



South Dakota Riparian Buffer Initiative



What Are Riparian Buffers?

Riparian buffers are a strip of vegetation between agricultural land and a stream which help protect the stream from impacts of the land use around it. Buffer strips improve water quality and provide valuable habitat, bank stabilization, forage for livestock, and increase the value of marginal crop lands. Buffers are an excellent conservation practice vital to improving South Dakota's impaired watersheds

Before buffer strips...



After buffer strips...



photos courtesy of the Big Sioux River Watershed Implementation Project

Program Requirements

- Land must be within one hundred twenty feet of a waterbody noted in ARSD 74:51:03 or must be locally designated by the local board of county commissioners as outlined in SDCL 10-6-31.7
- Must have existing or be willing to establish perennial vegetation
- Vegetation may not be harvested or mowed between May 1st – August 1st
- Vegetation may not be grazed between May 1st – September 30th
- A minimum of four inches of cover must always be maintained
- Buffers must be a minimum of 50 feet in width, with a max average of 120 feet in width
- Must commit to a ten-year contract

Benefits to Landowners



Vegetation in the buffer may be grazed or hayed in the spring and fall



Exclusion fencing and alternative water cost-share is available



Increased bank stabilization and water quality for the streams



Incentive payments and tax breaks for landowners

Incentive Payments

Payments are based on 250% of the USDA "Pasture or Non-Irrigated Cropland Cash Rent Paid Per Acre for South Dakota" publications and will vary depending on location.

Eligible Stream Segments – A onetime upfront payment will be made per acre for eligible acres. In addition, participants qualify for cost-share on exclusion fence, alternative water, and grass seed expenses.

For Example...

Cropland – ½ mile of an eligible stream buffered at 50 feet = 3.03 acres of buffer. The overall average rental rate is \$425 per acre. \$425 x 3.03 ac x 10 years = \$12,877.50

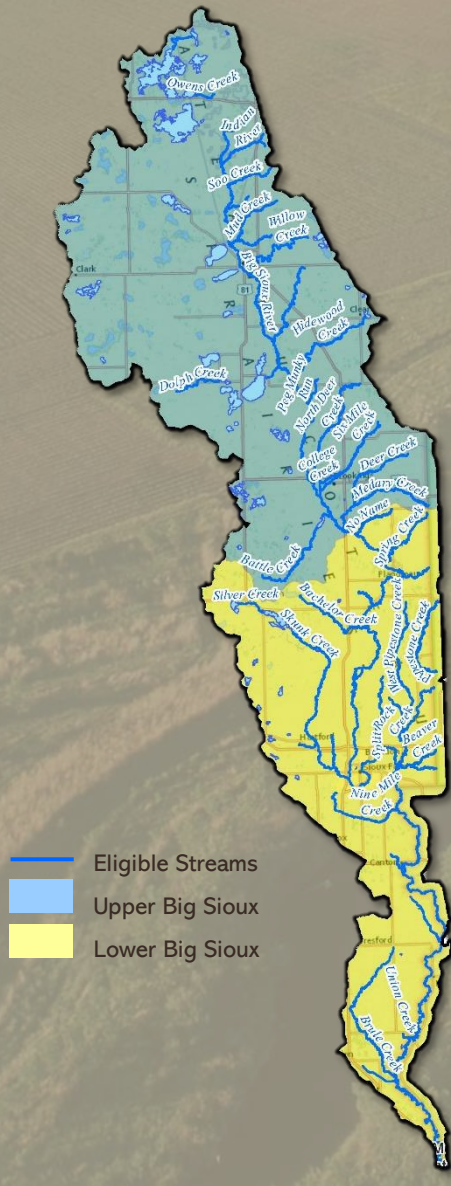
Pastureland – ½ mile of stream buffered at 50 feet would equal 3.03 acres of buffer. The overall average rental rate is \$145 per acre. \$145 x 3.03 ac x 10 years = \$4,393.50

Rental rates will vary by location

Cropland: \$350 - \$575

Pastureland: \$100 - \$157.50

Eligible Streams in the Big Sioux River Basin



For more information contact

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Special Thanks: Department of Agriculture & Natural Resources, South Dakota Legislature, Pheasants Forever, Game Fish & Parks, and East Dakota Water Development District