

# Riparian Tree Planting

## Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Program (VACS)



### Practice Requirements and Rates

The cost-share rate for a riparian tree planting is 95% of the total eligible costs, plus an incentive payment based on species planted and lifespan:

#### Incentive for conifer buffers:

\$100 per acre for a 10 year lifespan

\$150 per acre for a 15 year lifespan

#### Incentive for hardwood buffers:

\$100 per acre for a 10 year lifespan

\$250 per acre for a 15 year lifespan

Participants may select their practice lifespan. Lifespan begins on January 1st of the calendar year following payment.

Eligible cost-share components:

- Site preparation – mechanical and/or chemical
- Labor
- Tree seedlings/shrubs
- Seed for ground cover (Fescue is discouraged)
- Protective fencing

### **What is a Riparian Tree Planting?**

A riparian tree planting creates a woodland buffer filter area that protects local waterways from erosion, sedimentation, and non-point source agricultural pollution. The buffer also provides forested areas for wildlife and shade that benefits aquatic habitat.

### **Program Details**

The riparian tree planting practice provides cost-share to establish trees and also provides an incentive payment based on the practice lifespan and acres of buffer planted. Riparian tree plantings are commonly paired with stream exclusion projects, adding enhanced filtration and protection to the buffer area. Fencing is necessary to protect the riparian tree planting from livestock and grazing is not allowed in the planted area. The minimum width of the riparian buffer is 35 feet and cannot exceed 100 feet.

Recommendations for tree species, planting density and a management plan will be made by a Forester with the Virginia Department of Forestry.

Replanting due to mortality losses from circumstances outside the control of the participant may receive cost-share. To be considered for cost-share on replanting, the participant must notify the District within 6 months of a suspected failure. District staff will review conditions and determine eligibility for replanting in consultation with the Department of Forestry.

### Contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District:

**Lord Fairfax: 540-465-2424 ext. 5**  
(Clarke, Frederick, Warren, Shenandoah, City of Winchester)

**Shenandoah Valley: 540-534-3105**  
(Rockingham, Page, City of Harrisonburg)

**Headwaters: 540-248-0148**  
(Augusta, City of Staunton, City of Waynesboro)

