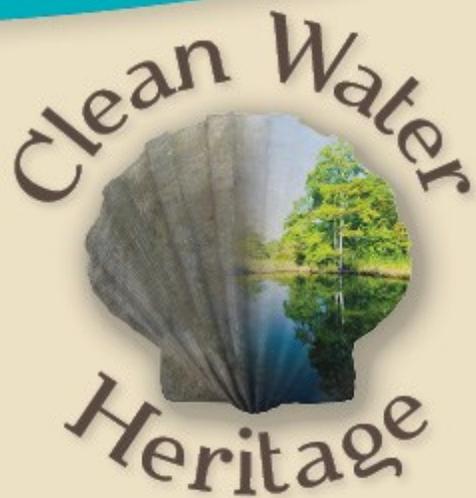


2015 Yarmouth Creek Watershed



Water Quality Report



Restore & Protect

www.jamescitycountyva.gov/857/Stormwater

James City County Water Quality Strategies

As part of a long term commitment to environmental stewardship, James City County volunteers and staff have been gathering information about stream health throughout the County since 2008. The goal of collecting water quality information is to be able to identify emerging water quality problems, target areas for restoration and preservation, document improvements from citizen and County actions and provide educational and volunteer opportunities for the public.

Volunteers and staff collect two types of data: one looks at the types of small creatures that live in streams and the other provides an indication of the amount of harmful bacteria present in a stream. Together, this information provides evidence of the overall health of the County's waterways.

The following information is a summary of known water quality conditions in the County, gleaned from data collected by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, from the County's volunteer water monitoring program and from completed James City County watershed management plans. As more information becomes available, this report will be updated.

Yarmouth Creek Watershed

Yarmouth Creek Watershed is one of eleven James City County Watersheds. Yarmouth Creek flows into the Chickahominy River, which then flows into the James River. The drainage area includes Cranston's Mill Pond and the Little Creek Reservoir, a drinking water source for the City of Newport News. It includes 1,523 acres of wetlands, and most of the watershed is forested with a diverse wildlife population. The upper area of the Yarmouth Creek watershed, where the stream begins, consists of commercial and residential development. New home construction is underway within the headwaters of Yarmouth Creek tributaries.

Water Quality Conditions

Yarmouth Creek is on the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's (VADEQ) impaired waters list for low dissolved oxygen levels, and for aquatic life. Currently there are no health advisories in effect.

Through the Stormwater Division's Water Quality Monitoring Program and the efforts of County staff and citizen volunteers, Yarmouth Creek has been monitored at three different sites. Water quality has typically been in the marginally acceptable range throughout the watershed, with scores meeting Virginia standards.

Problems in the Watershed

- In 2000, all nine of the subwatersheds that make up Yarmouth Creek were considered sensitive. In 2009, water quality had been degraded in one of these subwatersheds, and more are forecasted to likewise become impacted in the future. Yarmouth Creek runs a risk of becoming degraded from construction activities.
- Headwater streams are showing signs of deterioration due to increased development. Unchecked stormwater run-off has eroded stream channels and created severe headcuts in upstream areas. Sediment pushed downstream chokes aquatic vegetation and water drainage capabilities.
- Aging stormwater infrastructure is in need of maintenance and/or repair. Failing stormwater management systems need to be upgraded to prevent further flooding and erosion impacts.

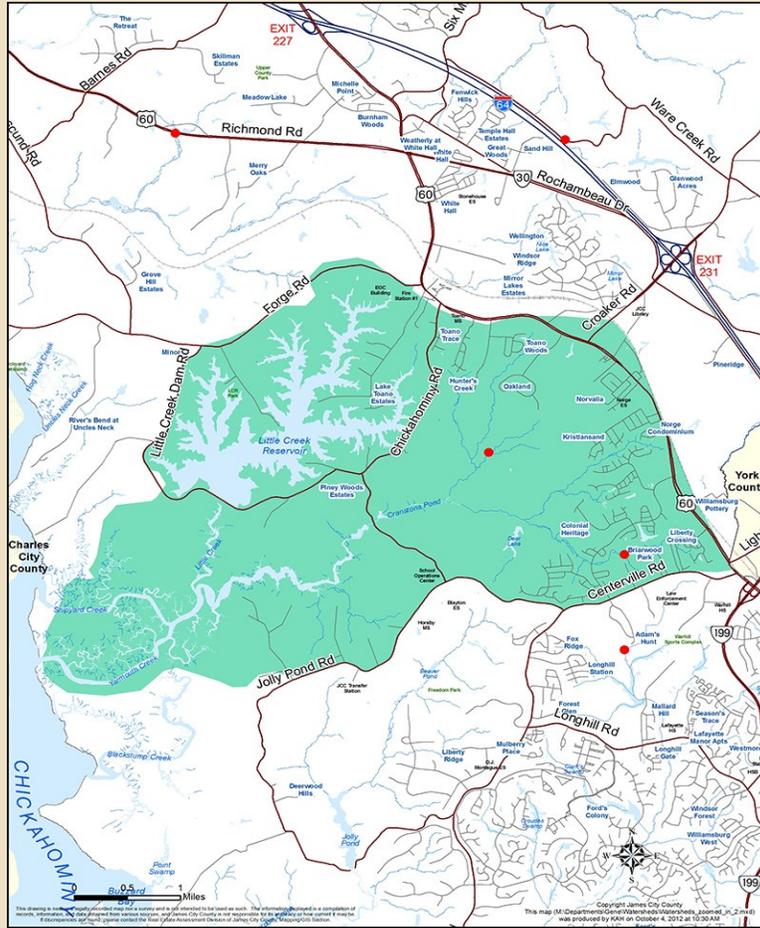
Completed Studies and Plans

- Site Assessment and Conceptual Plan, Kristiansand Tributary Project (WEG, 2008)
- Site Assessment and Conceptual Plan, Centerville Road Tributary Project (WEG, 2008)
- Yarmouth Creek Watershed Management Plan (CWP, 2003)

What Can Citizens Do?

- Clean up after your pet. Pet waste contains bacteria and viruses that are harmful to people and the environment.
- Fertilize properly. Learn about your soil and the type of grass in your yard to make a responsible fertilizing plan. Contact Turf Love at 757-564-2170 for help in identifying your yard needs.
- Leave a natural plant buffer around streams or stormwater ponds. Vegetation filters pollutants before they get to the water.
- Don't put fats and oils down the drain. Fatty deposits build up in the sewer system and can lead to sanitary sewer overflows, leaving harmful bacteria and viruses in the environment.
- Wash your car on grass, not on pavement. Soap and grease will be filtered through the grass and soil before getting into groundwater.
- Plant a rain garden. These beautiful landscaped areas can act as a trap for rain water and can prevent erosion in areas where there is a lot of stormwater run-off.
- Power-wash with care. Look for cleaning products with environmentally-friendly ingredients.
- Don't put leaves and yard clippings in road ditches or on top of storm-drain inlets. Collect leaves and clippings for compost or drop off at a County transfer station.
- Go to askhrgreen.org for more helpful ideas.

Yarmouth Creek Watershed Map



For More Information

If you are interested in more information, go to jamescitycountyva.gov/cleanwater or call 757-259-1446.

James City County continues to be proactive in the protection and preservation of natural resources in its commitment to create and sustain a quality community. Remember...caring for our natural resources requires a team effort. Together, we can make sure water quality in Yarmouth Creek Watershed is protected for generations to come.