



How to Care for your Buffer

CURB Partnership: Tri-State Steelheaders, Kooskooskie Commons, WW Co Conservation District and WA Dept of Ecology

Maintaining the riparian buffer is the responsibility of the landowner. Expect to invest time and energy for the first two years. After that, the buffer should not require much maintenance. Below are some general tips on caring for your buffer. Refer to your Project Plan for site specific recommendations.

➤ **Watering:**

- ❖ Plants will need regular water for at least 2 years during July, August, and September.
- ❖ Water once a week if the temperature is below 90° F and twice a week if the temperature is above 90° F.
- ❖ For the success of your new plantings, we recommend deep watering. Watering for at least an hour allows moisture to sink deeply into the soil, encouraging the roots of your new plants to follow.
- ❖ Plants should be watered even if it has rained, unless over an inch of rain was received.

➤ **Weeds:**

- ❖ Early summer is the most important time to weed. By removing the weeds before they go to seed, you will save yourself a lot of time later.
- ❖ Hand pull weeds from around the young native plants to reduce competition for moisture and nutrients.
- ❖ Avoid chemical sprays.
- ❖ Depending on your buffer layout, you may wish to try flame weeding, spot spraying with vinegar or other non-chemical alternatives.

➤ **Fertilizer:**

- ❖ No fertilizers are necessary. Buffers are planted with native plants, which have adapted to the local nutrient levels in the soil.
- ❖ Avoid “Weed and Feed” products.

➤ **Pruning:**

- ❖ Your native plants do not require pruning to stay healthy.
- ❖ If you wish to prune a specific plant for aesthetics, allow 3 years for the plant to become established before doing so.
- ❖ After 3 years, prune during dormancy when there are no leaves on the plant, generally between Thanksgiving and Valentine’s Day.

➤ **Questions?**

- ❖ Feel free to contact us!
 - Tri-State Steelheaders: 509-529-3543
 - Kooskooskie Commons: 509-529-8009
 - Walla Walla County Conservation District 509-522-6340
- ❖ Or visit our webpage at www.tristatesteelheaders.com. From the “Restoration” tab, click on “CURB”.