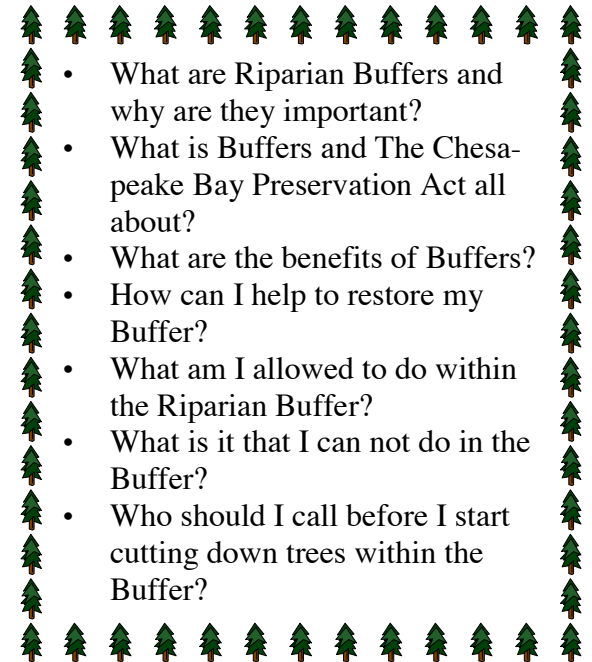




What you should know about waterfront property

King & Queen County
Building & Zoning Office
242 Allen's Circle Road
P.O. Box 177

King & Queen C.H., VA 23085
(804) 785-5975
Fax (804) 785-5999



- What are Riparian Buffers and why are they important?
- What are Buffers and The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act all about?
- What are the benefits of Buffers?
- How can I help to restore my Buffer?
- What am I allowed to do within the Riparian Buffer?
- What is it that I can not do in the Buffer?
- Who should I call before I start cutting down trees within the Buffer?



www.kingandqueenco.net

What am I allowed to do within the Riparian Buffer?

Subject to local government approval, vegetation may be removed from the 100-foot buffer for the following reasons:

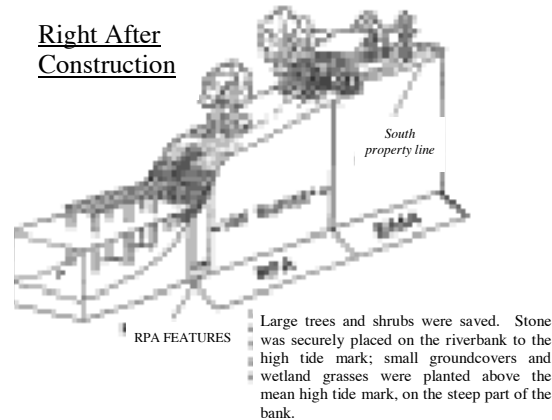
1. To provide reasonable water views, provided that any vegetation removed is replaced with vegetation that provides equivalent water quality protection.
2. To create a water access path, as long as it doesn't cause erosion.
3. To remove dead, dying or diseased trees and shrubs, and to remove noxious weeds or invasive exotic plants.
4. To provide for shoreline erosion control, provided that the buffer is replanted with native, woody vegetation.

Note: Before any of the work listed above is commenced you must first contact King & Queen County's Environmental Codes Compliance Officer for approval for such work at (804) 785-5975.

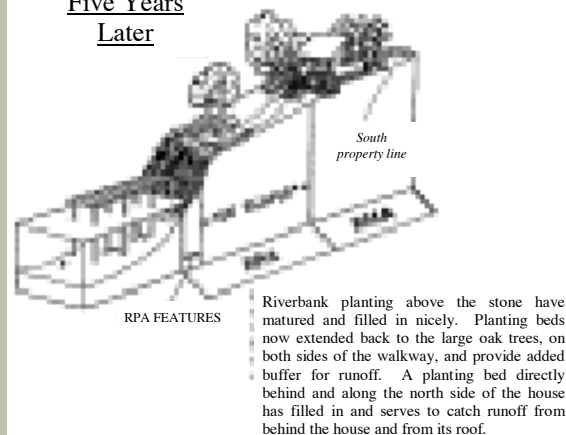
What is it that I can not do in the Buffer?

1. Development is not permitted if there is sufficient build-able area outside the 100-foot buffer OR if the property was subdivided after the local government adopted its local Bay Act program (generally 1989-1991).
2. Accessory structures like sheds, gazebos, pools, carports, or detached garages may not be located within the 100-foot buffer.
3. Clear-cutting of vegetation is not permitted.
4. Filling or grading land within the buffer is not allowed
5. Applying pesticides and fertilizer is discouraged.

Right After Construction



Five Years Later



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [A Guide to the Bay Act](#), available from the Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department, 1800-CHESBAY
- [BayScapes Brochure](#), available from the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, 1-800-662-CRIS
- [BayScapes Homeowner Guides](#); a series of 7 guides and landscape audits; available from the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, 1-900-662-CRIS

What are Riparian Buffers and why are they important?



Riparian buffers are vegetated areas adjacent to water bodies such as streams, lakes, rivers, marshes, and shorelines. Buffers are often described as the “last line of defense” for the protection of water quality.



These vegetated areas stabilize shorelines and stream banks, filter pollutants from storm water runoff, and provide critical habitat for aquatic species and wildlife. All of these functions are crucial to protecting water quality in our rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. Despite protective regulations, many of these buffer areas are being impacted by shoreline development and improper management of buffer vegetation. At greatest risk are buffers in parts of the state that have rapidly growing urban and suburban areas.

What are the benefits of Buffers?

In addition to **improving water quality**, riparian buffers that contain native, woody vegetation can provide many benefits to the waterfront property owner. These benefits include...

- **Increased property values** - Buffers can increase property values by as much as 20% from improved landscaping.
- **Reduced erosion** - Plants and their roots reduce runoff and stabilize soil.
- **Noise reduction** - Trees and shrubs can muffle urban noises.
- **Air quality improvement** - Trees and shrubs absorb air-borne pollutants and return oxygen to the atmosphere for our use.
- **Decreased heating and cooling costs** - Trees can provide summer shade and evergreens can act as winter windbreaks.
- **Increased shoreline stability** - Shrubs and groundcover can hold the soil on banks in place.
- **Wildlife habitat and viewing** - Bay wildlife depends upon mixed woodlands for food, habitat and travel corridors.
- **Groundwater recharge** - Buffers absorb excess water increasing groundwater recharge and reducing flood volume.

If you are in doubt as to whether or not you have your buffer marked correctly, call the building & zoning department at (804) 785-5975.

What's Buffers and The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act all about?

In 1988, the Virginia General Assembly passed the Chesapeake Bay Act to protect and improve the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The “Bay Act” applies in all 84 cities, counties, and towns in Tidewater Virginia; generally the areas of the state east of Interstate 95.



Riparian buffers are included as Resource Protection Areas (RPA's) under the Bay Act. This means that they are protected under state law and local ordinances. Generally, no development, land disturbance, or vegetation removal is allowed within 100-feet of the water or wetland vegetation.

How can I help to restore my Buffer?

Do your part to restore water quality by restoring the buffer!

Here are some things to consider:

- Plant a mix of trees, shrubs, and groundcover to mimic a natural forest.
- Minimize lawn area by retaining woods and adding mulched planting beds.
- Plant tall native grasses near the water to filter storm-water runoff.
- Use larger trees and shrubs to provide screening and privacy.

