

Design for Farms Near Water

We envision farmers as stewards of productive streamside lands that provide clean water and habitat.

Innovative farmers receive economic assistance to develop agricultural systems that restore ecosystem functions while providing food, fiber and fuel.

'Buffer' is a verb

It takes a watershed to buffer a stream. Good buffering filters pollutants before they reach streams and creates a healthy streamside environment for fish and wildlife. Our northwest cold water fish need streams that are shaded and loaded with wood. Ground and surface waters need to be cold and free of sediment, nutrients and toxins. Farm lands are different than forestlands, and require active management because the surrounding ecosystems have been so altered.

Designing for Stewardship

Caring for our agricultural land includes managing our soils for future productivity and designing to protect our water quality and fish habitat. This requires a comprehensive look at practices across the farm, not just the strip of land next to the stream. For example, if sediment and pollutant laden surface runoff is concentrated, flowing into a stream buffer, it doesn't matter how wide the buffer is—it doesn't work. Stewardship combines runoff management practices across the farm, and increases trees and other perennial vegetation near streams while putting limits on pesticide and fertilizer use. We can create farms that perform both economically and ecologically so they can continue to be productive over generations.

The Agroforestry Option

Agroforestry practices mix trees, crops, and animals to increase agricultural productivity and provide ecological benefits. We propose using a mix of agroforestry practices with stream and wetland restoration to create profitable agricultural landscapes that recover salmon. U.S. Farm Bill programs subsidize practices like forest farming, alley cropping, contour swales, rotational grazing, riparian forestry, coppice for fiber production, and silvopasture.

Phase One

- ☞ *Consult with regulators and stakeholders on buffering with agroforestry*
- ☞ *Support willing landowners to design and implement pilot projects*
- ☞ *Design a coordinated investment approach that supports farm innovation*



Mushroom Production on Alder Logs



Rotational Grazing in Silvopasture



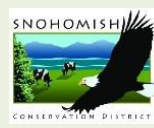
Runoff Infiltration in Contour Swale

The land is too various in its kinds, climates, conditions, declivities, aspects, and histories to conform to any generalized understanding or to prosper under generalized treatment.

Wendell Berry



PUGET SOUND
PARTNERSHIP



Mason
Conservation
District

https://salishsearestoration.org/wiki/Working_Buffer_Pilot_Project

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- ☞ *The public can share the costs of restorative stewardship while landowners retain ownership and judicious economic use.*
- ☞ *Agroforestry can allow harvest while filtering nutrients and toxins—managed forest succession can accelerate recovery of riparian functions.*
- ☞ *Dividing the landscape between a “channel zone” and a “water quality zone” can clarify design goals and support collaborative stewardship*

