

# VEGETATIVE BUFFER

## Regulations and Requirements

Winnebago Co. Zoning Code:  
Chapter 27.7



Winnebago County  
Zoning Department

*The Wave of the Future*

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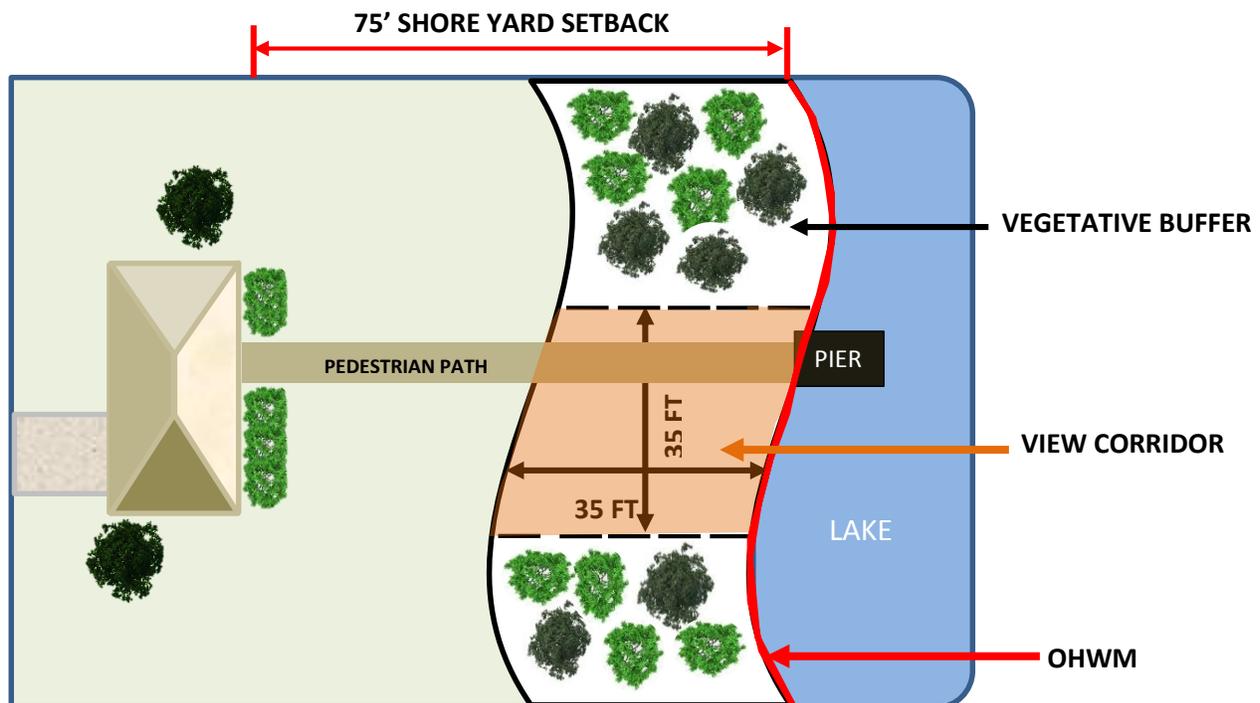
zoningdepartment@winnebagocountywi.gov

**PURPOSE:** To protect water quality, fish, wildlife habitat and natural scenic beauty, and to promote preservation and restoration of native vegetation.

**REQUIRED PERMITS:** A zoning permit is required to **remove any vegetation** within 35' of the ordinary high water mark.

**MAINTENANCE:** Routine maintenance is allowed without a permit.

**REPLACEMENT:** Removal of vegetation typically requires that a similar species of plant, capable of reaching the same height, is planted to replace the removed vegetation.

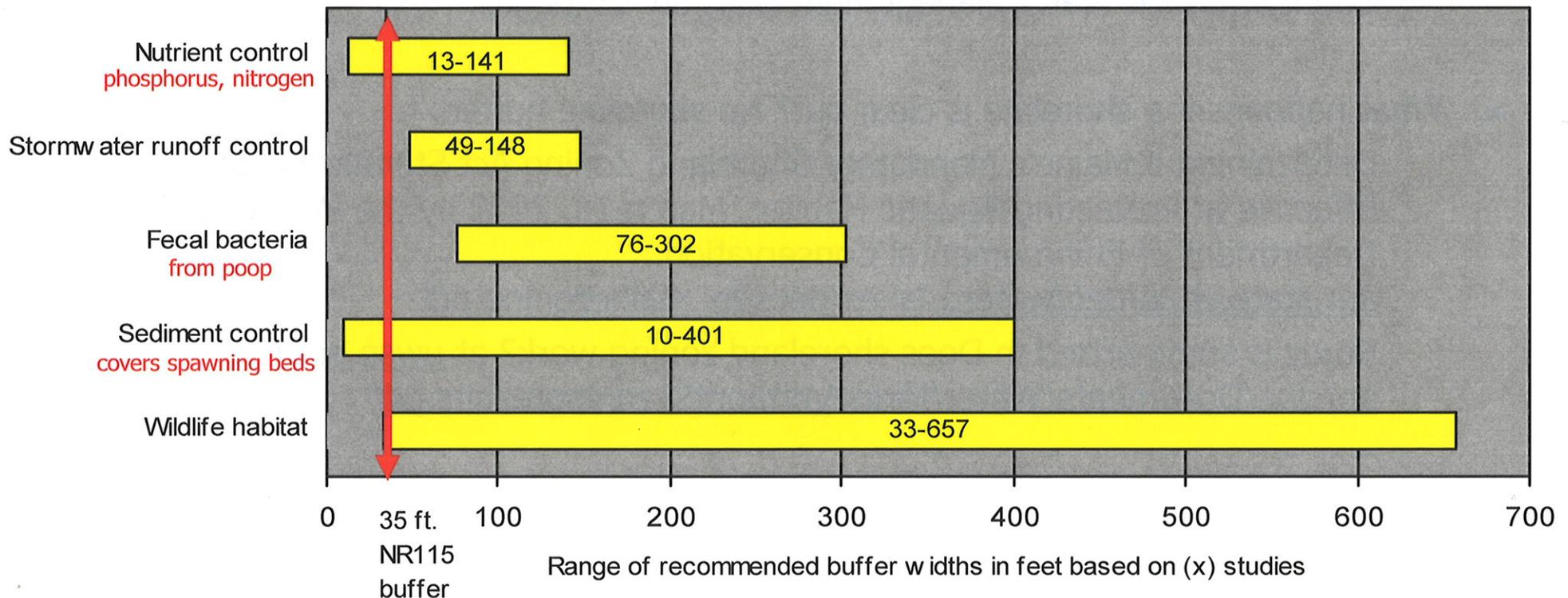


THIS HANDOUT IS ONLY INTENDED TO ASSIST INDIVIDUALS WITH A BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE REMOVAL OF VEGETATION – VEGETATIVE BUFFERS. OTHER RULES AND REQUIREMENTS APPLY.

COMPLETE RULES AND REGULATIONS ARE AVAILABLE AT:  
[WWW.CO.WINNEBAGO.WI.US/GENERALCODE](http://WWW.CO.WINNEBAGO.WI.US/GENERALCODE); CHAPTER 23.8-456

# What can buffers do if they're big enough?

## Recommended Shoreline Buffer Widths A Research Summary



Review of 52 U.S. studies by Aquatic Resource Consultants, Seattle WA

A 35 foot deep shoreline buffer does not keep bacteria from poop out of the water. In many situations, it doesn't keep P and sediment out of the water, and isn't enough for wildlife.

# Buffers affect birds

- Shoreline buffers provide habitat for
  - Eagles, loons, great blue herons, wood ducks and more

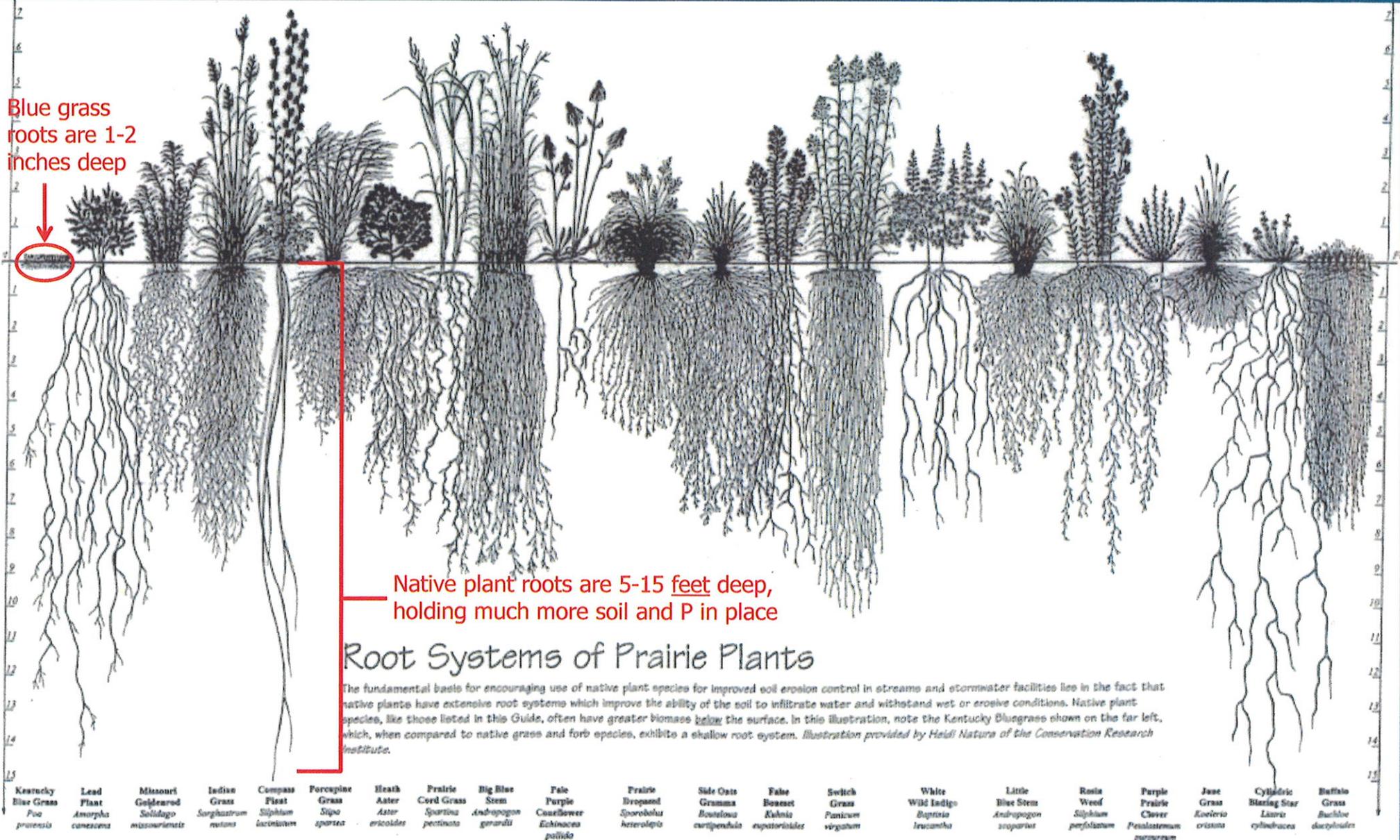
- Lawns provide habitat for
  - Canada geese



Geese avoid buffers because they can conceal predators such as coyotes, foxes and raccoons

Goose video at [youtube.com/watch?v=9Oef1C\\_kPNI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Oef1C_kPNI)

# Shoreline buffers



Blue grass cannot hold as much soil in place as native plants because blue grass has much shorter roots. Blue grass can lead to loss of shoreline, erosion, and sediment covering fish spawning beds.

## References

- Bar graph for shoreline buffers
  - A Literature Review of Recommended Buffer Widths to Maintain Various Functions of Stream Riparian Areas. 1992. Johnson, Alan W. (Aquatic Resource Consultants, Seattle, WA) and Diane M. Ryba. Prepared for King County Surface Water Management Division. 29 pages.
  
- What happens if a shoreline is clear cut? No shoreline buffer.
  - Determining if Maine's Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act Standards are Effective at Protecting Aquatic Habitat, March 14, 2013 by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation.  
[anr.state.vt.us/dec/waterq/lakes/docs/lp\\_mainezoning.pdf](http://anr.state.vt.us/dec/waterq/lakes/docs/lp_mainezoning.pdf)
  - Study is summarized in Does shoreland zoning work? at [uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/clue/Documents/Water/MaineVermontSLzoningresults.pdf](http://uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/clue/Documents/Water/MaineVermontSLzoningresults.pdf)