



Buffers 100

Beside every good stream is a good forest.

The best way to protect our communities and streams from...

- 🌀 Erosion
- 🌀 Pollution
- 🌀 Flooding
- 🌀 Drought

The best way to grace our communities with...

- 🌀 Clean drinking water
- 🌀 Higher property values
- 🌀 Good fishing
- 🌀 Growing ecotourism
- 🌀 Healthy economies

...is to protect and create healthy buffers along our streams, creeks, wetlands and rivers.

Pennsylvania Streams and Pennsylvania Communities Need:

Buffers of at least 100 feet on either side of every stream:

- 🌀 to ensure the ability of the plants and soils to filter out pollution;
- 🌀 to ensure healthy habitat;
- 🌀 to ensure establishment of plants and roots needed to prevent unnatural erosion;
- 🌀 to ensure flood protection by absorbing floodwaters and reducing flood damage.

An additional 50 feet on either side of our sensitive headwater streams:

- 🌀 to ensure the extra level of protection needed by these more vulnerable and endangered ecosystems;
- 🌀 to ensure cleaner water downstream.

An additional 200 feet on either side of our best quality streams:

- 🌀 to ensure the additional protection needed by Pennsylvania's best streams.

A healthy buffer is filled with native trees, shrubs, and ground covering plants and is wide enough to filter pollution, hold and absorb flood waters, and create healthy habitat.

Pennsylvania Campaign for Clean Water

www.pacleanwatercampaign.org

Why We Need Buffers

The science is in. Forested buffers do wonders. Consider:

Buffers increase property values. Forested stream corridors increase the market value of nearby homes, also increasing local tax revenues.

Buffers reduce flood damage. Forested buffers reduce flooding impacts by increasing storage and infiltration of floodwaters and slowing flood velocities.

Buffers protect drinking water. Forested buffers filter out pollution and battle drought — protecting both water quality and quantity.

Buffers decrease costs of stormwater management. Use of forested buffers in new land development design can reduce or eliminate the need for large and expensive stormwater infrastructure, such as storm sewers and detention basins.

Buffers filter pollutants. Forested buffers filter significant amounts of pollutants, including sediment, nutrients, toxics, and other contaminants. Pollution removal is maximized when forested buffer widths are 100 feet or greater.

Buffers improve in-stream pollution removal. Streams protected by forested buffers can break down and remove more pollutants, particularly nitrogen and pesticides.

Buffers reduce stream bank erosion. Root systems of forested buffers help stabilize stream banks and slow down runoff to prevent erosion.

Buffers cool waters. The shade of forested buffers can cool streams by 4-9 degrees F. Shaded and cooler water means healthier streams, particularly for temperature-sensitive fish such as trout.

Buffers enhance stream habitat for fish and other aquatic life. Leaves, sticks and other debris from forested buffers provide food, shelter and habitat, increasing biological productivity from the base of the food chain on up.

Buffers battle climate change. Forested buffers help reduce the impacts of climate change by absorbing greenhouse gases.

Pollution removal is maximized when forested buffer widths are 100 feet or greater.



Our Proposal

Pennsylvania's Chapter 102 regulations are designed to protect our rivers and streams from excessive erosion and sedimentation. These regulations should be amended to add minimum buffer requirements including:

100 foot forested buffers on either side of every stream from top of the bank or, if greater, a fully vegetated 100 year floodplain.

An additional 50 foot forested buffer for first and second order streams.

An additional 200 foot forested buffer for streams classified as Exceptional Value or High Quality.

Additional forested buffer widths for steep slope riparian areas.

Buffer restoration, with native trees and shrubs, in non-forested riparian areas where development is proposed.

Buffers of a size and vegetation type necessary to protect state or federal threatened and endangered species and habitat, but in no instance less than the minimum 100 foot requirement.

For impaired waters, either an additional 50 feet of forested buffer or implementation of specific buffer, land use and stormwater management requirements.

Some form of legally enforceable, permanent protection for all required buffer areas.

All required buffers established and maintained as non-disturbance areas limiting disturbance of vegetation or soil to restoration activities or other minimally disruptive activities, requiring offset of disturbance by buffer improvements or an extended buffer area, and prohibiting new structures.

Exemptions would apply for existing development and agricultural activities.