

What are riparian buffers?

Lands bordering streams, rivers, lakes or ponds that are planted with vegetation to protect water from pollution.

Why are they important?

In addition to filtering nutrients and other pollutants, they:

- Control erosion and sediment runoff during rainstorms
- Stabilize streambanks
- Reduce flood impacts
- Provide habitat for wildlife and pollinators
- Improve fish habitat

Buffer Types

Forest Buffers - Corridors of trees and shrubs with strong root systems to stabilize streambanks and reduce soil runoff. Their leaf canopies shade streams, cooling water temperatures and providing better fish habitat.

Grass Buffers (filter strips) - Strips of grass near water or adjacent to a forest buffer. Grass buffers trap sediment and nutrients from nearby land.

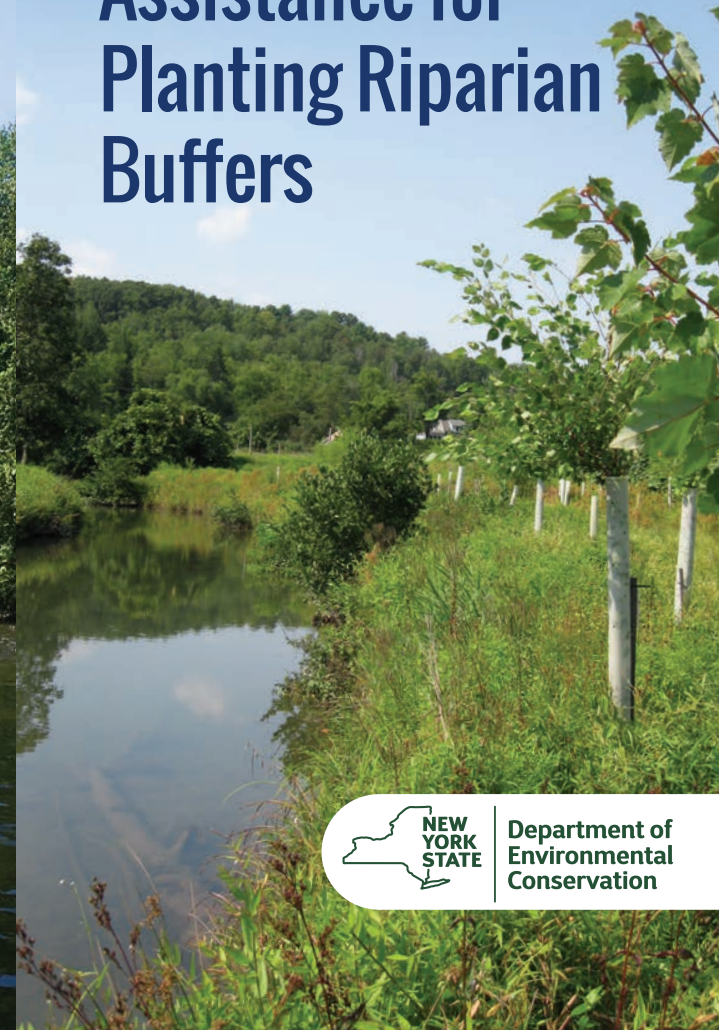


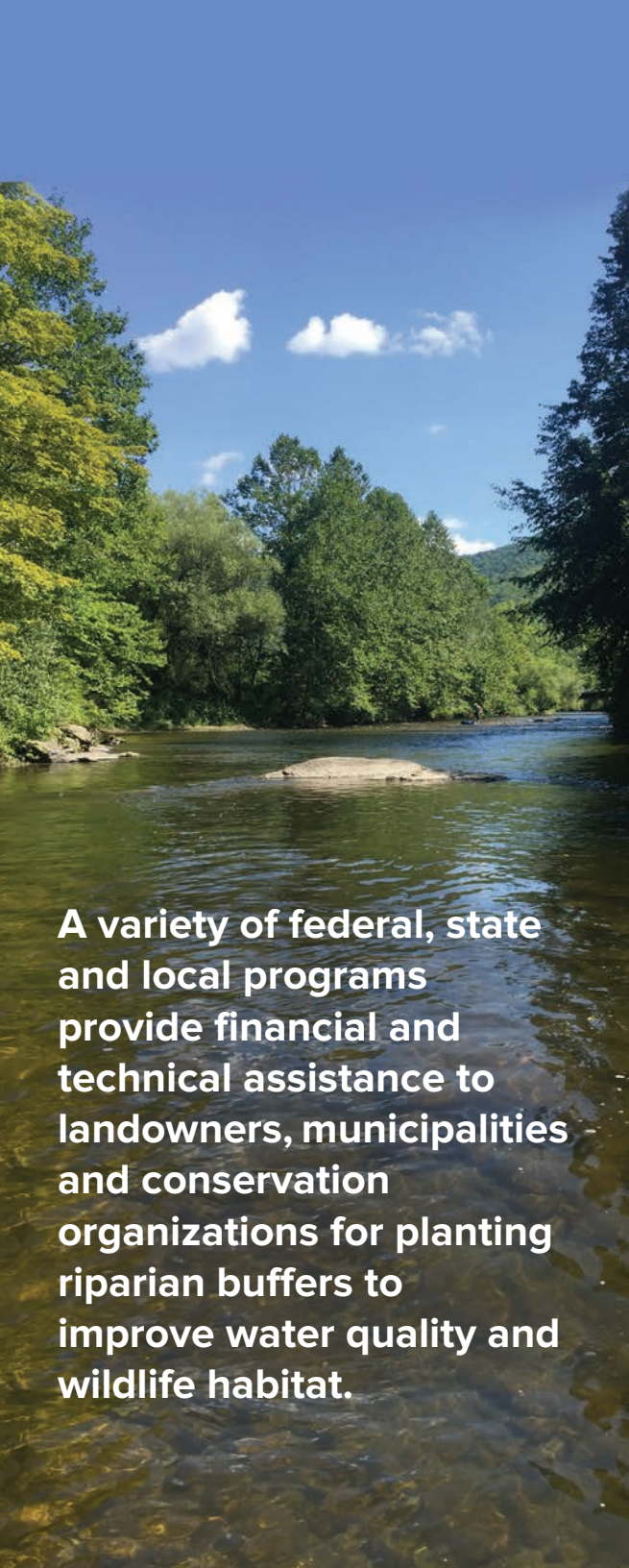
For more information, visit

www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/106345.html



Funding and Assistance for Planting Riparian Buffers





A variety of federal, state and local programs provide financial and technical assistance to landowners, municipalities and conservation organizations for planting riparian buffers to improve water quality and wildlife habitat.

Federal Programs

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) -

Agricultural landowners are eligible to receive financial incentives from U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) to remove streamside farmland from production and plant forests or grass buffers.

Debt for Nature (DFN) Program -

Farmers with loans from the USDA-FSA may qualify for loan cancellation in exchange for implementing conservation practices, like riparian buffers.

Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP) -

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service program providing financial and technical assistance to farmers to implement conservation practices, including riparian buffers, on farmland and non-industrial (not used for wood products) private forestland.



State Programs

Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program (AgNPS) -

NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets' competitive program helping farmers reduce water pollution by providing technical and financial assistance to implement best management practices. Projects incorporating riparian buffers receive priority scoring.

Green Innovation Grant Program (GIGP) -

NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation's program providing funding for municipal green infrastructure practices, including riparian buffers.

Trees for Tribs -

DEC's Saratoga Tree Nursery program providing landowners, municipalities and conservation organizations with free technical assistance and low- or no-cost native trees and shrubs to plant along streams.

Water Quality Improvement Program

(WQIP) - DEC's competitive grant program funding municipal projects that reduce polluted runoff, improve water quality, and restore aquatic habitats. Riparian buffers on non-agricultural land are a priority practice eligible for funding.

Local Programs

Catskill Stream Buffer Initiative (CSBI) -

Providing private landowners throughout the west of Hudson River watershed with individualized assistance and financial support to protect and improve streamside properties.

Upper Susquehanna Coalition (USC)

Riparian Buffer Program - Providing technical assistance and funding to landowners in the northern headwaters of the Chesapeake Bay watershed for conservation practices, including riparian buffers.