UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Construction, Facilities, & Real Estate
Planning, Design & Construction

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**To:** LVL Committee
**From:** Kate Farmer, Planning, Design & Construction
**Subject: UF 708 – Graham Stormwater Improvements**
**Date:** March 3, 2026

**Project Overview**
The Graham Woods and Graham Pond system comprises a key stormwater conveyance corridor within the 64.2-acre Lake Alice watershed. Over several decades, approximately fifteen stormwater outfalls have been directed into this steep and increasingly degraded conservation area. The system's primary 48-inch culvert is in failing condition, contributing to ongoing erosion, bank instability, tree loss, diminished water quality, and public safety concerns.

**LVL Committee Requested Information**

1. **Tree Impacts and Mitigation**
   - **Reviewed Tree Removal:** The removal of the 67 Heritage Trees has been reevaluated and confirmed that the proposed Heritage Trees will need to be removed to complete the Graham Woods Stormwater Improvements
   - **Tree Removals:** There are 947 trees in total, including 221 exotic invasive species, 67 of which qualify as heritage trees.
   - **Mitigation:** Planting of **447 trees** plus an estimated **$455,500** contribution to the UF tree mitigation fund.

2. **Comparable Successful Projects (Florida & Campus Scale)**
   - **Sweetwater Wetlands Park (Gainesville):** Wetland-based stormwater treatment system restoring natural hydrology.
     Project link: https://www.gainesvillefl.gov/Parks/Sweetwater-Wetlands-Park [gainesvillefl.gov]
   - **Depot Park (Gainesville):** Engineered stormwater system integrated with public park amenities, providing major pollutant reductions.
     Project link: https://www.landscapeperformance.org/case-study-briefs/depot-park-phases-1-2 [landscapep...rmance.org]
   - **Alligator Creek Restoration (Sarasota):** Natural channel design, bank stabilization, and ecological restoration within a tidal watershed.
     Project link: https://www.scgov.net/government/stormwater/alligator-creek-stream-restoration-project [scgov.net]

3. **Management Plan**

- A management plan will be developed by UF Facilities Services at the conclusion of the project for the long-term maintenance of Graham Woods.

4. **Quantification of energy/water movement trade-offs**
   - The existing design is engineered to attenuate hydraulic energy and reduce discharge velocities from the stormwater outfalls.

**Campus Stakeholder Support**

- On February 13, 2026, at the Faculty Senate Infrastructure Council Meeting, the council discussion was supportive of the project moving ahead (among the members present).

**Urgency and Need for Action**

- **Critical Infrastructure:** Identified as a *"Critical Project"* in the Lake Alice Watershed Study due to infrastructure failure risks, severe channel erosion, and major safety concerns.
- **Ecological Decline:** Current stormwater functions operate at approximately **40% of the ecological performance** expected of a stable wetland system.
- **Flooding & Structural Failures:** Recurrent flooding at Graham Pond and the collapse of multiple stormwater outlets require immediate structural rehabilitation.

**Core Improvements**

- **Habitat and Water Quality Restoration:** Removal of invasive species; installation of native vegetation; improved filtration reducing turbidity and nutrient loading.
- **Trails and Educational Enhancements:** Creation of safe pedestrian routes and environmental education opportunities.
- **Nutrient Load Reduction:** Improvements support compliance with the **Florida Clean Waterways Act**, targeting nitrogen, phosphorus, and turbidity reductions.
- **Channel and Slope Stabilization:** Regrading to safe 6:1 slopes; channel bottom stabilization; reconstruction of failing outfalls.
- **Stormwater Infrastructure Upgrades:** Replacement of damaged pipes and addition of manholes to reduce velocity and sediment transport.
- **Cascading Wet Pond System:** Construction of two interconnected upper ponds to slow flow and improve treatment through littoral zones.
- **Lower Pond Rehabilitation:** Basin reshaping and repair/replacement of weirs and concrete structures.

**Expected Outcomes**

- Stabilized, safer conservation area with reduced erosion and slope failure risk.
- Improved water quality entering Graham Pond and Lake Alice.
- Restoration of wetland and forest ecosystem function.
- Enhanced campus connectivity and environmental education opportunities.
- Long-term compliance with updated state stormwater criteria.

Motion to forward the project to the VP for Construction, Facilities and Real Estate with a recommendation to approve as presented.

**UF-708 Graham Stormwater Improvements**

March 5, 2026

# Landscaping and Natural Resources

## LVL Updates

**Facilities Services**

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## Palm Removals – January

| Species | Location | Date | Removal Reason |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cabbage Palm | Alfred A. Ring Tennis Complex | 1/12/26 | Dead |
| Cabbage Palm | Constans Theater | 1/15/26 | Dead |
| Washington Palm | Communicore | 1/21/26 | Diseased |
| Cabbage Palm | Shands Cair Parking | 1/29/26 | In Decline |

## Other Tree Removals - January

| Species | Location | Date | Removal Reason |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sycamore | Thomas Hall | 1/6/26 | Dead |
| Tulip Tree | Thomas Hall | 1/6/26 | Hazardous |
| White Ash | Substation #5 | 1/7/26 | Dead |
| East Palatka Holly | Marston Science Library | 1/10/26 | Hazardous |
| Spruce Pine | Racing Lab | 1/23/26 | Dead |
| Spruce Pine | Racing Lab | 1/23/26 | Dead |

# Other Tree Removals - January

| Species | Location | Date | Removal Reason |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hackberry | Black Hall | 1/24/26 | Hazardous |
| Sweet Gum | Black Hall | 1/24/26 | Hazardous |
| Sweet Gum | Black Hall | 1/24/26 | Hazardous |
| Spruce Pine | Cancer Genetics | 1/26/26 | Dead |
| Longleaf Pine | Deriso Hall | 1/28/26 | Dead |
| Longleaf Pine | Deriso Hall | 1/28/26 | Hazardous |
| Spruce Pine | Lake Wauberg South Side | 1/29/26 | Dead |
| Water Oak | Black Hall | 1/31/26 | Hazardous |
| Water Oak | Black Hall | 1/31/26 | Hazardous |
| Water Oak | Black Hall | 1/31/26 | Hazardous |
| Sweet Gum | Black Hall | 1/31/26 | Hazardous |
| Sweet Gum | Black Hall | 1/31/26 | Hazardous |

# Current and Upcoming Projects

- Stormwater cleanup projects
- Harrell/Bartram-Carr Bridge Replacement

Original Bridge

Replacement Concept