

RIPARIAN BUFFER REGULATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Forested riparian buffers provide ecological, recreational, and public health related benefits to water quality. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Filtering pollutants and protecting the quality of the water we drink.
- Stabilizing stream banks and minimizing erosion.
- Reducing flooding downstream by absorbing and slowing the flow of stormwater.
- Preventing sedimentation, which can choke off stream bottom life.
- Providing shade, which helps to control stream temperature fluctuations and prevent elevated temperatures harmful to aquatic life.
- Providing food and habitat for wildlife, both aquatic and terrestrial.
- Allowing for wildlife movement within corridors.
- Protecting associated wetlands.
- Providing the potential for outdoor recreational opportunities.



APPLICABILITY

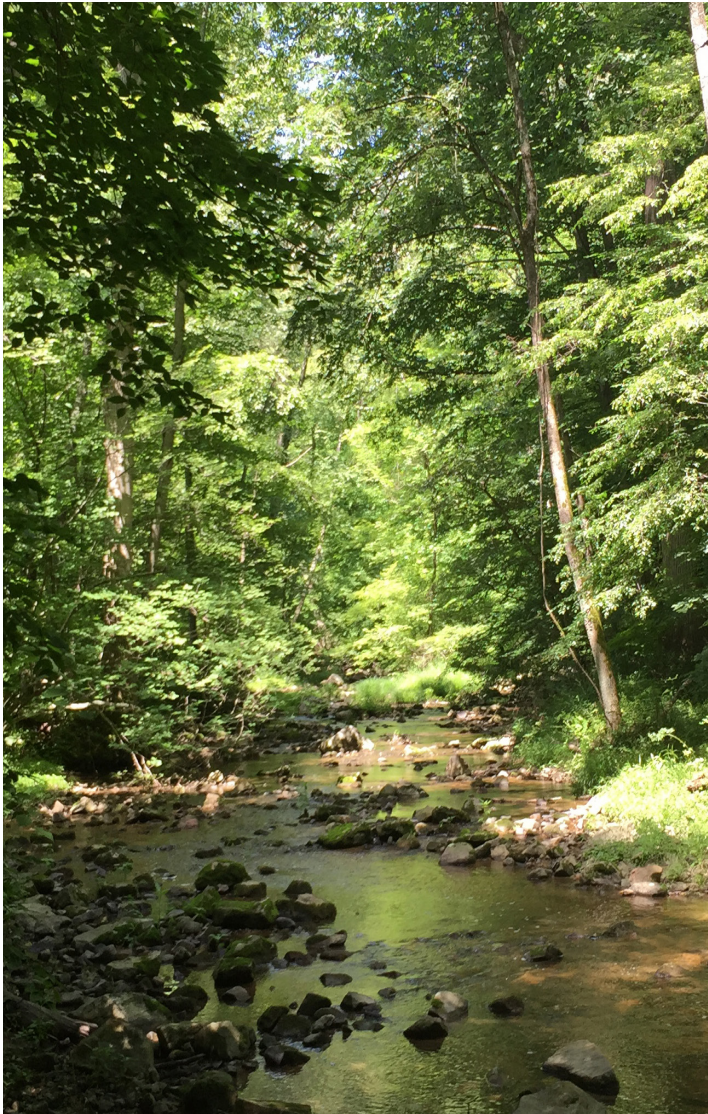
A Riparian Buffer Protection Ordinance can be used to support the following goals :

1. **Conservation:** Riparian buffers protect and improve natural resources including land, waterways, woodlands and wetlands.
2. **Water Quality:** Riparian buffers offer one of the most cost-effective measures for improving in-stream water quality.
3. **Education and Public Engagement:** Riparian buffer standards can help educate residents about the importance for stream and watershed health.
4. **Climate Resiliency and Sustainability:** Riparian buffers help absorb stormwater, slowing and lessening flooding and act as an opportunity to increase community resiliency, protect local resources, and safeguard people and assets in flood-prone areas.



IMPLEMENTATION

- Through a review of the municipal Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SLDO)
- Develop draft Ordinance (using recommendations from WeConservePA and Brandywine Conservancy's Guide and Model Ordinance for Pennsylvania Municipalities, Riparian Buffer Protection via Local Government Regulation)
- Public Meeting and Input
- 30-Day review by Municipal and County Planning Commission, neighboring municipalities, and public
- Public Hearing & Adoption



SUCCESSFUL CASE STUDIES

Chester County:

- Caln Township
- City of Coatesville
- East Fallowfield Township
- Honey Brook Township
- Honey Brook Borough
- Pocopson Township
- Upper Uwchlan Township
- West Bradford Township
- West Brandywine Township
- West Caln Township

Delaware County:

- Chadds Ford Township
- Radnor Township
- Upper Darby Township

For more information on the Riparian Buffer Regulations process see the expanded technical bulletin included in this toolkit.