

Benton County Riparian and Wetlands Project 2009-2011

Stakeholder Advisory Group Charge

Goal: Create a Policy and associated Program to protect streams, riparian corridors and associated wetlands, for water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, erosion and flood control, and similar purposes. The program will operate proactively through land use code, education and outreach, incentives and partnerships. The program will focus on the unincorporated areas where Benton County has land use jurisdiction.

Specific Work Objectives:

This project is a phased, 2-year project, convened by the Benton County Community Development Department. The Board of County Commissioners holds the authority to approve the final Riparian/Wetland Program. The role of the Stakeholder Advisory Group is to provide consensus recommendations to Community Development Staff throughout the process, and a consensus recommendation on the final program to the Board of Commissioners.

There are three components of the project: 1.) Mapping, 2.) Riparian/Wetland Program Options Analysis, and 3.) Outreach and Education. Each component has timelines that overlap, where one component of the project works to complement others. The Stakeholder Advisory Group will meet monthly or as necessary to provide input to County Staff to:

- Finalize Scope and Objectives of Project,
- Inform the assessment and detailed mapping of current riparian/wetland conditions (GIS, [LiDAR](#), and other applicable data),
- Determine program elements including land use code through an “options analysis” process to meet Comprehensive Plan goals,
- Determine the scope and goals of ground truthing field assessments,
- Identify information gaps of importance for future work to enhance the County riparian/wetlands program.
- Inform and review County Policy and Program details for riparian/wetland planning and protection adoption by Board of County Commissioners.