



**OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE**



Streamside Vegetation

Land managers are often advised to add functional, noninvasive streamside (riparian) vegetation to their property to protect water quality. Here are five reasons why this kind of streamside vegetation is important for crops, humans, and wildlife alike.

This stream has a variety of functional, noninvasive vegetation types lining its edges. Just as rotating crops benefits soil health, willows, grasses, and more add to the riparian soil structure and fertility.



1. Combats Water Pollution

Streamside vegetation:

- Filters runoff and removes excess phosphorus and nitrogen
- Captures sediment in overland flow
- Filters pollutants such as pesticides out of water before they reach a stream
- Stabilizes streambanks and prevents erosion provided the vegetation has deeply planted roots



2. Provides Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Streamside vegetation:

- Keeps streams cool, which many fish require
- Is key habitat for mammals, birds, amphibians, and reptiles
- Can be a vital habitat connector
- Provides migration routes
- Provides food for water-loving insects, which are food for fish

Photo courtesy of John Caldwell



3. Protects Against Natural Disasters

Streamside vegetation:

- Slows flood water speeds
- Protects against stream heating during extreme heat events
- Prevents soil loss during high-flow events
- Decreases flood damage by delaying and reducing peak flow



4. Increases Economic Value

Streamside vegetation:

- Increases hunting and fishing opportunities
- Increases property values
- Improves forage
- Saves economically important croplands from erosion



5. Complies with Oregon Law

Allowing streamside vegetation to establish and grow is required by Oregon law. The vegetation is required to provide shade, filtration, and bank stability. Shade is required on all perennial streams.

TO LEARN MORE

You can visit ODA's Agricultural Water Quality webpage to find more resources, including staff contact information. Scan the QR code below to visit the webpage



Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts provide technical and financial assistance to landowners. SWCDs have no regulatory role.



Water Quality Program
635 Capitol Street SE
Salem, OR 97301-2532 USA
503.986.4700 | oda.direct/AgWQ