

## Stimulus funds paying to restore miles of Torrence Creek



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HUNTERSVILLE – In a large field not far from the Historic Cedar Grove home on Gilead Road, high grass and weeds have yielded in recent weeks to mounds of boulders and rock – about 3,000 tons of rock so far.

The stockpile will soon grow to 5,000 tons of rock, which county officials plan to use to restore about three miles of badly eroded banks along Torrence Creek and one of its tributaries.

Federal stimulus money has made the work possible, according to Robert Morgan, project manager for Mecklenburg County Storm Water Services. The county received up to \$2.6 million in federal funds for the project, and the county has to pay back half of the money over 20 years at no interest. The N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund also is contributing up to \$370,000, Morgan said.

Crews will start on Torrence Creek Tributary No. 2 at Interstate 77 and work west to its confluence with the main stem of Torrence Creek. Crews will continue on the main stem from McCoy Road to its confluence with McDowell Creek, around Gilead Road, Morgan said. McDowell Creek empties into Mountain Island Lake. Local residents should see work begin sometime in December or January.

“I’m glad to hear that it’s a creek restoration project,” Mark Denning, a nearby resident, wrote in an e-mail. “I’m very supportive of good stewardship of God’s creation. It would be nice if they would post a legible sign that is large enough to be read from a passing car telling people what’s being done.

“... I was concerned that they were trucking in filler to put a parking lot in or something. That’s how large an area is now covered with very large rocks. I was primarily concerned with the beauty of that whole area being destroyed for some form of development.”

In recent years, development on both sides of I-77 has mushroomed. With more impervious surfaces – everything from roof tops to parking lots and driveways – the volume and speed of the water washing into Torrence Creek has increased and washed away the sloping banks characteristic of a healthy creek, according to Morgan. Banks along much of that portion of Torrence Creek are vertical, which means water containing sediment, oil and other pollutants runs right into the creek.

The project calls for restoring the sloping banks, which will require crews to remove tons of dirt, install the rock to hold the soil in place and, at the end, planting bushes and trees that will once again filter grit and grime out of the runoff.

A private contractor is hauling the rock from Lincoln County, where officials are blasting it loose to build a wastewater treatment plant, Morgan said. Denver-based Eagle Wood has the contract to restore the creek banks. - [The Herald Weekly](#)



A contractor has piled 3,000 tons of boulders and rock in a field on Gilead Road. *Frank DeLoache/Herald photo*