

Help For Streambanks

Did you Know...

Riparian buffers provide a wide range of benefits:

- Slow surface runoff, decreasing erosion.
- Provide stability to streambanks that prevents erosion and bank failures.
- Regulate water temperatures, important for aquatic life in the stream.
- Filter pollutants such as sediment, chemicals and nutrients.
- Provide habitat and shelter necessary for wildlife and game species such as turkey, deer, rabbits, and quail.
- Provide food sources for wildlife and fish.



1990



1994



1996

Photos courtesy of Dick and Tom Schultz, Iowa State Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management.

Riparian buffers are areas adjacent to streams that serve as protective barriers between the stream and different land uses. These buffers usually contain vegetation such as trees and shrubs, and play an important roles in protecting the quality of the stream. Riparian buffers filter pollutants and sediment from surface runoff, stabilize the streambank and prevent erosion, regulate the stream temperature, provide food and habitat for wildlife, and create shelter for wildlife and game animals traveling to the water source.

By creating or maintaining buffers, landowners increase the quality of the stream. A healthy stream is the foundation necessary to support a diverse ecology that includes wildlife such as fish, game animals, and songbirds. A balanced and stable stream also improves the quality and value of the surrounding property. Vegetation prevents erosion that leads to streambank failure and a loss of land. While a riparian buffer is no longer available for livestock grazing or hay production, it is a valuable investment for improving the environment and protecting fields and farms.

If bank erosion is extreme you may contact the **West Virginia Stream Access Permitting Program**. Agency personnel will provide landowners with technical assistance including plans for stream management and restoration. Activities include erosion prevention, the removal of material creating blockages and the creation of riparian or restoration areas. For more information contact the WV Conservation Agency at (304) 422-9088.

Native Plants For Buffers

Did you know...

Native plants have evolved within a particular region and environment.

They are usually well suited to the growing conditions, and have developed an important place within the ecological system.

Native species will usually be healthier, require less maintenance, and provide more food and habitat for wildlife than non-native plants.

You can find examples of native plants by observing natural areas in your watershed. You can get more information on native trees in your area from your local WVU County Extension, WVDNR, NRCS, WVCA or the WV Division of Forestry.

Native Trees and Shrubs

Black Willow	River Birch
Silver Maple	Box Elder
Sweet Gum	Sycamore
Hackberry	Pin Oak
Red Maple	Hazel Alder
Northern Catalpa	Silky Dogwood
Sand Bar Willow	Button Bush
Elderberry	Black Gum
Red Maple	Swamp White Oak

Where To Buy Native Plants

*West Virginia
Division of Forestry
Clements State Tree Nursery
P.O. Box 8
West Columbia, WV 25287
(304) 675-1820*

*Ernst Conservation Seeds
9006 Mercer Pike
Meadville, PA 16335
(800) 873-3321
www.ernstseed.com*

*Sunshine Farm & Gardens
HC 67 Box 539B
Renick, WV 24966
(304) 497-2208
www.sunfarm.com*

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