

Where is LARA?

LARA works primarily with Elon, Burlington, and Graham, which all contribute stormwater flows to Little Alamance Creek. By working together, these communities can help ensure clean water for today and tomorrow.

LARA is the result of an Ecosystem Enhancement Program funded Local Watershed Plan led by the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments (PTCOG). In 2008, the final plan identified public outreach and education as a priority in restoring Little Alamance Creek. In 2009, the NC Department of Water Quality awarded PTCOG funding to initiate LARA.

If you're interested in working with us to educate and involve the public on water quality issues, or to schedule a presentation, please contact:

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What is LARA?

LARA is an initiative to improve water quality conditions on Little Alamance Creek through public awareness and involvement.

Little Alamance Creek is in a highly urbanized watershed. This means there's a lot of impermeable surfaces like rooftops, roads, sidewalks and parking lots. Because water can no longer soak into the ground, it's got to find somewhere to go. Along the way, it collects pollutants and carries them into a stream, or through a stormdrain which deposits the water **UNTREATED** into a nearby waterbody.

One of the easiest ways to prevent water pollution is by establishing a riparian buffer. This is simply a combination of grasses, shrubs and trees planted along the streamside that slows the flow of water, allowing it more time to absorb into the soil. When water absorbs naturally into the ground, microorganisms break down pollutants, filtering fresh, clean water back into the aquifer.

By providing a dedicated group of individuals with the knowledge and resources they need, LARA can provide a much needed connection between watershed communities and Little Alamance Creek. Please contact us to find out more about how you can help restore Little Alamance Creek.



What's the Problem?

Little Alamance Creek is considered an impaired waterbody by the NC Division of Water Quality. The waters can't support bugs and other critters that need fresh clean water to survive. Why is Little Alamance so unhealthy? Stormwater flows over the ground, picking up litter, chemicals, dirt, nutrients and other pollutants and carrying them into nearby waters. These pollutants travel downstream, eventually finding their way into the Haw River. The Haw River feeds into Jordan Lake, Fear River which goes all the way to the Atlantic Ocean. Think about how many pollutants are and the coast! By making a few simple changes, you can do your part to protect water picked up between here in North Carolina.

Fertilize with Caution!

Excess fertilizer washing in our waterways is a major problem. Fertilizer is full of nitrogen and phosphorous, nutrients that cause algae to grow out of control. An "algal bloom" reduces the amount of oxygen in the water, disrupting the ecosystem and causing a variety of problems, including fish kills. Here's what you can do:

- Follow the directions (use the minimal amount).
- Check the weather! Fertilizer applied right before a storm washes straight into the stormdrain. It's best to apply fertilizer then water it slowly.
- Use a slow release, organic fertilizer.
- Get your soil tested through the NC County Cooperative Extension.

www.ncagr.gov/agronomi



Let it Grow!

Planting native plants along stream banks helps filter pollutants from runoff. Easier still, don't mow the grasses, shrubs, and trees that already line your stream banks. Plants slow down the flow of water and allow pollutants including excess fertilizers from your lawn to absorb into the ground.

Pick up the Poop!

Not only is dog waste unappealing to look at, it can also contain dangerous bacteria like salmonella and E. Coli. When it rains, dog waste washes into the water, travels downstream, and may end up where we swim! Think of all the dogs in your neighborhood. Do your neighbors pick up the poop?

