ROOTS AND RIVERS

Native grasses, trees, and shrubs have deeper root systems than turf grasses. Their deep and interwoven roots help prevent stream bank erosion during high flows. These native plants also promote more absorption of stormwater, reducing impacts of runoff and the potential for flooding. Native plants filter pollutants such as nitrogen and phosphorus and sediment from entering our waterways. Shade created from trees and shrubs also keeps water cool and well oxygenated for fish and other aquatic life.

GET INVOLVED

MWA has resources to assist landowners with riparian buffer planting and streamside landscaping on their property. MWA also has opportunities to volunteer with native plantings within our watershed.

HOW TO CONNECT

Visit our webpage by scanning the QR code below and sign up for a site visit today.

Funding for this project is provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Riparian buffer of native trees and shrubs on West Portal Creek
NATIVE BUFFERS

A **riparian zone** is the area of land alongside a river or body of water.

Allowing for a buffer of **native plants** along our streams and tributaries protects stream banks, filters pollutants, and protects streamside properties.

Native buffers can also serve as a **corridor** for wildlife such as birds and pollinators. Most insects, including many pollinators, are actually very picky eaters! Without natives most birds and other wildlife cannot thrive.

Native buffers can enhance your property
- Reduce impact of flood events
- Prevent soil loss
- Provide habitat for wildlife and pollinators
- Provide visual interest to our landscape

Native trees, plants, and grasses do more than add robust beauty to the landscape. They are an intrinsic part of our region’s natural heritage.

Native buffers protect the water that sustain communities and farms throughout the Musconetcong Valley. They shelter and nourish local wildlife. They improve resiliency in a changing climate.

Each stream mile of native buffer that we restore helps to protect the natural resources and scenic character of the Musconetcong River that we cherish.

TIPS FOR A RIVER-FRIENDLY LANDSCAPE

Improving streamside buffers doesn't have to be hard! Check out what you can do to get started.

- Work with MWA staff to identify native plants suited to your property.
- Include trees and shrubs where possible. Forested buffers provide the most benefits to water quality, but any native planting will be beneficial.
- Create a “No-Mow” zone alongside streams or other water bodies on your property. Many native plants are waiting to emerge when you stop mowing.
- Pick plants that tolerate flooding and wet soils for your buffer. While not all riparian zones have wet soils year-round, plants should tolerate periods of saturated soils.

A well buffered stream provides clean, cool water to fish and other aquatic life.