



Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy

People and Wildlife Living in Harmony

What is Needed For Healthy Streams? What can We Do?

People can preserve healthy streams or restore them to healthy conditions.

- Preserving a natural riparian buffer stabilizes the stream banks and filters rainwater flowing into the stream.
- Preserving a tree canopy shades and cools stream waters and provides leaf litter to feed aquatic insects.
- Preserving a rocky substrate helps aerate the water and provides stable living spaces for aquatic insects and fish.
- Preserving a floodplain with pervious surfaces helps filter and hold rainwater as it soaks into the ground.



A healthy stream with a natural riparian buffer and tree canopy that has been preserved.



A farm with no riparian buffer, eroding stream banks, and sediment in the water because cows have access to the stream.

Actions by people can turn healthy streams in farming areas into unhealthy streams.

- Removing the riparian buffer causes bank erosion, fills the stream with mud and sediment, and warms up the water in the summer.
- Neglecting to install fences and alternative water sources to keep livestock out of streams allows them to erode the stream banks and introduce fecal waste that contaminates the water.