



**CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY**

**E391136Z**

**CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM**

Increase riparian forest buffer width to enhance wildlife habitat

**Conservation Practice 391: Riparian Forest Buffer**

**APPLICABLE LAND USE: Crop (Annual & Mixed); Crop (Perennial); Pasture; Range; Forest; Associated Ag Land; Farmstead**

**RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Fish & Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat**

**PRACTICE LIFE SPAN: 15 Years**

**Enhancement Description**

Where an existing riparian forest buffer is located along a river, stream, pond, lake, or other waterbody, increase the diversity of native species, control invasive species, install fencing and relocate equipment operations, trails, and livestock to increase the functional width of the buffer.

**Criteria**

- Existing buffer width shall be at least 35 feet or (if applicable) the minimum State buffer-width requirement, whichever is greater. Buffer width shall be increased to 60 feet and may be extended up to 180 feet or the State-allowed maximum width, but no greater than the width of the geomorphic floodplain.
- The management plan shall consider habitat and wildlife objectives such as habitat diversity, habitat linkages, daily and seasonal habitat ranges, limiting factors, and native plant communities.
- Establish plant communities that address aquatic and terrestrial wildlife and pollinator needs and have multiple values such as habitat enhancement and nutrient uptake.
- Dominant vegetation will consist of existing, naturally regenerated, or seeded/planted trees and shrubs suited to the soil and hydrology of the site.



## CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

- Use tree and shrub species that are native and non-invasive. Substitution with improved and locally accepted cultivars or purpose-specific species is allowed. For plantings and seeding, only viable, high-quality and adapted plant materials will be used.
- Favor tree and shrub species that have multiple values such as those suited for timber, nuts, fruit, florals, browse, nesting, and aesthetics.
- Periodic removal of some forest products such as high value trees, medicinal herbs, nuts, and fruits is permitted provided the buffer area is not compromised by the loss of vegetation or harvesting disturbance.
- Necessary site preparation and planting shall be done at a time and manner to insure survival and growth of selected species.
- Harmful plant and animal pests present on the site will be controlled or eliminated as necessary to achieve and maintain the intended purpose. Pest management will be conducted in a manner that mitigates impacts to pollinators.
- Protect riparian vegetation until the desired plant community is well established.
- Design the expanded buffer enhancement for an expected life of at least 15 years.
- The enhancement will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and with States' Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality

### **Documentation Requirements**

- Specifications for this practice shall be prepared for each site. Specification shall be recorded using approved specifications sheets, job sheets, narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.