Maintaining forests during stream restoration

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Problem statement

- Stream restoration is an important tool for improving water quality in degraded streams
- Qualifying conditions and best practices provide guidance for minimizing environmental impacts
- BUT this guidance is inconsistently utilized. In some cases:
  - Functioning forest buffers are removed to make way for stream restoration
  - Hydrological changes can result in tree mortality
- Riparian forest loss can negatively impact watershed and stream health

Proposed cross-GIT funding project

- Work with urban stormwater, stream health and wetlands workgroups
- 3 major components:
  - Assess how forests are currently accounted for in different jurisdictions at multiple phases of stream restoration:
    - Project planning (local)
    - Permitting
    - Implementation
    - Post restoration
  - Quantify impacts of stream restoration on riparian forest cover (both during and after restoration)
  - Web forum with practitioners and regulators to share lessons learned

Project activities

- Assessment of how forests are currently accounted for (1):
  - Literature and policy review
  - Interviews
- Quantifying stream restoration impacts on forests (2)
  - Spatial analysis using high-resolution data
  - Explore opportunities to couple with on-the-ground monitoring
- Compile report
  - Identify opportunities to better incentivize practices that will minimize tradeoffs between stream restoration and riparian forest cover

Questions or suggestions?