

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
PRACTICE DOCUMENTATION GUIDE
RIPARIAN FOREST BUFFER**

391

391 – STEP 1. INITIAL EVALUATIONS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to determine the landowner's desire to establish, enhance or protect riparian woody and herbaceous plants in New Mexico. (See Natural Resources Conservation Service, Practice Standard 391).

The landowner must be interviewed to determine the purpose and need for riparian forest buffer. Some considerations will include the landowners intended desire for the protection of the riparian area, whether for wildlife, sediment control flood scour production or forest health issues, carbon sequestration, recreation and other pertinent reasons.

391 – STEP 2. INVESTIGATIONS, SURVEYS, AND INVENTORIES

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to identify all of the mandatory preliminary operations that are required before a riparian forest restoration operation can be sited and planned. This will include identifying all needed utility clearances, archeological clearances, and identifying the proper USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle sheet and other needed maps.

391 – STEP 3. PRACTICE DESIGN

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to plan the riparian forest buffer project, identify the objectives, and develop a record of the completed actions taken.

All required deliverables for the design, installation, and compliance are found on the New Mexico Statement of Work. This document will be followed to successfully complete the project.

The local conditions will need to be assessed at the proposed site in order to identify any possible problems that may arise. This involves assessing the local riparian forest and topographic conditions and the local land uses, among other things. The practice standard should be consulted to understand the three zone system for riparian buffers. Species selection must be appropriate to the local area. Planting dates must be appropriate for an acceptable rate of survival. Plantings will be protected from unacceptable adverse impacts from insects, wildlife, livestock and fire. Mulching or supplemental water may be required to assure adequate survival and growth. Erosion control must be implemented and in areas of excessive bank erosion, vegetative, structural or mechanical treatments may be required. All appropriate maps and reports must be reviewed with the landowner. An awareness of the types of equipment and materials used in the establishment a riparian forest buffer is essential, and a list of accepted materials must be provided to the landowner. (See Natural Resources Conservation Service Practice Standard 391, Practice Specification 391, and pertinent job sheets).

The landowner will need to provide the contractor with the appropriate standards, statement of work, job sheets and personal expectations.

391 – STEP 4. PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to document and describe the methods and materials used during the construction of the riparian forest buffer.

This will include the documentation of the equipment and tools which were used, techniques and methods used at each site, and

Practice Documentation Guide 391-2

recording the relevant information from each site on the approved specification sheets, statement of work, job sheets, technical notes and narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.

391 - STEP 5. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to assure the proper management and maintenance is completed at the job site. (See Natural Resources Conservation Service, Practice Standard 391, Practice Specification 391, and appropriate job sheets.

This requires a familiarity with the design and management objectives in order to minimize erosion potential and to maintain the site in a proper and safe fashion while meeting the objectives of the project. These measures should be discussed with the landowner.

612 – STEP 6. COMPLIANCE OR SPOT CHECKING

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to determine that all work has been completed to the standards required by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

All completed NRCS forms should be collected from the landowner and submitted to the appropriate persons. (See Natural Resources Conservation Service Practice Standard 391, Practice Specification 391, Statement of Work (Riparian Forest Buffer) and associated job sheets).

II. DOCUMENTS

Copies of all completed job sheets and associated work sheets should be submitted to the Natural Resources Conservation Service representative within 10 working days of completion of the project. .