

4.1 Riparian Buffer Zones



Do you want to protect the river and your property investment? The most important action could be taking no action at all. Leave the vegetation along the creek undisturbed and you will dramatically reduce soil erosion.



A riparian buffer zone is a vegetated area that exists next to a waterway. Riparian zones are periodically flooded so they usually consist of vegetation types that are tolerant to water saturation. These areas act as a buffer between upland activities, such as agriculture or development, and the stream corridor. Riparian buffers along the Kings River can be found in all shapes and sizes because of both natural factors and landowner priorities. Whatever you use your property for, there is a type of riparian buffer that could and should be implemented to protect your investment.

Benefits of Riparian Buffers

To The Landowner

Flood Control: Vegetation slows down moving water and absorbs and retains water.

Erosion Control: Root systems hold bank soil in place.

Property Value: Acreage protected with reduction in bank erosion. Mature trees bring higher values.

To Water Quality

Filter: Sediment and pollutants in stormwater run-off captured.

Nutrient Removal: Excess nutrients utilized before they reach the stream.

Temperature Reduction: Tall vegetation shades and cools the stream so water can carry more oxygen. Shade also inhibits algal growth.

To Wildlife

Habitat: Riparian corridors are used by wildlife more than any other habitat type.

Travel Corridor: Provides migration corridors for birds, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals.

Food Source: Provides the basis for the aquatic food web.