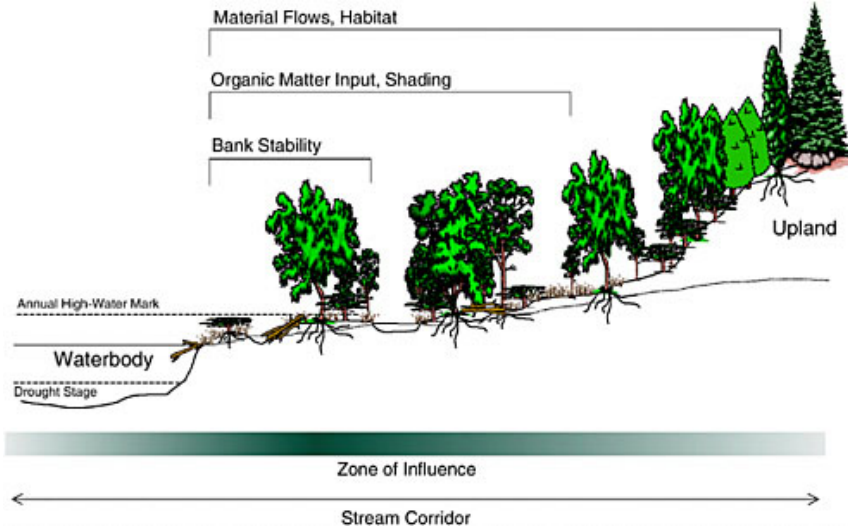


## Waterway and Tree Removal Permits Requirements for Sonoma County

### **Riparian Area Protection Laws**

Trees are needed in these areas to stabilize soils and shade the water in hot summer months. Riparian plant communities are specially adapted to waterways and you should consult with an expert for the best treatment of planting or removal in riparian zone. Areas around waterways should not be disturbed because it is important for reducing erosion and keeping water clear, clean, and cool, which is important for fish habitat. Here is an illustration of the services riparian vegetation provides:



Source: RipZET Riparian Zone Estimator Tool, SFEI, <https://www.nap.edu/read/10327/chapter/3#47>

**California Lake and Streambed Alteration Program** (Fish and Game Code section 1602) requires an entity to notify CDFW prior to commencing any activity that may:

- Substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream or lake;
- Substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel or bank of any river, stream, or lake; or
- Deposit debris, waste or other materials that could pass into any river, stream or lake.

Please note that "any river, stream or lake" includes those that are episodic (they are dry for periods of time) as well as those that are perennial (they flow year round). This includes ephemeral streams, desert washes, and watercourses with a subsurface flow. It may also apply to work undertaken within the flood plain of a body of water. To obtain an LSA Agreement or written verification that one is not required, [begin your notification to CDFW.](#)

**Riparian Corridor Zoning for Sonoma County**- vegetation removal is not allowed within the riparian corridor setback (50-100 feet from top of bank) without a permit. Removing vegetation for safety may be allowed in some cases, but you must file for a permit through [Permit Sonoma](#) before doing it.

**Watercourse and Lake Protection Zones (WLPZ)** apply for CalFire Timber Harvest permits. Vegetation or tree removal is not allowed in the area around waterways except for sanitation salvage or drainage maintenance. Permits must be filed for work that damages vegetation around water bodies.

- **Timber Harvesting Laws for Sonoma County & California Laws are explained here:** <http://www.sonomacountygazette.com/cms/pages/sonoma-county-news-article-912.html>