, floodplain, and wooded areas through the County's Geographic Information System (GIS) on-line database and share this information with property owners and developers
Strategy 8b: Review new State and federal water resource protection requirements for consistency with County stream buffer regulations in the Development Area. If necessary, update County stream buffer regulations for intermittent streams and modify Master Plans accordingly.

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Climate Action Plan
<i>Landscape, Natural Resources, And Agriculture</i>
L.1.1: Maintain and increase the County’s land-conservation programs and related efforts, with a focus on keeping large forested properties intact and in forested land cover, to protect and increase carbon sequestration, as well as to protect water quality and habitat.
L.1.3: Connect landowners with existing funding sources, conservation assistance programs, and succession planning resources to minimize parcelization and fragmentation of farms and forested properties.
L.1.5: Include the carbon trapping potential of land as part of the ranking methodology for the County’s Acquisition of Conservation Easements (ACE) program, and offer additional points for landowners willing to commit to carbon-informed land management.
L.1.6: Provide general educational resources for landowners regarding the benefits of protecting, restoring, and appropriately managing natural areas.
L.1.7: Assess the feasibility of new programs or ordinances to further incentivize natural resource protection, restoration, and management.
L.1.11: Promote small forests (“Victory Forests”) instead of lawns on large lot subdivision parcels and other large rural residential parcels. Ensure equitable access for property owners of a full range of incomes and property sizes.
L.1.13: Incentivize and support the protection, enhancement, and restoration of vegetated riparian buffers and wildlife habitat corridors for multiple benefits, including carbon sequestration.
L.2.1: Promote the use of trees, shrubs, rain gardens, and native meadows in lieu of turf grass in landscape design and property management; encourage native species for additional benefits.
L.2.3: Provide education, resources, and assistance to landowners.
L.2.6: Reduce paved/impervious surfaces to mitigate heat islands.
L.3.1: Provide education, resources, assistance, and incentives to property owners and agricultural producers regarding rotational grazing methods, cropland management, agroforestry, and other best management practices that both improve soil health and increase carbon sequestration.
L.3.2: Encourage and incentivize retention of forest cover and carbon-informed management of managed forestland.
L.5.5: Continue to fund the Albemarle Conservation Assistance Program to provide support to residents for carbon-sequestration projects and other environmental improvement projects on residential land.
L.5.6: Provide information resources for County residents on land management techniques and tree-species selection for successful carbon sequestration.

Biodiversity Action Plan
1.1: Develop strategies to conserve and protect lands in the conservation focus areas.
1.2: Use existing conservation tools (e.g. conservation easements) to protect lands in the conservation focus areas, where possible.
1.3: Take appropriate actions to conserve and protect the high priority Important Sites identified in Appendix C.
1.4: Use existing conservation tools and develop strategies to protect lands that can serve as habitat corridors or connections among important habitat areas.
1.6: Educate and inform landowners about the conservation value and importance of conserving Important Sites, with special focus on the high priority sites.
1.7: Educate and inform the public about the conservation value and importance of conserving lands in the three conservation focus areas.
2.1: Promote the county’s ACE and PRFA conservation easement programs. Promote and support conservation easement programs of other organizations.
2.2: Revise ACE and PRFA easement-acceptance criteria to reflect biodiversity values and conservation needs. Incorporate data from this report and the NHC in assessing biodiversity values.
2.3: Ensure that all easements held by the county include terms that protect specifically identified biodiversity and other natural resources identified on the property.

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Biodiversity Action Plan (cont.)
3.2: Contact the landowners of Important Sites throughout Albemarle County to educate and inform them of the biodiversity resources on and near their property. Develop relationships and encourage conservation of the land.
3.3: Conduct landowner workshops and other events aimed at educating target audiences and the general public and promoting conservation.
3.4: Serve as an information source and clearinghouse for landowners. Promote conservation efforts on the part landowners and the general public.
5.1: Target areas containing large forest blocks and promote their protection through conservation easements and other habitat protection tools.
5.2: Target areas of forested and other habitat corridors connecting large forest blocks and promote their protection.
5.3: Promote protection of forested and other habitat corridors with road and waterway crossings favorable to animal movements and prioritize these corridors for conservation.
14.1: Upon completing a review of current stream buffer rules, the county should strengthen stream buffer requirements.
14.2: Inform and educate landowners about the county's buffer regulations. Ensure that landowners who convert land from agriculture or forestry to a different land use are informed.
14.3: Educate the public on the value of stream buffers. Promote and support existing cost-share programs for buffers and livestock exclusion from streams. Promote locally native riparian plantings on non-agricultural lands through VCAP and other programs.
15.1: Educate landowners regarding cost share programs to create wetland buffers and exclude livestock from them.
16.1: Establish protection standards for urban streams.
16.4: Develop policies that encourage protection of existing natural streams and wetlands rather than the construction of stormwater facilities.
17.1: Allow Nutrient Banks and Wetland Mitigation banks as by-right uses adjoining the Rivanna River.
20.2: Create and assemble documents from other sources and develop mechanisms for the dispersal of information on biodiversity education topics
20.4: Create and distribute an informational flyer, to be mailed with tax bills, that provides simple landowner tips that promote biodiversity, best stewardship practices, and includes a link to the county's Natural Heritage web page.
20.6: Create and disperse a welcome package for new landowners with information about best practices for enhancing biodiversity on their property and opportunities for placing property in a conservation easement.