



RIVANNA RIVER STEWARD REPORT

River Stewards: Dan Triman

Date: 07-27-18

Starting Location and Time: North Fork – 29 Bridge / Camelot (10:00 AM)

Ending Location and Time: Darden Towe Park (3:00 PM)

Weather: Partly Cloudy Recent Precipitation: Some rain this week

USGS Gauges: Earlysville 2.10 ft (140 cfs), Palmyra 3.80 ft (900 cfs)

Water Color: Brownish Water Odor: None Air Temp: 80° F

DO: 6 ppm PH: 7 Turbidity: 40 JTU Water Temp: 28° C

Water Testing Location: Just before 29 bridge River Left (38°09.2'N 78°25.3'W)

Land Use:

Mostly private land, with some farms and residential. Good vegetation buffer around the River for the whole stretch of the Rivanna.

Wildlife Sightings and Plant Life:

Ducks, Turtles, Sandpipers, 2 Red Fox, 2 Beavers, 3 Young Deer, 3 Ospreys, 2 Blue Herons, Green Heron, Fish, Geese, Dragonflies, Butterflies, Spiders, Vultures, and Crow. More large downed trees than I could count in the water from the recent floods, with vegetation along banks very lush and green. One patch of dense bamboo on the North Fork near the Confluence with the South Fork at River Right. Many severely eroded banks seen today, mostly on outside of curves in River.

People Interactions:

I was joined on this paddle by Jacob Chaffin, a DGIF Conservation Police Officer. Nobody else on the North Fork portion of the paddle, but there were lots of people in the river on kayaks, SUPs, fishing, and swimming between the Confluence of the North and South Forks and Darden Towe.

Litter and Pollution:

We collected about 2 large trash bags worth of trash today. There was a wide range of objects found including plastic bottles, metal cans, sports balls, inner tubes, pieces of metals, chairs and furniture, a grill cart, coolers, a bicycle, a pile of bricks and construction debris, and probably 40 or so tires scattered all over the entire stretch of the Rivanna we paddled.



Overall Summary:

This paddle involved the southernmost 10 miles of the North Fork of the Rivanna River (from the 29 Bridge at the Camelot neighborhood down to the Confluence with the South Fork), and then another 3 miles from the Confluence down to Darden Towe Park on the main stem of the Rivanna River. So in total, we paddled 13 miles.

The rain we had the past week brought the water level on the North Fork up enough to do the paddle today without too much boat scraping on the bottom of the river and rocks. However, the recent floods we had resulted in severe destruction of the trees on the banks of the Rivanna River. Pretty much the entire route had large trees down from the floods. We lost count of how many places there were that had trees down across the River. Only a handful of these places were ones that the trees completely blocked the entire route and we had to get out and walk the kayaks. There were also several places where you could just squeeze by the downed trees, or that you could paddle under a fallen tree trunk that was up out of the water. Locations of some of the worst blockages of the River from downed trees were the following: 1) 38.149840°N 78.42070°W, 2) 38.12513°N 78.39919°W, 3) 38.11259°N 78.40678°W, 4) 38.09030°N 78.40926°W, and 5) 38.08305°N 78.42481°W.

Paddling this stretch of the North Fork of the Rivanna River is not recommended until the tree situation is addressed. There are too many places with strainers and safety hazards (especially when the water levels are up). The floods also added to the severe erosion on a lot of the banks of the North Fork.

We saw lots of great wildlife today in and around the river as well, the highlights of which were an osprey that kept flying up ahead of us and which we got to see attempt to catch a fish in the river, 2 young deer hopping their way across the River, 2 young red foxes on the bank, and 2 beaver sitting on a bank as we paddled by.

Actions Needed – level of priority (1 highest/5 lowest):

2 – Tree clean up / removal to make the paddle safe for boaters; 3 – Remove some of the larger trash objects found; 3 – address old power lines and poles that are sitting on eroding bank on North Fork between Proffit Rd and Confluence with South Fork.



Figure 1: 1st of many tires – this one just before 29 bridge



Figure 2: Tree down across 29 bridge columns.

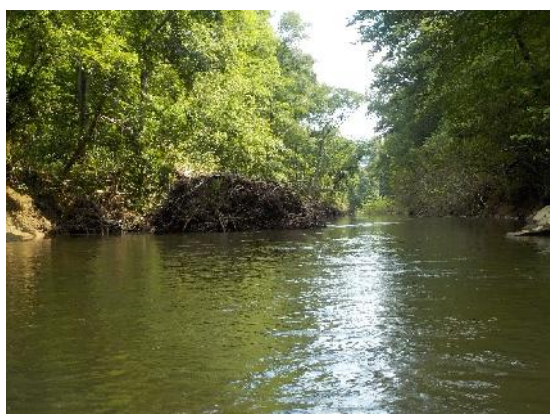


Figure 3: Example of massive tree root ball in the River



Figure 4: Bicycle caught in debris on river bank
(Location - 38.15454°N 78.41553°W)



Figure 5: Another buried tire



Figure 6: One of the young red foxes (see arrow)



Figure 7: Grill cart on the bank
(Location - 38.15161°N 78.41650°W)



Figure 8: Tree down blocking the River



Figure 9: Pile of bricks and construction debris
(Location - 38.14706°N 78.40829°W)



Figure 10: Recliner chair on the bank



Figure 11: Example of severely eroded bank



Figure 12: Railroad Bridge



Figure 13: Another tree down blocking the River



Figure 14: Butterfly that landed on my kayak paddle



Figure 15: Vulture on the look-out



Figure 16: Old bridge abutment

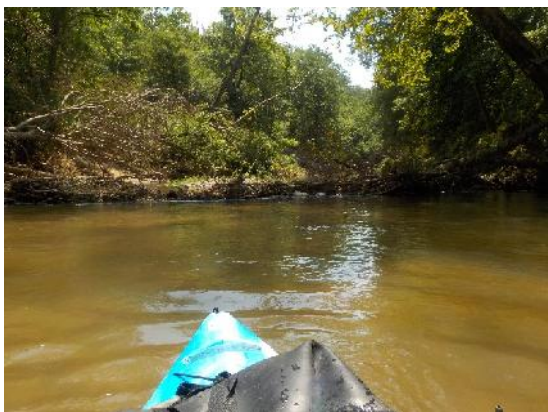


Figure 17: Another tree down blocking the River

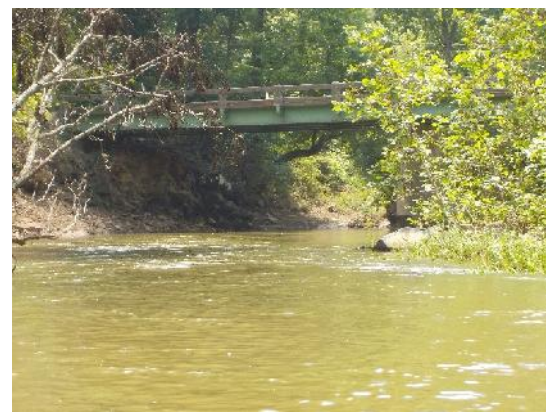


Figure 18: Proffit Rd Bridge



Figure 19: Old power lines on eroding bank (River Right On North Fork between Proffit Rd Bridge and Confluence with South Fork)



Figure 20: Patch of dense bamboo



Figure 21: View of Confluence looking upstream



Figure 22: Blue Heron standing on a log



Figure 23: Turtles relaxing on a log



Figure 24: Trash collected during the paddle