

How do we maintain healthy riparian areas?

Manage land and streams carefully.

- ❑ Leave trees and brush cover along stream banks (at least 25-75 feet from each bank).
- ❑ Avoid straightening or "cleaning out" creeks. If bank erosion and flooding are a problem, seek technical help from a professional (see back panel).
- ❑ Avoid construction or pavement on floodplains. Flooding is natural. A floodplain's function is to absorb and slow down floodwaters.
- ❑ Keep bulldozers, 4WDs, 4 wheelers and other equipment out of the creek as much as possible. Don't mine gravel below the normal high water line.
- ❑ Control erosion on the uplands, too. Install filter strips and conservation tillage on cropland. Use silt fences, mulch, and sod to prevent erosion on construction sites.

Graze riparian areas carefully.

- ❑ Reduce grazing pressure on stream-bank vegetation by maintaining good forage, shade and water outside the riparian area.
- ❑ Allow riparian pastures to rest and recover, and don't graze in early spring.
- ❑ Move cattle feeding areas and mineral feeders away from the creek.
- ❑ Consider exclusion fencing with stabilized stream access areas for sensitive sites.

Where to get help:

💧 **County Conservation Districts and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS):** technical and design assistance for riparian management and information on cost share programs.

💧 **Forest Services Division, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry:** assistance on riparian planting, timber harvest, and cost-share programs for conservation practices. 918-456-6139.

💧 **The Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Commission:** landowner assistance in the watersheds of the Illinois and other state Scenic Rivers. Phone 918-456-3251 or visit their website at: www.scenicrivers.state.ok.us

💧 **Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Northeast Region:** 918-683-1031

💧 **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Tulsa:** 918-581-7458.

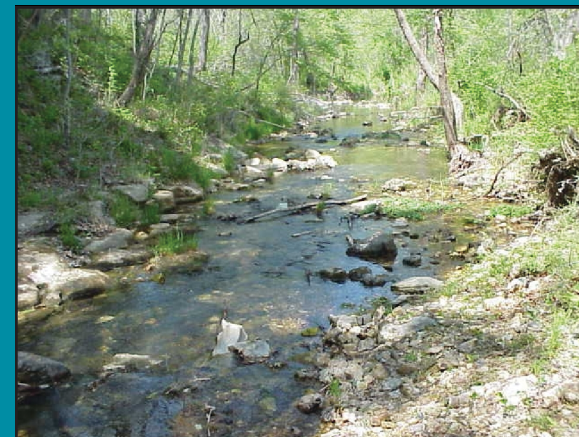
💧 **County OSU Cooperative Extension Service:** information and programs on riparian and grazing management. *The Riparian Area Management Handbook*, a publication of OSU Extension and Oklahoma Conservation Commission, is available for purchase, or it can be downloaded free on the internet at: <http://agweb.okstate.edu/pearl/e952/e-952.pdf>

A publication of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, in cooperation with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, funded by EPA 319(h) Task 500, the Illinois River Education Program.

Oklahoma State University, in compliance with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246 as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and other federal laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices or procedures. This includes but is not limited to admissions, employment, financial aid, and educational services.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Robert E. Whitson, Director of Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. This publication is printed and issued by Oklahoma State University as authorized by the Dean of the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and has been prepared and distributed at a cost of 42 cents per copy.

PROTECT RIPARIAN AREAS FOR THE ILLINOIS RIVER



L-311

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
in cooperation with
Oklahoma Conservation Commission