

Riparian Buffer Strips

Riparian (riverbank) buffer strips are areas of permanent vegetation between rural lands and bodies of water such as creeks, rivers, agricultural drains, ponds and wetlands. Buffers can have trees, shrubs, grasses or wildflowers, in any combination. As their name suggests, buffers protect waterbodies from impacts of neighbouring land uses.



Buffers take up nutrients and trap and filter sediment.



Thick grass cover reduces sediment and nutrients carried in runoff from the adjacent field.

Buffer Benefits

Water quality protection

Surface runoff (water running over and off of land from fields, lawns, and other surfaces) can carry sediment, nutrients, pesticides, bacteria and pathogens. Buffer strip vegetation reduces the amount of pollutants reaching nearby waterbodies.

- Plants slow down runoff.
- Buffers take up nutrients and trap and filter sediment.
- They increase infiltration of runoff through plant root channels.

Erosion control

Roots from grasses, shrubs and trees protect vulnerable soils and strengthen and stabilize streambanks.

Habitat creation

Overhanging vegetation shades water to cool and regulate water temperature.

Plant litter and organisms are an important food source for aquatic and terrestrial wildlife.

Riparian buffers provide shelter and corridors for wildlife movement.



Tree, shrub, and plant roots help stabilize a bank and reduce erosion.



Treed buffers may benefit as windbreaks, protecting open fields.



Grassed buffers help to improve water quality and improve access for farm equipment and recreation.



Combining trees with thick grass cover slows runoff and makes streambank more stable.

Call us about buffers on your property

To find out more:

Huron Clean Water Project staff are available to work with you to plan your buffer.

To learn more about buffer benefits, design, and maintenance, contact Ausable Bayfield or Maitland Valley stewardship staff. Please see contact information below.



Call us at **519-235-2610** or **519-335-3557** or visit our websites to find out more:
huroncounty.ca/plandev/county-wide-projects/water-protection • abca.ca • mvca.on.ca