

**Appendix A**  
**Automated Template for Post-Construction Storm**  
**Water Quality Plan**

**(Provided in Electronic Format Only)**

<http://www.placer.ca.gov/lowimpactdevelopment>

**Appendix B**  
**BMP Fact Sheets**

# STREAM SETBACK AND BUFFERS

## Fact Sheet SDM-1

Also known as: Aquatic buffers, riparian setbacks

### DESCRIPTION

Stream setbacks and buffers are vegetated areas that exist or are established along a stream system, lake, reservoir, or wetland area where development is restricted or prohibited. They consist of trees, shrubs, and herbaceous vegetation that separates and physically protects aquatic ecosystems and habitats from future disturbance or encroachment. Stream setbacks and buffers can either be preserved natural areas or engineered BMPs specifically designed to treat stormwater runoff before it enters a stream, shore, or wetland.



Stream zone avoidance in south Placer County.  
Source: Placer County Conservation Plan

### ADVANTAGES

- Can be used as part of a treatment train with other BMPs.
- Can provide high level water quality treatment with proper design.
- Limits development in floodplain areas.
- Improves aesthetics
- Improves quality of aquatic ecosystems and habitats.
- Serves as foundation for present or future greenways.

### LIMITATIONS

- A minimum stream setback and buffer width of 500 feet is required to obtain stormwater runoff reduction credits.
- Restrictions on available space for development.
- Potential establishment of nuisance species.
- Not suitable for treating point-source stormwater discharges (i.e. end of pipe).
- Can be difficult to delineate and demarcate stream setback and buffer widths.
- Natural stream shifts may alter stream setback and buffer widths.

### KEY DESIGN FEATURES

The ability of a particular stream setback and buffer to function effectively depends on how well the buffer is planned or designed. In general, the following guidelines should be followed (for more information see *The Architecture of Urban Stream Buffers, The Practice of Watershed Protection: Article 39*):

- Maintain the stream setback and buffer in an ungraded and uncompacted condition
- Protect the stream setback and buffer from vehicular traffic to reduce compaction.
- The contributing overland slope should be 5% or less unless a level spreader is used.
- Adopt a vegetative target based on predevelopment plant community.
- Expand the width of the middle zone to pick up wetlands, slopes and larger streams.
- Use clear and measurable criteria to delineate the origin and boundaries of the buffer.