



What Are Riparian Buffers?

Riparian Buffers are areas directly adjacent to streams. Livestock are excluded from the stream and the buffer, and crops are not to be harvested in the area.

Buffers improve water quality by filtering run-off water from pasture and cropland. The vegetation in buffers ties up excess nutrients coming from agricultural land. Also, since livestock are excluded from the stream, bacteria in the water is greatly reduced.. Buffers also slow storm water, reducing the damage from flood events.



Headwaters SWCD
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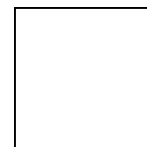


We work with the people who work the land.

Best Management Practices for Virginia Agriculture



Riparian Buffers



What are the Benefits of Riparian Buffers to Farmers?

Riparian Buffers offer many benefits to cattle farmers. These benefits include:

• Improved Herd Health

- Scours, IBR, BVD, mastitis, parasites and foot rot are all transmitted by polluted water. Keeping cattle out of streams and ponds prevents the transmission of these diseases.
- Eliminates many problems associated with calving by excluding cattle from high-risk areas.

• Improved Distribution of Grazing

- Pasture is usually grazed more heavily near the source of water. A buffer system will establish a watering trough where it will optimize grazing distribution.
- A riparian buffer system offers the opportunity to rotationally graze pasture, a proven technique to improve forages.

• Improved Wildlife Habitat

- Riparian Buffers are perfect habitat for many wildlife species. Also, the improved water quality will benefit fish and other aquatic species.

• Plus More! Ask your local conservation planner.

Available Cost-Share Programs

Option 1: CREP

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

- Buffer Width: 35 feet
- Cost Share: 90 to 115 percent + bonuses + **annual rental payment**
- Tree Planting is required
- Mowing is restricted from April 15 to August 15

Option 2: CRP-29

- Buffer Width: 20 feet (50 feet if enhanced)
- Cost Share: 90 percent + **annual rental payment**
- Herbaceous plantings required (grasses, shrubs, etc.)
- Mowing is restricted from April 15 to August 15

Option 3: State BMP

- Buffer Width: 35 feet
- Cost Share: 75-85 percent
- Tree planting is **not** required
- Mowing is **not** restricted

Option 4: Other Buffer Programs

- Buffer Width: 10 feet
- Cost Share: ~50 percent
- Tree Planting is **not** required

Option 5: Combine the Programs

- Mix and match the programs to suit your needs!

Please ask about other programs that will help you meet your conservation goals



For more information on Riparian Buffers contact:

Headwaters Soil and Water Conservation District

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