

**Vermont State Supplement, Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM14 - Riparian Forest Buffer, Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife Habitat**  
**Vermont Supplemental Information in Blue Font**



***Enhancement Description***

The activity consists of the managing forested riparian zones to achieve stream side cover and vegetative diversity and structure to improve terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat.

***Land Use Applicability***

Cropland, pastureland, rangeland and forestland

***Benefits***

Targeted conservation measures are implemented to enhance habitat for aquatic species such as fish, turtles, frogs, salamanders, aquatic insects and other species of concern in riparian zones of rivers or streams and their floodplains. These measures include re-location of equipment or forest management activities out of riparian zones and floodplains, and riparian forest stand management to increase tree canopy cover to streams or rivers and standing snags for riparian wildlife.

***Criteria***

This enhancement is implemented mainly by managing existing live trees and shrubs. The producer will apply and maintain management actions specifically for improving or protecting

natural riparian zones and their functions associated with terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat. These actions include:

1. The width of forested riparian zones must wider than the NRCS State standard width for Riparian Forest Buffers to a maximum width of 150 feet.
2. Manage the riparian area to maintain a diversity of non-invasive tree, shrub, and herbaceous species by techniques such as selective thinning, controlled grazing, prescribed burning, selective use of herbicides and/or the planting<sup>1</sup> of native species.

<sup>1</sup>See the book ‘Wetland Woodland, Wildland – A guide to the Natural Communities of Vermont’ and the companion soils guide ‘Vermont NRCS Soil Series of Vermont and their associated Natural Communities’ found within section IIA of the electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG). These two resources, used with a soils map for the site, will provide a list of native plants likely to be found on the site in a natural condition. For other wildlife friendly plants lists that include some introduced but beneficial species, see VT NRCS Technical Notes:

[http://www.vt.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/Technical\\_Notes/TechNotes\\_Index.html](http://www.vt.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/Technical_Notes/TechNotes_Index.html)

- VT Plant Materials Technote #1 – Grass Seeding Mixes for Wildlife
  - VT Plant Materials Technote #2 – List of Vermont Plants Important to Bees
  - VT Forestry Technote #2 – Vermont Trees and Shrubs for Conservation
3. Retain existing snags or create new snags by girdling live trees of at least one/acre.
    - o Be sure to maintain and promote large trees in the riparian area. These will provide shading, detritus, cavities, mast (food) and large woody debris for the stream.
  4. Manage the riparian vegetation to provide tree canopy shade of the stream and good stream side cover.
  5. Do not use heavy equipment such as bull dozers and tractors within the forested riparian zone to implement enhancement activities.

### ***Documentation Requirements***

Following implementation of this activity, the landowner must document:

1. Management activities conducted in the riparian zone for terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat.
2. Delineations on a map or aerial photo indicating the stream channel length where the riparian zone has improved habitat.