

Riparian Buffer

Definition/Purpose

A Riparian Buffer means a permanent, long-lived vegetative cover (grass, shrubs, trees, or a combination of vegetation types) established adjacent to and up-gradient from watercourses or water bodies to improve water quality. Benefits may include reduced soil erosion and nutrient delivery, sedimentation, pathogen contamination and pollution from dissolved, particulate and sediment-attached substances. (DIP)

Policies

1. For purposes of the ACSP only, riparian buffers are applied on stable areas adjacent to permanent or intermittent streams, rivers, lakes, ponds, and types of wetlands that flood or pond. Field staff shall determine the need and suitability of this practice using visual observation.*
2. The width of riparian buffers must be a minimum of 20 feet.
3. Elements and items already a part of average cost paid at 75% of average cost; includes grading, vegetation, pipe drops and surface inlets, and animal guards. Also allows the incorporation of other approved BMPs such as cropland conversion to grass or trees, filter strips, and field borders.
4. Cropland conversion shall not be used in conjunction with a CREP CP22 Riparian Buffer when the cropland conversion eliminates the pollutants source. Agricultural pollutant sources can include unbuffered crop, hay, pasture, or other non-forested areas that could contribute to sediment, nutrients, or chemicals to receiving waters.
5. All contracts that include pre- or post- plant site preparation or competition control treatments must include a statement from either the county forest ranger or a registered forester that the specified treatments are necessary. This statement cannot be substituted for the forest management plan required for CREP contracts. A forest management plan recommending the specified treatments can be submitted in lieu of the above statement.

RIPARIAN BUFFER	
Maintenance Period	10 YEARS
BMP Units	ACRES
Required Effect	ACRES_AFFECTED – (planted acres plus drainage area) SOIL_SAVED NITROGEN_SAVED PHOSPHORUS_SAVED
JAA/NRCS Standard unless otherwise noted	ECS – 391 – Riparian Forest Buffer if forested and greater than or equal to 35 feet. Otherwise, follow ECS – 393 – Filter Strip
CS2 Reference Materials	NC-ACSP-11 Signature Page Map with BMP location, fields, and roads.

Agriculture Cost Share Program

*Additional references can include:

- The most recent version of the 1:24,000 scale (7.5) minute quadrangle topographic maps prepared by the United States Geological Survey (USGS).
- The most recent printed version of the soil survey map prepared by NRCS.
- The most recent version of the NCDENR, DWQ Identification Methods for the Origins of Intermittent and Perennial Streams (<http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/wq/swp/ws/pdu/protocol>).