

South Fork Kent Creek Watershed:
Rural Best Management Practices

Filter Strips

A filter strip is an area or strip of permanent, herbaceous vegetation for removing organic matter, sediment, and other pollutants from runoff before it enters water sources or water bodies. Filter strips are installed in environmentally sensitive areas that need protection from contaminated runoff.

Conservation Practice Standard: Filter Strips, **Code 393**

Benefits:

- ✓ Reduces suspended solids and other pollutants in runoff
- ✓ Reduces excessive sediment in waterways
- ✓ Decreases dissolved contaminant loadings in runoff



NRCS Georgia



NRCS USDA

This flier was prepared using United States Environmental Protection Agency funds under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act distributed through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. The findings and recommendations contained herein are not necessarily those of the funding agencies.

South Fork Kent Creek Watershed:
Rural Best Management Practices

Filter Strips

Design Considerations: Filter strips should be planted cross-slope or on the contour downhill from the source of contamination. They should be wide enough to accomplish intended purposes. According to the NRCS Conservation Practice Standard, filter strip width should be based on a 15-minute flow through time determined not to exceed a 30-minute flow through time.

Species Considerations: Plant species should be adapted to climate and soil of the planting site and have a moderate to aggressive establishment rate in order to inhabit the site quickly. Chosen plants should also be able to tolerate polluted runoff, sediment deposition, and herbicide runoff. Ideally, selected plant species could have stiff stems and a high stem density close to ground surface.

Operation/Maintenance Considerations: In order to maintain the filter strip's filtering capacity, filter strip vegetation should be harvested and removed at appropriate times. Harvesting and removing dead vegetation will improve

vigor and density of vegetation, remove pollutants absorbed in plant tissue, and aid in maintaining upright growth habit. Periodically it may be necessary to regrade or reestablish filter strip

vegetation when sedimentation jeopardize the filter strip's function.

