

## 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: Costal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium

[www.mywatersheds.org](http://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.