

Vegetated Buffers

Sherburne Soil And Water Conservation District



A buffer strip is an area of land maintained in permanent vegetation that helps to control air, soil, and water quality. Buffer strips trap sediment, and enhance filtration of nutrients and pesticides by slowing down runoff that could enter the local surface waters.

Buffers and filter strips along the banks of lakes, rivers, streams, and ditches provide multiple benefits

Soil Conservation:

Buffer strips slow runoff, trap sediment, and reduce sheet and rill erosion.

Water quality protection:

Buffers may intercept or remove pollutants and sediment in the following percentages from runoff: 50% or more of nutrients and pesticides, 60% or more of some pathogens, and 75% or more of sediment.

Deep rooted plants and wider corridors are more effective at protecting water quality and promoting groundwater recharge.

Streambank and lake shore stabilization:

Native vegetation has dense, deep, intertwined root systems that physically strengthen soils.

Root systems remove excess moisture from the soil, making banks more resistant to erosion or slumping.

Habitat benefits:

Buffers can provide shade, shelter, and nesting cover for many wildlife species.

Continuous buffers also provide connecting corridors allowing wildlife to move from one habitat to another.

Local and State Laws and Ordinances

Law/Ordinance	Agency	Waterbody Type	Details
Sherburne County Zoning Ordinance Section 14 Shoreland District. Subdv5-6b	County	Agricultural (Streams, Rivers, Lakes)	The shore impact zone for parcels with permitted agricultural land uses is equal to a line parallel to and 50 feet from the OHWL
MN Rules Chapter 61.20.3300 subp7	State	Agricultural (Streams, Rivers, Lakes) & DNR protected waters	The shore impact zone for parcels with permitted agricultural land uses is equal to a line parallel to and 50 feet from the OHWL
103E.021 Subdv.1	State	Ditches (Public, County)	For any new ditches or ditch improvements, the land adjacent to public ditches must include a buffer strip of permanent vegetation that is usually 1 rod (16.5 feet) wide on each side.

Buffer Programs

Program	Agency	Land Type	Details
CRP (Conservation Reserve Program)	USDA FSA (Farm Service Agency)	Agricultural	10-15 year contract Annual payments based on soil type from \$51-\$81 an acre. Potential signing incentive \$100 per acre Pays up to 90% to establish and maintain buffer
EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program)	USDA NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service)	Agricultural	Financial and technical assistance available for designing and installing a filter strip.
Local and Regional Programs	Sherburne SWCD (Soil and Water Conservation District)	All	State Cost Share Program covers up to 65% of costs for buffer strip installation. Clean Water Fund program covers up to 75% of costs for buffer strip installation in select subwatersheds; check with the SWCD to see if you qualify. Check with the SWCD for other available programs.

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