

Marginal Pastureland and Cropland Practices to

# BUFFER YOUR STREAMS AND SINKHOLES

for Water Quality and Wildlife Habitat

## WHAT IS A BUFFER?

Buffers are narrow bands of permanent vegetation such as grasses, shrubs, or trees that are established along side of ditches, streams, rivers, or sinkholes. These plants filter the water so that less soil, pesticides, fertilizers, and other contaminants enter streams and groundwater.



## WHY HAVE BUFFERS?

Most importantly, buffers provide a natural protection for your community's drinking water. Established buffers of trees and shrubs stabilize stream banks and protect them from being washed away. Stable stream banks provide clean water and habitat for livestock and a variety of fish and aquatic creatures. Buffer vegetation provides habitat for quail, turkey, deer, songbirds, and other wildlife.

## WHERE ARE BUFFERS NEEDED?

Buffers should be established immediately adjacent to streams, rivers, wetlands, sinkholes, sinkhole basins, ponds and lakes. They are typically 20 to 180 feet wide, depending on the situation. You can also improve your filtration of runoff by setting up smaller buffers between fields. Regardless of how much land you farm, you can make a difference by maintaining buffers on your property.

## WHAT PROGRAMS HELP PAY FOR BUFFERS?

### Farm Service Agency

- *Continuous Sign-up Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP)* - Includes annual per acre rental payment for each year of contract, plus cost-share and incentives.

### Natural Resources Conservation Service

- *Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)* - Cost-share plus forgone income

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife

- *Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program* - Cost-share only. Practices must be targeted to help threatened and endangered species.

### Tennessee Department of Agriculture

- *Agricultural Resources Conservation Fund (ARCF)* - Cost-share only.
- *319 Nonpoint Source Program* - Cost-share only. Varies by watershed.
- *Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program for Forest Landowners (TAEP-FL, Division of Forestry)* - Cost-share only.

### Tennessee Wildlife Resources Foundation

- *Tennessee Stream Mitigation Program* - Private, non-profit program targeting degraded streams.

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ON BUFFERS?

Contact your county USDA Service Center, Soil Conservation District, or a Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency Private Lands Biologist. For contact information, see:

[www.twrprivatelands.org](http://www.twrprivatelands.org)

615-781-6614 or 615-781-6610

And: [www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov/programs](http://www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov/programs)

[fsa.usda.gov](http://fsa.usda.gov)

[www.tn.gov/agriculture](http://www.tn.gov/agriculture)

[www.fws.gov/southeast/pubs/facts/tpacon.pdf](http://www.fws.gov/southeast/pubs/facts/tpacon.pdf)

<http://tsmp.us>



CLEAN STREAMS  
PROVIDE BETTER  
FISHING AND  
CLEANER WATER  
FOR LIVESTOCK  
AND PEOPLE!



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Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency Authorization No. 328863, 20,000 copies, December, 2012. This public document was promulgated at a cost of \$.10 per copy.

# COMPARISON OF PROGRAMS AND BUFFER PRACTICES

Program and Practice	Establishment Payment	Signing Incentive Payment	Annual Payment	Land Type Eligible	Practice Funded				Agreement Length
					Cover Establishment	Exclusion Fencing	Water Facility	Stream Crossing	
USDA Continuous CRP CP21 Herbaceous Filter Strip	50% Cost-share + 40% Practice Incentive Payment	YES \$100/acre <sup>1</sup>	YES <sup>3,6</sup>	Cropland with cropping history	YES—native grasses or cool season grasses	YES <sup>4</sup>	YES <sup>5</sup>	NO	10 to 15 years
USDA Continuous CRP CP22 Riparian Forest Buffer	50% Cost-share + 40% Practice Incentive Payment	YES \$100/acre <sup>1</sup>	YES <sup>3,7</sup>	Cropland with cropping history or Marginal Pastureland	YES—native trees and native shrubs. Native grasses optional in Zone 3.	YES <sup>4</sup>	YES <sup>5</sup>	YES	10 to 15 years
USDA Continuous CRP CP29 Marginal Pastureland Wildlife Habitat Buffer	50% Cost-share + 40% Practice Incentive Payment	YES \$100/acre <sup>1</sup>	YES <sup>3,6</sup>	Marginal Pastureland	YES—native grasses, forbs and shrubs	YES <sup>4</sup>	YES <sup>5</sup>	YES	10 to 15 years
USDA Continuous CRP CP30 Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffer	50% Cost-share + 40% Practice Incentive Payment	YES \$100/acre <sup>1</sup>	YES <sup>3,6</sup>	Marginal Pastureland	YES—native grasses, forbs and shrubs	YES <sup>4</sup>	YES <sup>5</sup>	YES	10 to 15 years
USDA EQIP Herbaceous Filter Strip	75% or 90% New and Disadvantaged Farmers	NO	NO <sup>8</sup>	Cropland or Pastureland	YES—native grasses or cool season grasses	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>2</sup>	2 to 10 years
USDA EQIP Riparian Forest Buffer	75% or 90% New and Disadvantaged Farmers	NO	NO <sup>8</sup>	Cropland or Pastureland	YES—native trees and native shrubs	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>2</sup>	2 to 10 years
U.S. Fish & Wildlife - Partners Program Herbaceous Filter Strip	Up to 90%	NO	NO	Cropland or Pastureland	YES—native trees and forbs	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>2</sup>	10 years
U.S. Fish & Wildlife - Partners Program Riparian Forest Buffer	Up to 90%	NO	NO	Cropland or Pastureland	YES—native trees and native shrubs	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>2</sup>	10 years
Tenn. Dept. of Ag. - ARCF Filter Strip	75% or 85% for 303d-listed streams	NO	NO	Cropland or Pastureland	YES—native grasses or cool season grasses	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>2</sup>	10 years
Tenn. Dept. of Ag. - ARCF Riparian Forest Buffer	75% or 85% for 303d-listed streams	NO	NO	Cropland or Pastureland	YES—native trees and native shrubs	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>2</sup>	YES <sup>2</sup>	15 years
Tenn. Dept. of Ag. - TAEP-FL Riparian Forest Buffer	50% or 75% Not to exceed set maximums per acre	NO	NO	All land capable of growing trees	YES—native trees	NO	NO	YES <sup>2</sup>	10 years
TWRF - Tenn. Stream Mitigation Program Stream and stream corridor restoration	100% of all cost	NO	NO	Degraded stream corridor	YES—native trees, shrubs and grasses	YES	YES	YES	Perpetual <sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> for a 10 year contract

<sup>2</sup> funded as separate practice

<sup>3</sup> an additional 20% soil rental rate paid above the base soil rental rate

<sup>4</sup> maximum cost based on 4-stranded, barbed wire fence

<sup>5</sup> Water facility maximum \$2,400 or water development maximum \$3,600. Maximum \$2,400 for pipeline per contract.

<sup>6</sup> an additional \$0/acre (no fencing or water facility), \$4/acre (with fencing), \$5/acre (with fencing and watering facility) for annual maintenance

<sup>7</sup> an additional \$2/acre (no fencing or water facility), \$4/acre (with fencing), \$5/acre (with fencing and watering facility) for annual maintenance

<sup>8</sup> Forgone income provided. Payments vary by program and practice.

<sup>9</sup> Conservation easement or other long-term protection agreement is placed on the land that is contained within the restored/enhanced corridor only. Does not apply to entire property.