

without buffer



Source: Davis Creek Watershed, MI

A riparian buffer is an area of vegetated land that serves as a transition zone between water and land use.

with buffer



Source: Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium

www.mywatersheds.org

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Riparian Buffers

Protecting our
Water Resources



What is a Riparian Buffer?

An area located between local waterways and upland areas. These vegetated land areas provide streamside and aquatic habitat, erosion protection and serve as a natural filter for stormwater runoff.

What are the benefits of a riparian buffer?

- Reduces polluted runoff.
- Stabilizes banks and reduces erosion.
- Decreases flood severity.
- Provides important habitat areas.

How do I create a buffer?

- Plant native trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers.
- Quit mowing up to the edge, let existing vegetation grow in.
- Maintain your buffer a *minimum* of 15 feet* from the edge.

*be sure to check local ordinances for width requirements and plant restrictions.



Challenges: Urban development requires balancing flood protection, water quality protection, and the economic viability of the development.

Opportunities: Buffers may offset costs by providing adequate space for providing long-term water quantity and water quality protection. Buffers provide visual diversity on the landscape, wildlife habitat and a sense of connection, and help maintain property values.