



Minnesota Buffers Initiative

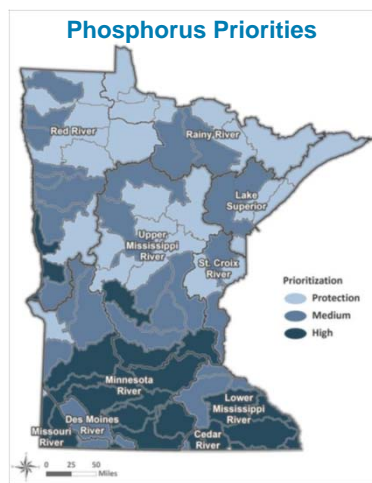


September 16, 2015

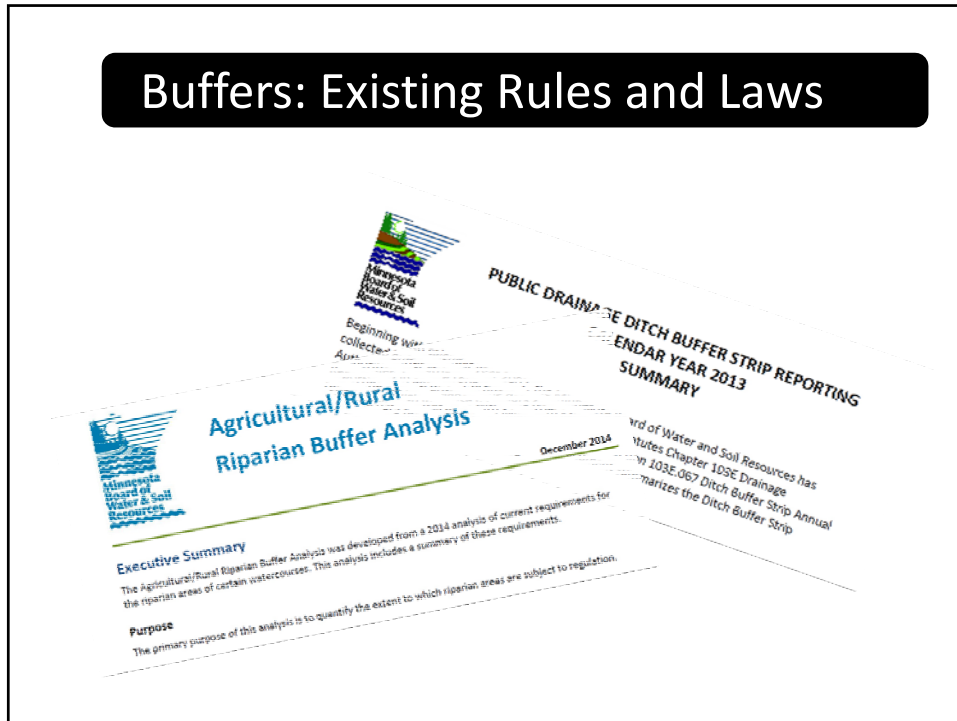
Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources

John Jaschke, BWSR Executive Director
Sarah Strommen, DNR Assistant Commissioner

Nutrient Reduction Strategy Priority Areas



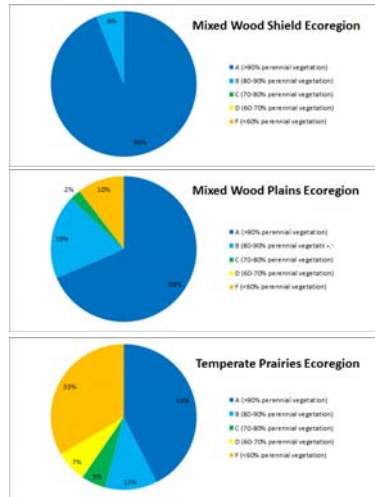
Buffers: Existing Rules and Laws



Buffer Analysis Results

Riparian classification	Linear miles	% Total stream/ditches	Buffer required (feet)
Shoreland Requirement	21,642	30%	50.0
Ditch Buffer Requirement	4,022	6%	16.5
No Buffer Requirement	44,850	64%	0.0

Buffer Zone Vegetation Analysis



~1/3 of 50-foot buffers in the Temperate Prairies Ecoregion are composed of less than 60% perennial vegetation (~11,000 stream miles)

Buffers Improve Water Quality

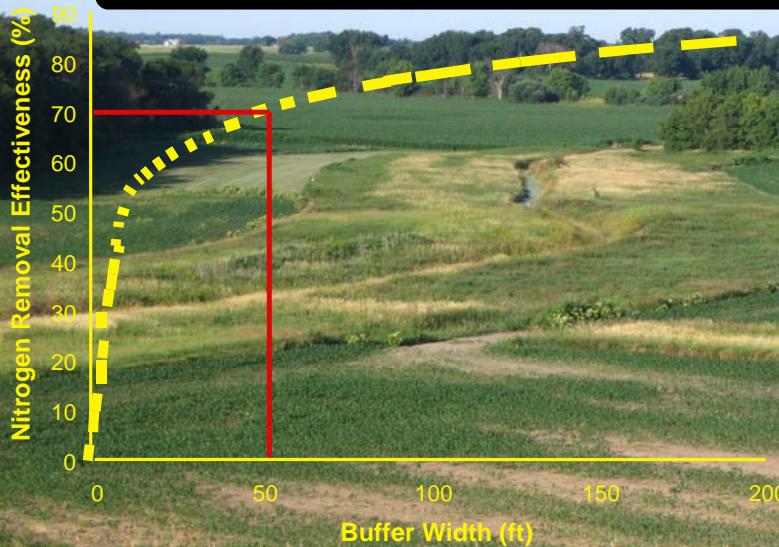


Photo Credit: Cannon River Watershed Partnership, 2008
Slide Credit: MN DNR, 2015

Minnesota's Buffer Initiative



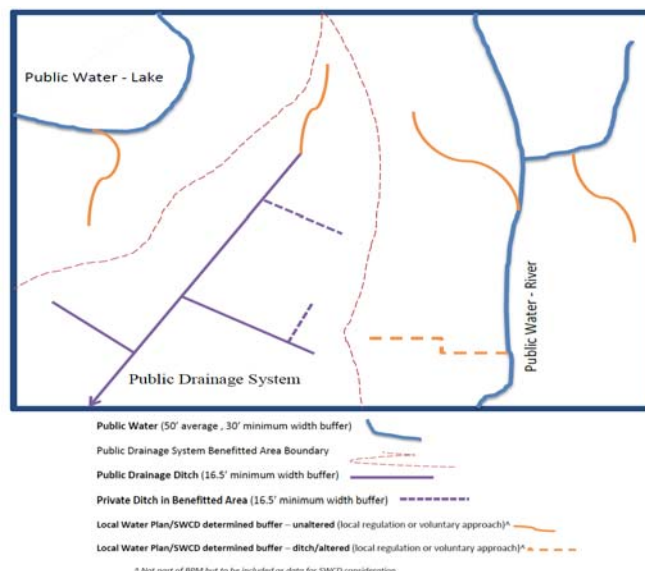
Minnesota's Buffer Initiative

A Statewide, basic standard approach:	
Maps	DNR will create buffer protection maps
Waters Covered and Buffer Widths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public waters – 50-foot average, 30-foot minimum • Public ditch systems - 16.5-foot minimum • Or alternative practices • Other waters determined by SWCDs
Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County or watershed district provides correction letters when noncompliance identified. • Local/state \$500 administrative penalty • State program funds can be withheld for failure to implement

Minnesota's Buffer Initiative

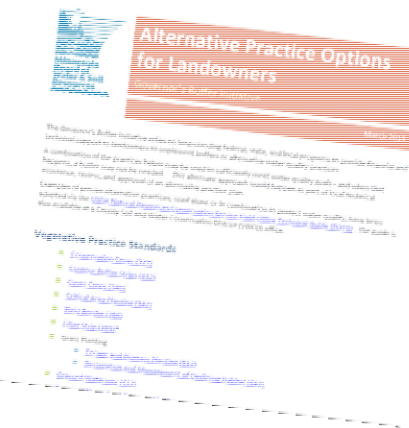
A Statewide, basic standard approach:	
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public waters – Nov 2017 Public ditch systems – Nov 2018 Extension if waiting for funding
Exemptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads, trails, building and structures. Inundated crops, alfalfa seeding Enrolled in CRP Areas covered by NPDES water-quality permits

Buffer Protection Map



Alternative Practices

Alternative water quality practice, or combination of practices, may be used to sufficiently meet water quality goals. In these instances, buffers may not be needed.



Landowner Financial Assistance

Is there financial assistance available for landowners?

There are many programs at the local, state, and federal level that provide assistance for establishing buffers.



Exemptions

Will any general exemptions to the 50 foot buffer requirement be considered?

Yes. The following areas would be exempt:

- Land enrolled in the federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- Public or private water access or recreational use areas
- Areas covered by a road, building or other structures
- Municipalities or others in compliance with federal and state storm sewer or storm water law

State Financial Commitments - next two years

- Clean Water Fund
 - \$22M for SWCD Local Capacity
 - -\$5M for Buffer Compliance Assistance
 - \$33M for Long Term Water Quality Protection (RIM, CREP)
 - \$20M for Projects and Practices Grants
 - \$12M for Targeted Resource Protection and Enhancement
 - \$1.5M Conservation Drainage
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: \$4.5M for buffers for wildlife and water quality
- Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund: \$1M for Farm Bill Assistance Program

Buffer Initiative – What's New?

- Expanding the scope of waters covered
- Setting timelines for implementation
- Providing for enforcement
- Strengthening soil erosion statutes
- Appropriating Funding

2015 Buffer Law

For more information:

The screenshot shows the website for the Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources. The main content area is titled "2015 Buffer Legislation" and includes a paragraph about Governor Mark Dayton's new landmark buffer initiative. To the right, there is a "Common questions and answers" section with a list of questions and answers, such as "What is the bill's purpose and who helped craft it?" and "Where are buffers required?". At the bottom left of the screenshot, there is a small image of a field with a stream and a sign that says "WHAT IS A BUFFER? VIEW SLIDESHOW".

<http://bwsr.state.mn.us/buffers/>

For more information

John Jaschke

BWSR Executive Director

P: 651-296-0878

john.jaschke@state.mn.us

<http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us>

Sarah Strommen

DNR Assistant Commissioner

P: 651-259-5021

sarah.strommen@state.mn.us

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us>