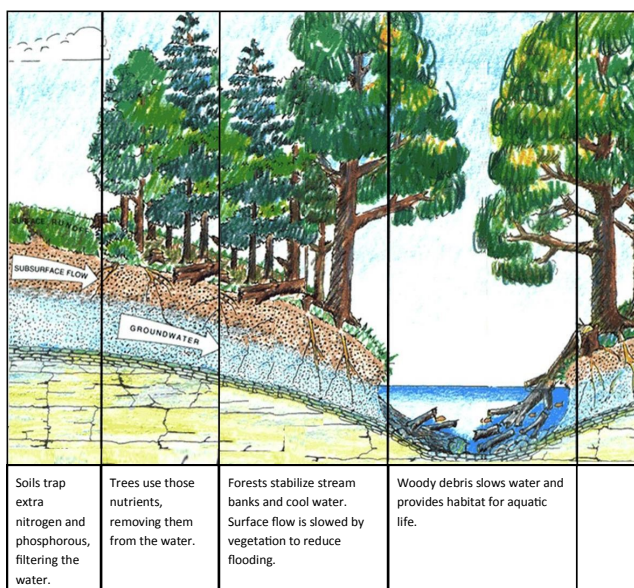


# Protect Our Water: Let The Plants Grow

## WHAT IS A VEGETATED BUFFER?

A vegetated buffer is a combination of plants that grow along a river, stream or lake and reduce the amount of pollution entering the water.



## HOW DO I GROW A BUFFER?

- ◆ Establish a “no mow” area along your stream bank, lakefront or ditch.
- ◆ Plant trees, shrubs, and bunch grasses in your buffer zone. Native plants have deeper roots, which secure stream banks and prevent erosion. When roots die off, they leave tunnels in the soil, which help water soak into the ground.
- ◆ Periodically pick up litter that gets caught in the plants.
- ◆ Pick up pet waste and fertilizers in clear weather to reduce nutrients entering the water.



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# Vegetated Buffers

## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Polluted runoff contains animal waste, dirt or soil, fertilizer, pesticides and even motor oil. When the plants grow along streams, rivers, and lakes, they reduce the amount of pollution entering the water.



## PLANTS ARE THE SOLUTION:

- ◆ Nitrogen and phosphorus are nutrients found in pet waste and fertilizer that are often in runoff.
- ◆ Trees, shrubs and grass keep these extra nutrients from getting in our waters by using them to grow. Reducing the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus in rivers and lakes limits the ability for algae to grow. When algae grow out of control, it causes health concerns for people who fish, swim in, or drink the water.
- ◆ Plant roots also hold soil and reduce erosion from runoff and heavy rains, this keeps soil from entering the water and making it dirty.
- ◆ Plants in the buffer also feed, shelter and provide travel paths for animals and birds.



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