

Get Involved!

- If you have a creek, stream, river or any other type of surface water on your property, you have an immediate opportunity to help improve local water quality.
- One of the easiest ways to improve water quality and species diversity is to establish a buffer zone between the land and the water.
- You can make a difference in protecting the environment, and we would like to help you get started.



You May Qualify For Funding

Grants are available to landowners who live in qualifying areas of our watershed to implement projects which will help improve local water quality. Grant rates and ceilings may vary between watersheds.

Eligible Items*	Grant Rate	Grant Ceiling
Riparian buffer strips, wetlands and habitat creation or protection, floodplain & fragile land retirement.	Up to 75%	Up to \$10,000

* Technical advice and assistance is available to all watershed residents.

Program Guidelines

To qualify for current funding the following criteria must be met:

- Projects must be within the eligible area.
- Projects must demonstrate an improvement to local surface and/or groundwater quality.
- The landowner must demonstrate good land stewardship practices.
- The landowner must contribute financially to the project in some capacity.
- The landowner must complete a water quality improvement application and sign a project agreement form*.

How To Apply For Grants

- Obtain specific program information from the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority to determine if your project qualifies.
- Complete a Water Quality Improvement Application.
- A site visit from Authority staff will be necessary to determine eligibility.
- Projects that will result in the best benefits to water quality will be prioritized for funding.
- All proposals are subject to review by an established project committee.

* To acquire your water quality improvement application and project agreement form, please contact our local office at the address and / or number below.

Buffers are Better

WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM



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“Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little”.
– Edmund Burke

DID YOU KNOW?

Leaving an area of trees, grasses, shrubs, even wildflowers along waterways can improve the water quality adjacent to your property by over 30%. These natural areas are known as riparian buffers. They should be protected if you have them. If you don't, they can be easily created and offer many benefits.

A riparian buffer removes sediment and pollution such as chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides, bacteria and even road salt before they reach surface water.

Over 300 types of species in Niagara rely on riparian buffers to survive. Riparian buffers can also control flooding, prevent erosion, improve water clarity, provide shade and cooler water temperatures for fish and other creatures such as turtles and frogs.

If you have an opportunity to restore, protect or rehabilitate a riparian buffer zone on your property, you will help protect water quality for future generations. Most of our riparian buffer habitat has been eliminated through urbanization and agriculture.

Ninety-three percent of the riparian areas in the Niagara Peninsula are privately owned. If every landowner protected or improved one small piece of riparian buffer on their property, these little changes would make a big difference in improving local water quality.

5 simple things you can do today to make a difference

Stop Mowing

A simple way to ease into creating your backyard buffer is to allow your grass to grow wild. Avoid maintaining a lawn next to the water's edge; manicured grass has no habitat value except for moles and mice. It puts your property at risk for erosion and delivers chemicals and sediment directly to the water.



Use Native Plants

Native plants have adapted to local climate and environmental conditions. They respond well with very little maintenance, and are resistant to most diseases and insects. They are the plants that wildlife such as birds and butterflies prefer. They also add colour and aesthetic value to your property.



Think Big

The best safeguard for water quality is a buffer, and the more species of trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers it contains, the better the "buffering" ability. The plant's roots will stabilize stream banks. The leafy vegetation will act as a filter to trap pollution, and provide cover and food for all types of wildlife.

Plant a Buffer

There are many different techniques that can be used to get a buffer started, or make an existing one look better. Planting a variety of trees, grasses, shrubs and wildflowers helps improve water quality and attracts wildlife.

Leave natural vegetation, rocks and gravel along shorelines

A diverse aquatic community helps improve water quality. Roots from plants help prevent streambank erosion and siltation. Overhanging vegetation provides food, shelter and shade for aquatic life. Rocks and gravel provide hiding places for organisms and provides spawning beds for fish.

