

Interim Riparian Buffer Recommendations for Streams in Puget Sound Agricultural Landscapes
November 2012
 (Originally proposed as federal Option 3 for the
 Agriculture Fish and Water (AFW) Process, March 2002)

Channel Type	Habitat Functions	Composition	Buffer Width	Comments
Class I Constructed ditches; small non- fish bearing streams	Water quality protection; shade; sediment filtration	Grasses, trees or shrubs; may only need woody vegetation on one side of channel	As wide as necessary to meet water quality standards; can be determined by NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG)	Channels constructed for purpose of draining farmland. If dredged, dredging should occur when fish are absent or at lowest densities
Class II Fish bearing streams; natural and modified natural watercourses that are incised and cannot move	Water quality; LWD for cover, complexity; litter fall; shade	Site potential vegetation; trees where they will grow	2/3 Site potential tree height; 50 ft. minimum to 180 ft. maximum	Portions of natural watercourses that can no longer migrate laterally
Class III Fish bearing; natural unconfined channels	Same as above, but structural LWD essential	Same as above	3/4 Site potential tree height	Highly desirable to buffer entire channel migration zone (CMZ)
Class IV fish bearing streams confined by dikes or other hardened man-made feature	Water quality; complex cover; litter fall; shade	Trees and shrubs	Face of levee, from top of dike to Ordinary High Water (OHW) mark	
Class V Fish bearing intertidal and estuarine streams and channels	Water quality; food inputs; habitat complexity	Site potential vegetation (salt- tolerant sedges, shrubs, trees)	35-75 ft.; varies according to adjacent land use	