

# Building a Riparian Area

Riparian areas slow water velocity, filter water passing through and hold water for later release.

- ◆ When floods occur, flowing water is slowed by riparian vegetation and by the ability of the stream to access its floodplain; flood water is stored temporarily in wetlands, lakes and floodplains.
- ◆ Vegetation helps build and maintain streambanks, shorelines and riparian areas.
- ◆ Water quality is enhanced when sediment is trapped and incorporated in the riparian area.

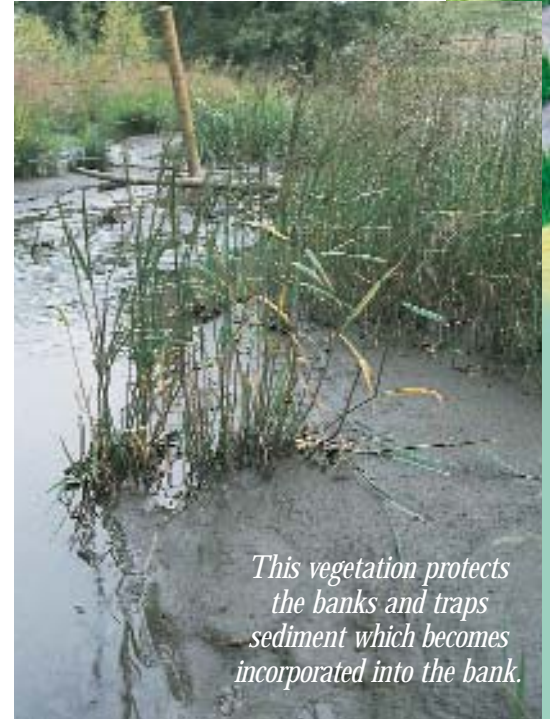


*Streambank vegetation “squeezes” stream flow upwards, slows it down, and allows more water to be added to groundwater and bank storage. The groundwater table moves upwards and sideways, increasing the size of the green zone.*

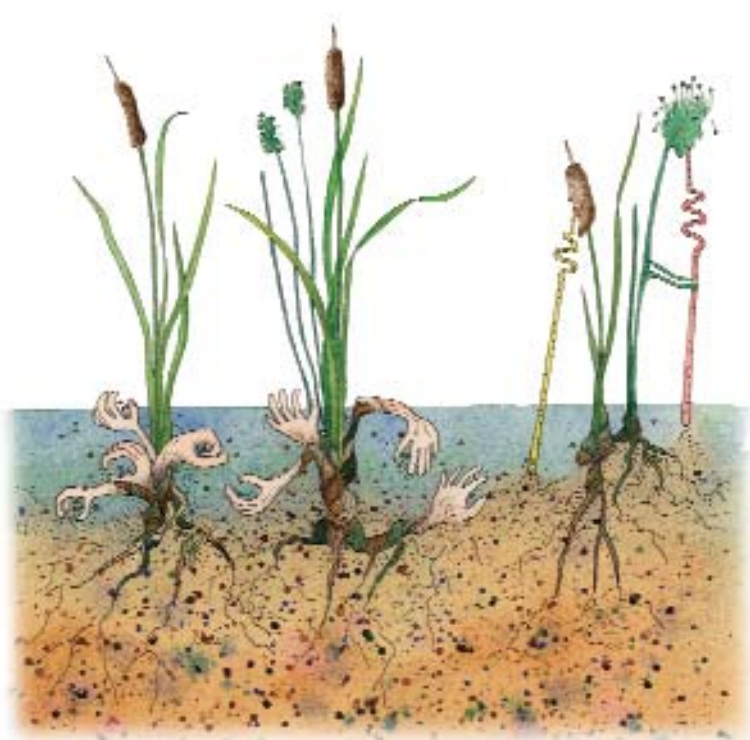


*Many plants with high forage or habitat values respond to the higher water tables in well-managed, well-vegetated valleys.*

- ◆ Nutrients are used by riparian plants, improving water quality.
- ◆ Vegetation helps keep streams flowing and water levels higher during low flow periods.
- ◆ Diverse types of vegetation are key to riparian area development because they add complexity, strength and reinforcement.



*This vegetation protects the banks and traps sediment which becomes incorporated into the bank.*



*Riparian vegetation “grabs” sediment, “holds” it and “sucks” up nutrients.*

*Vegetation: it's the root of the solution for riparian management.*