

Interim Riparian Buffer Recommendations for Streams in Puget Sound Agricultural Landscapes (Originally proposed as federal Option 3 for the Agriculture Fish and Water (AFW) Process, March 2002)

Guidance

October 28, 2013 Final

NMFS Channel Type ⁱ	Channel Types	Habitat Functions/Composition	Buffer – Minimum Default Width ⁱⁱ
Class I Constructed ditches; fishless streams.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Constructed Ditches, Intermittent Streams and Ephemeral Streams that are not identified as being accessed and were historically not accessed by anadromous or ESA listed fish species Perennial waters that are not identified as being accessed and were historically not accessed by anadromous or ESA listed fish species 	Water quality protection; shade; sediment filtration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 35' 50'
Class II Fish bearing, modified natural channel, entrenched or spring fed watercourses that do not move	Modified or highly entrenched perennial, intermittent and ephemeral waters that are identified as being accessed or were historically accessed by anadromous or ESA listed fish species	Water quality, large wood debris (LWD) for cover, complexity and shade	100' supporting site assessment recommended to increase buffer width
Class III Fish bearing	Unconfined perennial, intermittent and ephemeral waters that are identified as being accessed or were historically accessed by anadromous or ESA listed fish species	Water quality, large wood debris (LWD) for cover, complexity and shade	100' supporting site assessment recommended to increase buffer width
Class IV. Diked, permanently fixed ⁱⁱⁱ	N/A	N/A	N/A

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Class V ^{iv} Fish bearing, intertidal/estuary	Perennial, intermittent and ephemeral waters that are identified as being accessed or were historically accessed by anadromous or ESA listed fish species in intertidal and estuarine streams and channels	Site potential vegetation (salt water) sedges, shrubs, etc.	35' – 75' Supporting site assessment of adjacent land use recommended to increase buffer protections needed to meet all applicable water quality standards.
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ⁱ Fish presence based on Washington’s Integrated Fish Distribution database. Fish presence includes all classes of presence of anadromous or ESA listed fish. Where no fish distribution data is available, fish presence must be determined by contacting local WDFW or Tribal biologist.

ⁱⁱ Buffer widths are required minimums, however, if a landowner believes that the buffers called for by the table significantly interfere with his/her ability to reasonably use their property, there is a process to identify alternative buffers that are smaller. Please see FAQs for more information.

ⁱⁱⁱ Generally, buffer vegetation is required between the watercourse and dike, based upon the criteria of the corresponding channel type. However, levee vegetation requirements are subject to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) guidance which can be found in Engineering Technical Letter No. 1110-2-571, "Engineering and Design: Guidelines for Landscape Planting and Vegetation Management at Levees, Floodwalls, Embankment Dams, and Appurtenant Structures", as well as in the USACE Levee Owner's Manual for Non-Federal Flood Control Works.

^{iv} Estuarine channels are defined as stream channels having direct, daily tidal influence such that the vegetation is adapted to saltwater or intertidal conditions.