

Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM05 - Extending riparian forest buffers for water quality protection and wildlife habitat



Enhancement Description

Where existing riparian forest buffers (i.e., buffers) are utilized, extend them to gain more efficiency in intercepting overland flow, reducing the transport of nutrients, pesticides and agro-chemicals, and for wildlife habitat.

Land Use Applicability

Cropland, Pastureland, Rangeland

Benefits

Widening existing riparian forest buffers can provide food and cover for native and game species as well as enhancing aquatic habitat by providing shade, input of wood or carbon to the stream, and stabilizing streambank conditions. Extended buffers offer more

surface area to filter out sediments and agro-chemicals. Riparian forest buffers can also mitigate pesticide drift during pesticide applications and pollen drift where the mixing of plant varieties is not desired.

Riparian habitats are important transition zones between terrestrial landscapes and aquatic zones. Wildlife species utilize these transition zones because they provide a unique combination of cover, access to water and often provide important travel corridors. Extending existing buffers not only enhances wildlife habitat but it increases the effectiveness of water quality protection they provide to the streams.

Conditions Where Enhancement Applies

This enhancement only applies to acres of existing riparian forest buffer(s) on crop, pasture or range land uses.

Criteria

1. Extend the existing buffer for a total of 60 feet or more to enhance habitat and water quality functions.
2. The extended buffers must be composed of at least 5 species of non-noxious, wildlife friendly trees and shrubs best suited to site conditions. Include species that provide pollinator food and habitat where possible.
3. All site preparation and plant establishment shall be accomplished according to the appropriate NRCS conservation practice standard criteria and specifications.



4. Forest riparian buffers shall consist of a diversity of tree and shrub species of which the majority is capable of producing fruit or nuts and trees, when mature, will achieve heights of at least 60 feet and 60% canopy closure.
5. Any use of the buffer must not compromise its intended purpose.
6. To the extent possible the buffer areas and extended buffer areas will be shaped and vegetated to increase overland flow interception and increase water quality values of the stream or water body.
7. The extension of buffers can incorporate other buffer types (filter strips or riparian herbaceous cover) where applicable to meet specific operator management goals.

Operation and Maintenance

1. Once established, buffers must not be mowed, disked, grazed, or otherwise disturbed during the primary wildlife ground nesting period.
2. Buffers will be regularly maintained for the intended purpose through the life of the contract. This includes any removal of vegetation, including grazing.
 - a. Grazing is not permitted unless a grazing management plan is in effect.
 - b. The grazing management plan must protect the integrity, diversity and function of the riparian area.
3. Buffers will have a wildlife management plan to maintain established plant communities through the life of the contract. The wildlife plan will maintain the plant community and its structural diversity and provide habitat for intended species, remove duff, and control woody vegetation.
4. The grazing management plan and the wildlife management plan shall complement each other.

Adoption Requirements

This enhancement is considered adopted when the buffer has a total width of 60 feet or more for the selected land use.

Documentation Requirements

1. A map showing the location and size of existing and enhanced riparian forest buffer(s).
2. Documentation of the type and rates of vegetation planted in the new riparian forest buffers.

ANIMAL ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

ANM05 – OR Extending riparian forest buffers for water quality protection and wildlife habitat

Criteria

- Suitable wildlife-friendly trees and shrubs for riparian zones are listed in Appendices F, G, H, and I of the Oregon & Washington Guide for Conservation Seedings and Plantings (2000).
- Planting site conditions (e.g., soil texture, precipitation zone, soil drainage class) and plant species requirements (e.g., light, space, and moisture) shall be taken into consideration when selecting appropriate species to plant.

Operation and Maintenance

- Primary wildlife ground nesting period is March 1 - July 15.

References

- Oregon & Washington Guide for Conservation Seedings and Plantings. 2000. USDA-NRCS. Online: <ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/OR/Plants-Materials/OR%20WA%20seeding%20guide.pdf>

**Conservation Stewardship Program Enhancements
Requiring Cultural Resource Notification**

The enhancements identified below require that a cultural resources request form (OR-EVT-1 CR/TE (6/11) be completed and submitted prior to implementing the enhancement. If producer enhancements are not listed below and only a T&E species list is required, do not check the cultural resources box at the top of the form. If you need a cultural resources review make sure you include the contract number, USGS Quad name, tract number and legal location. Describe the planned action and include equipment to be used and the extent of the disturbance. Do not just list the enhancement code. The enhancements requiring cultural resource review are:

ANM05

ANM11

ANM12

ANM21

PLT05

PLT17

WQL01

FPP02

FRD01

BFO06

Questions: Call Ann Rogers at 503-414-3283; ann.rogers@or.usda.gov