



What do healthy Riparian Areas Do?

When we look at a piece of riparian landscape, we focus on what it does for us. We think about opportunities to fish, graze livestock, or a place to find shelter or shade. As we begin to understand how key riparian areas are, we begin to add water quality, water supply, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, property value and many more attributes to the list of riparian products, services or values.

A long list of benefits is made possible when eight fundamental ecological functions are performed in healthy riparian areas. These functions are the foundation upon which everything else is built. When all are present, these functions mesh together, like a finely crafted Swiss watch. Riparian health evaluation helps us focus on what produces the benefits - a healthy, functioning riparian landscape. Riparian health represents how well all of these basic functions are being performed.



A watch keeps the time for us - that's the service. It does this through the correct meshing of many interconnected parts. We depend on riparian areas to do many things for us. Their ability to do these things also depends on the correct meshing of a complex series of interconnected functions.