

Keeping your riparian areas healthy:

Do:

- Leave natural vegetation intact in riparian areas
- Replant a variety of native vegetation along your bank
- Remove unnecessary debris from your shoreline
- Place snow dumps away from water bodies

Don't:

- Mow lawns to the water's edge
- Modify your bank without consulting the appropriate permitting agency
- Discard dog waste, grass clippings, or fertilizers in or near the water
- Build structures within the riparian buffer

Remember,
protecting a riparian area is
always easier than repairing it!

If you are having problems with streambank erosion or would like to improve your streambank, please contact:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Partners Program
Mitch Osborne
(907)456-0209
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Please be aware that state, federal, and local permits will be required.

For more information about streambank restoration or riparian areas:

- Search www.adfg.alaska.gov for 'Stream Restoration'
- Search www.tvwatershed.org for 'Riparian Resource Links'



Tanana Valley Watershed Association
PO Box 84104
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www.tvwatershed.org

The mission of the Tanana Valley Watershed Association is to promote and improve the health of the Tanana Valley watershed through education, restoration, collaborative research, and diverse community involvement.

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Living Streamside

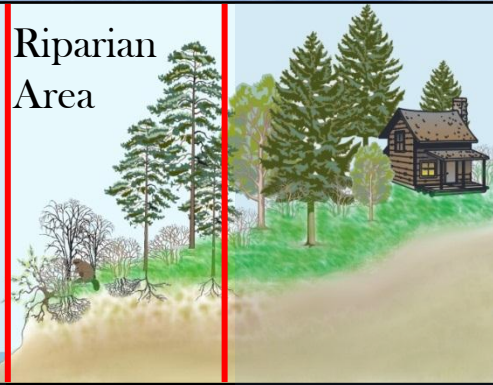
A Landowner's Guide
to Riparian Areas



What is a riparian area?

Riparian areas are strips of land alongside water bodies and are a transitional zone between land and water environments. These vegetated areas are an important component of a healthy water body and offer numerous benefits to people, fish, and wildlife. They are also known as **riparian zones**.

Riparian Area



Alder and willow are fast growing plants that provide good root structure for bank stabilization. They can also be trimmed to 3 feet to maintain a view. Native grasses and sedges are also important for bank stabilization.

Mowed grasses have shallow roots which do little for bank stabilization

Bad



Better



Best!



How wide should a riparian area be?

The minimum recommended width of a riparian area is called a **riparian buffer**. This width is a compromise between the natural riparian width and the needs of adjacent land uses, and can vary from 50 to 300 feet. But, the wider the better!

Why are healthy riparian areas important?

- ❖ Stabilizes stream banks and prevents land loss
- ❖ Filters pollutants and traps sediments
- ❖ Provides habitat for fish and wildlife
- ❖ Provides attractive scenery
- ❖ Slows runoff and minimizes flood damage
- ❖ Improves water quality and quantity

To visualize how riparian areas work, think of a large sponge placed across the end of a sloped board. If water is poured over the board toward the sponge, most of the water is slowed and absorbed by the sponge. Over time, some of the water drains slowly out of the sponge and some evaporates. The sponge also filters out dirt and chemicals. Like a sponge, riparian areas absorb, clean, and filter water

