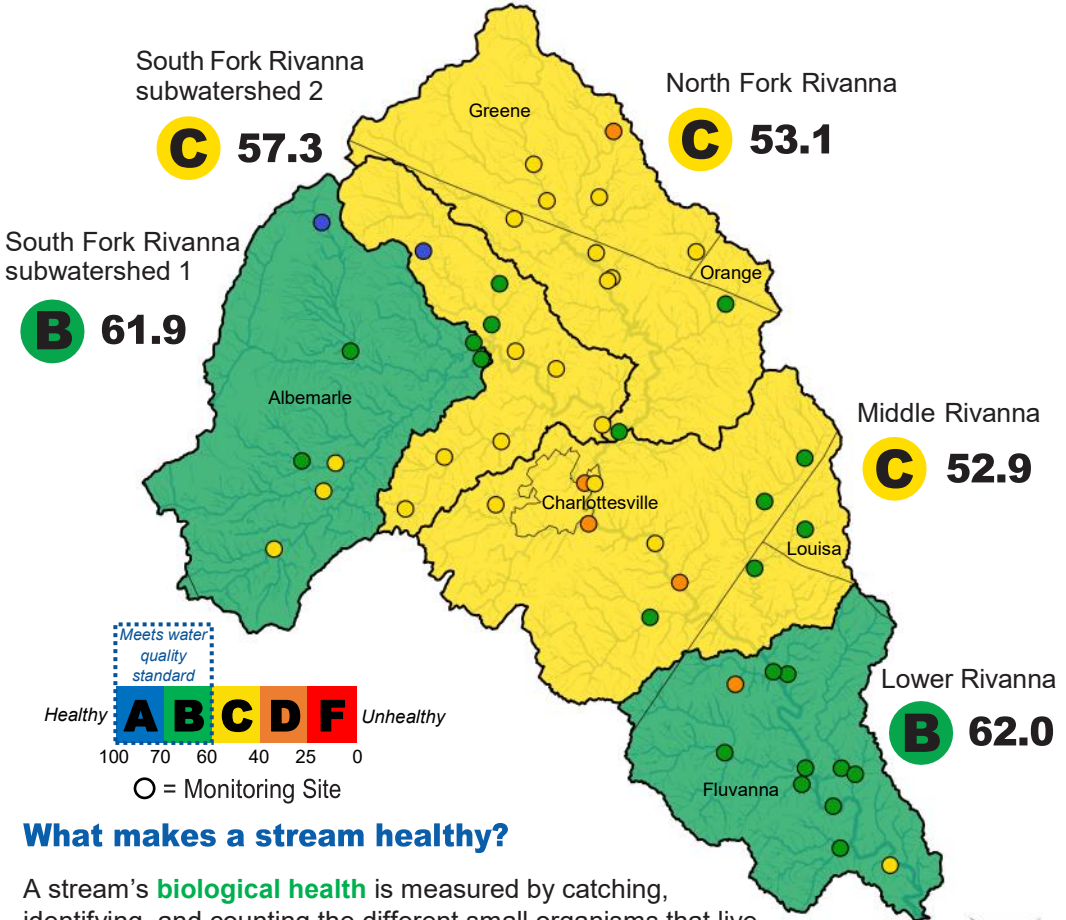




## Biological Health of the Rivanna River Watershed



- Data collected from 2017 to 2022 at RCA's 50 long-term monitoring sites.
- RCA's volunteer stream monitors sample each site every spring and fall.
- Streams that score 60.0 or higher meet Virginia's water quality standard.



### What makes a stream healthy?

A stream's **biological health** is measured by catching, identifying, and counting the different small organisms that live in it, such as clams, crayfish, and stonefly and mayfly larvae. A healthy stream has many different types of organisms living in it (high diversity). It also has organisms that need clean water to survive.

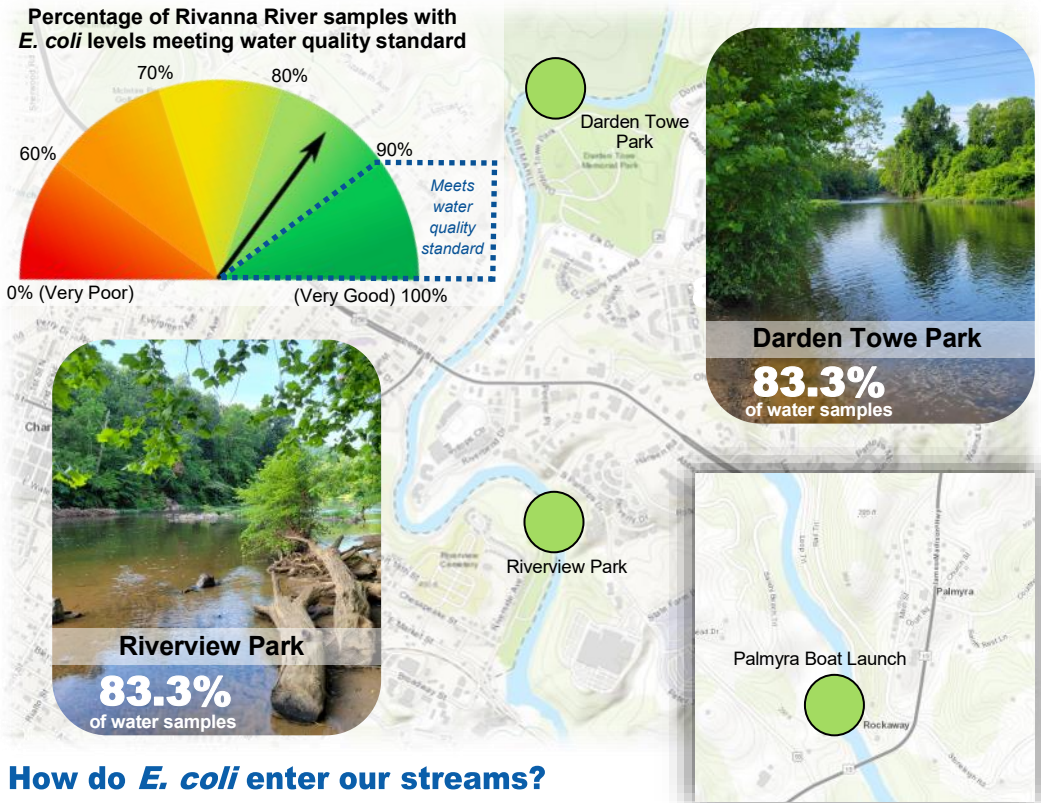


Stream health is important because it affects overall ecosystem health. Organisms in streams help keep our water clean by eating algae, fallen leaves, and debris. They are also an important food source for a wide range of animals, including fish, birds, and otters.

Learn more: [rivannariver.org/long-term-monitoring-program/](https://rivannariver.org/long-term-monitoring-program/)

## Recreational Water Quality of the Rivanna River

- RCA's volunteer stream monitors sampled for *E. coli* bacteria at three recreational sites along the Rivanna River from Memorial Day to Labor Day in 2022.
- Sites meet Virginia's water quality standard for recreation if at least 90% of samples have *E. coli* levels lower than 410 colonies per 100mL of water.



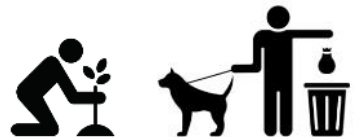
### How do *E. coli* enter our streams?

*E. coli* bacteria are present in human and animal waste and may enter streams through stormwater runoff, leaking sewer pipes and septic systems, and animals in and around waterways.

Heavy rainfall can temporarily elevate *E. coli* levels. When *E. coli* levels are high, people should avoid contact with the water (e.g., swimming & wading) to prevent potentially dangerous illnesses and infections.

### How can we reduce *E. coli* levels in our streams?

- Pick up pet waste and dispose of it properly.
- Fix leaking sewer pipes and maintain septic systems.
- Fence livestock out of streamside areas.
- Plant trees near streams to filter runoff.



Learn more: [rivannariver.org/bacteria](https://rivannariver.org/bacteria)