



RIVANNA RIVER STEWARD REPORT

River Stewards: Justin Altice & Mariah Burgess

Date: 5/17/20

Starting Location and Time: Riverview Park (4:00 PM)

Ending Location and Time: Milton Landing (6:00 PM)

Weather: Cloudy, rain in the forecast Recent Precipitation: Rainfall for the week was <1"

USGS Gauges: SF Rivanna River 3.1 ft (194 ft²/sec), NF Rivanna River 5.77 ft (107 ft²/sec), Palmyra 3.24 ft (478 ft²/sec)

Water Color: Clear Water Odor: None Air Temp: 65° F

DO: 5 ppm pH: 8 Turbidity: 10 JTU Water Temp: 61° F

Water Testing Location: Confluence with Moores Creek

Land Use:

The majority of this section is private land in Albemarle County. Development is sparse and conservation easements encompass an approximate and combined 2.5 bank miles between I-64 and Barn Branch tributary under the Thomas Jefferson Foundation. Luck Stone, a stone quarry company, owns and/or operates along an approximate and combined 1.5 bank miles beginning where Barn Branch feeds into the Rivanna. The railroad road runs along river right for several miles. There is also a major utility corridor along both sides of the river.

Wildlife Sightings and Plant Life:

Many river-dependent species were out and active at the time we paddled. Along the way, we observed: a muskrat gathering leaf material, a fish hunting a frog, two bald eagles soaring, green and blue herons hunting, multiflora rose (invasive) blooming, various bird species hunting and gathering, and turtles huddled together on logs along the river's edge.

People Interactions:

Although we did not talk to many people directly, there were several community members hanging out along the banks and many others fishing. Some whitewater paddlers were posted up at rapids. There were about five vehicles located at the Milton access point.



Litter and Pollution:

There was a significant amount of litter on the river bottom. There were several areas with trees and shrubs acting as strainers along the river banks. See Figure 8.

Hazards:

A downed tree is creating a strainer hazard on river left across from the Riverview Park takeout. See Figure 1.

Overall Summary:

Although it was an overcast day with cooler temperatures, the wildlife sightings made this paddle particularly enjoyable. The water was slow moving but deep, which created good conditions for paddling the rapids. High water events from the past year have left a significant amount of trash in trees and shrubs on this section.

The Riverview and Milton launch sites both are functional, but improvements should be pursued to strengthen these community resources.

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

- 2 – Speak with community groups about conducting a Covid 19-compliant river clean up
- 3 – Work with Albemarle County and City of Charlottesville officials to collaborate on access point improvements



Figure 1: Downed tree has created a strainer on river left. View is from center of river across from Riverview Park boat launch.



Figure 2: Orange flags signal RCA livestake planting locations at Riverview Park, some of which have been removed or damaged.



Figure 3: Confluence with Moores Creek.

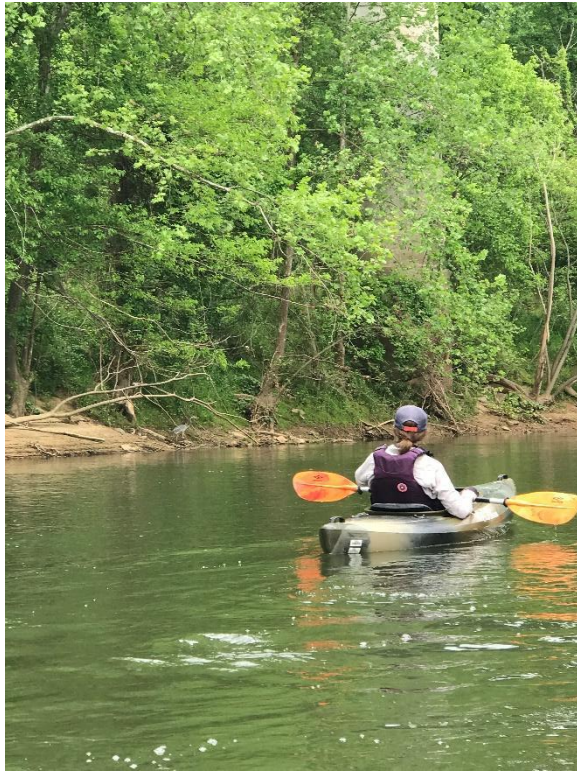


Figure 4: Blue heron observed along the right river bank.



Figure 5: Blue Heron takes flight to the right of wood buildup at railroad bridge.



Figure 6: View passing under the railroad bridge just downstream of I-64.



Figure 7: Which is the River and which is the sky?.



Figure 8: Prevalent trash observed along strainer land areas along the banks.



Figure 9: Milton access steps experiencing erosion that will need to be addressed to avoid creation of a hazard.