**Riparian Forest Buffer Planting Plan Template**

**Conservation District:**

**Project Contact:**

**Site Location:**

**Acres:**

**Site Details:** Explain the planned layout of the project including details related to soils; site preparation; buffer width and length; tree/shrub species, size, and spacing; specific materials and plating methods; seedling protection; and any other details, photos, or specifications necessary to adequately explain the buffer design.

**Planting Timeline (including site prep):**

**Project Map:**

**Other:** If applicable, explain details appropriate for managing multifunctional buffers, including access (foot, vehicle etc.), maintenance, or anticipated harvest practices and potential profitable income.

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*DCNR Watershed Forestry Specialist or Service Forester*

Riparian Forest Buffer Planting Minimum Requirements, Guidance, and Recommendations

* All C2P2 CWF-funded plantings should add new riparian forest buffer acreage within the buffer zone.
* Existing invasive tree canopy, or hazardous standing dead trees, can be removed from planting sites prior to planting. Plantings within these areas count as new riparian buffer acreage.
* A maximum buffer width is 300 feet per side of waterway, including any existing woody vegetation.
* Planting areas can be non-contiguous within the 300-ft buffer zone.
* Plantings may expand existing buffers within 300-ft of the streambank.
* A minimum average buffer width of 35 feet is strongly encouraged.
* A minimum width of 15 feet in specific situations to accommodate existing infrastructure is acceptable. Generally, wider is better. Consult with your Service Forester or Regional Watershed Forestry Specialists for specific questions about buffer width.
* Plant approximately 150-200 trees and shrubs per acre to ensure canopy closure once the planting reaches maturity. 200 stems per acre is more desirable as some mortality is expected.
* A minimum of three (3) genera is required per planting; a higher diversity is strongly encouraged.
* Plant a diversity of both tree and shrub species, as appropriate.
* A 70/30 split of trees and shrubs, respectively, is recommended, but not required.
* Consider dividing plantings into three zones, especially if planting a multifunctional buffer, and choose species for each zone dependent on zone light levels, soil types/moisture, planned usage, slope, etc.
* Zone one: Streambank to 15 feet from streambank
* Zone two: 15-35 feet from streambank
* Zone three: 35 feet from streambank
* If planting a multifunctional buffer with limited species or genera in zones two and/or three for production purposes, plant at least three genera of native species in Zone one.
* Plant trees in rows for post-planting establishment ease; 10’x10’ for shrubs and 15’x15’ for trees is recommended.
* Adjust spacing as needed to accommodate maintenance equipment to be used by the staff, contractors, and/or landowners who will be conducting post-planting establishment activities and maintaining the site long-term.
* Control any existing competing vegetation, especially invasive species, via mechanical and/or chemical removal.
* Follow herbicide label instructions and take care not to impact nearby waterway.
* Choose tree protection materials:
* Tree and shrub shelters (sizes vary)
* Wooden or fiberglass stake placed on upstream side of tree or shrub shelter (sizes vary)
* Bird nets
* 3’ x 3’ weed mats
* 6” lawn staples
* ALL plantings require regular post planting establishment care during the grant term to ensure buffer establishment and success.
* Post-planting establishment activities include mowing, competing plant control, replanting (as needed), and tree/shrub protection material replacement.