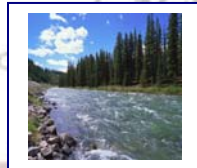


## PROTECTING YOUR STREAMS

The **upper reaches of the Touchet River** are some of the most pristine and ecologically important waters in the Walla Walla Basin. As a property owner in the upper Touchet River watershed you have a unique opportunity to help maintain or improve the health of streams and riparian areas in this environmentally sensitive area.

A riparian area is the area of land adjacent to a perennial or ephemeral stream, lake, or wetland. **Removing or damaging plants through construction and landscaping, especially in the riparian area can harm streams.** Also livestock grazing and timber harvesting in the riparian area should be limited or avoided as much as possible.

### Why do healthy riparian areas matter?



#### Riparian areas help to keep our water clean

- Filter out pollutants, such as fertilizers, pesticides, and animal wastes.
- Shade streams in the summer. Cool water is healthier for many native fish species.
- Help prevent erosion by holding soil in place with their roots.
- Filter sediment out of muddy runoff, keeping it from smothering fish habitat.
- Allow rain to soak into the soil which allows water to be released slowly to the stream during the dry season.
- Reduce the chance of flooding.
- Increase the aesthetic and recreational value of your property.
- Provide habitat for fish and wildlife.

#### The bottom line is:

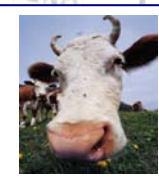
- Less flooding during and immediately after storms
- More water in the stream during summer
- Cleaner water
- Homes and food for wildlife, including many species of fish, insects, amphibious, reptiles, birds, and mammals.

## What can you do?



### During construction:

- Always observe local ordinances, minimum set-back distances, and get proper permits.
- Leave as wide a vegetation buffer as possible next to the stream.
- Leave as many native plants as possible to streams everywhere!
- Plan new construction away from existing streams and wetlands instead of modifying them. Don't place riprap on stream banks.
- Minimize paved areas. Keep the roof area, walkways, and driveways as small as possible and direct runoff to landscaping or another filtering system where possible. Use gravel or bark instead of pavement for paths and driveways.



### If you have livestock:

- Limit or avoid grazing or riparian areas by using fences or paddocks where possible.
- Provide water, shade, and salt in other areas to encourage livestock to graze and loiter away from riparian areas.



### In your garden:

- Minimize the use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.
- Do not dispose of grass clippings near streams



### In and around your house:

- Inspect your septic tank annually, and pump the tank as necessary.
- Keep pet waste away from streams, riparian areas, and paved areas. Put pet waste in a bag in the trash.

For more information contact:  
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