

Seven Stewardship Suggestions

- > Get involved in your community.
- > Check into existing watershed stewardship programs.
- > Maintain healthy, native streamside buffers.
- > Beware of rogue plants!
- > Properly dispose of yard and household waste.
- > Be careful what you do to the stream and its banks.
- > Stay out of the floodplain.

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Your Role in Streamside Living

Below are general descriptions of each stewardship suggestion. For more detail, please visit: www.catskillstreams.org.

Get involved in your community.

Public events like meetings, hearings and workshops provide a great opportunity for streamside landowners to ask questions, express concerns and generally learn about stream stewardship activities. Local agencies host many public events every year and welcome input from residents and community members. As a watershed resident, you are encouraged to get involved with protecting the beautiful natural environment that we all share.



Detailed information about your property and the stream adjacent to it may be available in a Stream Management Plan. Contact your local SWCD to see if a Plan has been developed in your watershed.

Check into existing watershed stewardship programs.

Many programs already exist for assisting streamside landowners monetarily and in-kind with stewardship activities. One place to learn about these opportunities is through the CWC, which has programs in septic rehabilitation, stormwater retrofits, local technical assistance, education, and economic development. Forest landowners may be eligible for assistance through Watershed Agricultural Council's (WAC's) Forestry Program or through the Catskill Forest Association. Agricultural landowners may be eligible to participate in WAC's Whole Farm Planning Program. And landowners with smaller parcels may receive detailed stream information, including a site visit from DEP's Stream Management Program or SWCDs. Please visit the website listed left to learn how you may enroll in these programs.





Maintain healthy, native streamside buffers.

Instead of mowing to the very edge of your streambank, allow a buffer strip to grow freely with native trees and shrubs. You can still have access to the stream by planting native species and leaving openings in your landscape design. When raking leaves or gathering grass clippings designate a compost area in the corner of your yard as far from the stream bank as possible. Do not throw debris over the streambank or pile it up like a berm, killing vegetation underneath. Also, if you have fallen trees in the stream near you, see if the logs are diverting the water's energy toward the bank and causing erosion. If so, remove the logs piece by piece. Leave any woody debris that's not causing erosion, because fish love to hide underneath fallen logs.



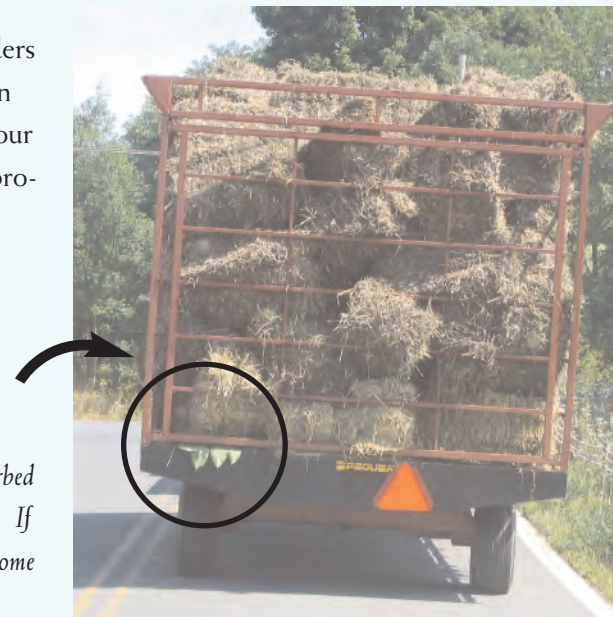
Beware of rogue plants!

Some plants introduced into personal gardens or farms have escaped those borders and sprouted downstream, even though they are not native to New York or even



the U.S. Some non-native species can colonize our streambanks with only one small piece that has broken off, washed downstream, and rooted itself. Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), often referred to as bamboo, is one example of a non-native, invasive species that spreads rapidly and overtakes native vegetation. Invasive plants like knotweed are both costly and labor intensive to remove. *Prevention, by replanting barren slopes or disturbed soils, is the most cost effective way to battle invasive plants. If invasives are detected, remove the plants before they can become established.* Contact your local SWCD or visit

www.catskillstreams.org for advice on how to address invasive plants.



Properly dispose of yard and household waste.

Unfortunately, some people think of streams as garbage dumps. Debris can become a hazard during floods, and it can pose a threat to our groundwater. Remove old tires, garbage, and litter from your property and store these materials as far from the stream as possible. Waste from pets and livestock is a significant source of water pollution, creating excessive nutrients and bacteria. Dispose of your pet's waste in the trash and store livestock manure properly. Finally, hazardous substance such as paints, thinners, solvents, grease, oil, carpet cleaning water, pool and spa water and detergents should not be dumped into streams, septics or stormwater collection systems. Your town or county may sponsor a day (i.e. Clean Sweep in Delaware County) to collect household hazardous waste. Using alternatives, or reusing and recycling hazardous fluids and other products, can reduce the amount of waste produced in the first place.

Plants appropriate for streamside areas

(please note this is only a partial list)

SHRUBS

- > Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis* L.)
- > Red Osier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea* L.)
- > Gray Dogwood (*Cornus racemosa* Lam.)
- > Silky Willow (*Salix sericea*)
- > Black willow (*Salix nigra*)
- > Small pussy willow (*Salix humilis*)
- > Arrowwood Viburnum (*Viburnum dentatum*)
- > Silky Dogwood (*Cornus amomum*)
- > Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*)
- > Shadbush (*Amelanchier arborea*)

TREES

- > Green Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanicus*)
- > Red Oak (*Quercus rubra* L.)
- > Sycamore (*Plantanus occidentalis* L.)
- > Red maple (*Acer Rubrum* L.)
- > Serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*)
- > River Birch (*betula nigra*)
- > Mountain Ash (*Sorbus americana*)

For more information visit:

www.catskillstreams.org



Be careful what you do to the stream and its banks.

Cleaning gravel out of the stream, armoring its banks with rock, or creating berms are actions many landowners want to take following a flood. However, these activities provide only temporary stability to one point in the stream, and they can often lead to increased erosion and flooding downstream. Installing these practices often leads to the concentration of damaging flood flows, over-widening, loss of sediment transport and fish habitat and increased bank erosion. Resource professionals at DEP and local SWCDs have developed management plans for many of the streams in the Catskills. Following the careful analysis of the stream's natural characteristics, the partners devised new longer-lasting solutions that are both cost-effective and ecologically sound. Some activities in a stream require a permit.

Be sure to seek professional advice before taking action. Contact one or more of the agencies listed on the back page for assistance.

Stay out of the floodplain.

As their name implies, floodplains are subject to periodic flooding. When there is a flood, healthy floodplains provide storage areas for flood waters, reduce flood velocities and reduce flood peaks. A properly functioning floodplain can also provide other benefits like filtering pollutants and wastes. It can help to moderate temperature, and provides vital habitat. A stream can be disconnected from its floodplain by filling and developing the floodplain or digging in the stream channel. Once disconnected, instability and erosion throughout the stream system can result. It is typically recommended to avoid building structures in the 100-year floodplain-the area which has a 1% chance of being inundated in any given year. Remember, anything in the floodplain (including buildings) is at risk of being washed downstream. **Visit your town clerk's office to learn whether or not your house or any structures on your property are built within the 100-year floodplain.**

