

Applicant's checklist for riparian buffer requirements

1. **Pre-application meetings are strongly advised for any project involving a riparian buffer requirement, especially those involving a riparian buffer request.**
2. The applicant must make the demonstration that there is a necessity for having a waiver or the 150 foot riparian buffer requirements. Applicants must investigate alternative siting, downsizing of the project and other ways of decreasing the impact to the buffer zone to justify the granting of the riparian buffer waiver request.
3. Buffer waiver requests must contain three major parts:
 - a. An alternatives analysis that addresses impacts to the 150 foot buffer
 - b. A demonstration that all existing riparian buffers will impacted to the least extent practicable
 - c. All other aspects of Chapter 102 are met
4. Areas to be affected by the riparian buffer should be clearly delineated
5. Applicants may also request a waiver from the riparian buffer composition requirements (forested or non-forested based on the needs of the project)
6. Applicants should list the designated use of the receiving water(s) and if it's impaired or has a TMDL
7. Applications should include a map or plan drawing showing the 150 foot buffer clearly defined
8. If receiving water is impaired or has a TMDL, a riparian forest buffer is required (also required if applicant is proposing a voluntary buffer). The PCSM plan must contain a riparian forest buffer management plan with the following parts:
 - a. Planting plan
 - i. Identifies number of native trees and shrubs
 - ii. Identifies density of native trees and shrubs
 - iii. Identifies species of native trees and shrubs
 - b. Maintenance schedule (should address a five year period)
 - i. Ensure survival of growth and plantings
 - ii. Protect from invasive and noxious species

iii. Include activities to maintain the forest buffer

1. Disturbance of existing vegetation
2. Tree and shrub removal
3. Clearing
4. Mowing
5. Burning
6. Spraying
7. Timber harvesting

c. Inspection schedule

- i. Includes measures to ensure long-term maintenance and proper functioning of riparian forest buffers
 - ii. Includes measures to repair damage to buffer from storm events greater than the 2-year/24-hour storm
9. Ensure widths are 150 feet +/- 10% for mandatory riparian forest buffers or 100 feet +/- 10% for voluntary riparian forest buffers
 10. Ensure all stormwater entering the buffer will be sheet flow or shallow concentrated flow for storm events up to and including the 2-year/24-hour storm
 11. Ensure that buffers are measured horizontally and perpendicularly to the bank with no more than 10% variation below the minimum width from the normal pool elevation for lakes, ponds and reservoirs and from the top of the streambank
 12. Activities covered by Chapter 105 obstruction and encroachment permits are allowed in the buffer; however, any remaining upland areas not covered by the Chapter 105 permit and within 150 of the water must either maintain the 150 foot buffer intact or must request a waiver
 13. Contact your local county conservation district or your regional DEP office for any questions related to riparian buffers and waivers