

Buffer Tree Planting

Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Program

Lord Fairfax Soil and Water Conservation District (LFSWCD)



What is a Tree Planting?

A tree planting practice creates a woodland buffer filter area to protect local waterways from erosion, sedimentation, and non-point agricultural pollution. It also provides forested areas for wildlife and aquatic benefit. This practice offers cost-share and an acreage incentive payment for the lifespan of the practice.

VACS Program

A tree planting (FR-3) is commonly paired with stream exclusion projects, adding increased filtration and protection to vegetated buffer areas. Fencing is necessary to protect the tree planting from any livestock, and buffer area grazing is not allowed. The minimum width of the wooded buffer must be at least 35 feet, not to exceed 100 feet.

Recommendations for tree species, planting density and a management plan will be made by an Area Forester with the Virginia Department of Forestry.

“In any subsequent program year within the practice lifespan, a single replanting due to mortality losses from circumstances outside the control of the participant may receive cost-share. Only the eligible component costs necessary to replant the site for the same acreage. In order to be considered for cost-share on replanting, the participant must notify District staff within 6 months of a suspected failure. District staff will review conditions and determine eligibility for replanting in consultation with Department of Forestry.” - (VACS Manual)

Practice Specifications and Rates

The state cost-share rate for a woodland buffer filter area is 95% of the eligible approved costs, plus an incentive buffer payment:

For conifer buffers;

\$100 per acre for a 10-year lifespan

\$150 per acre for a 15 year lifespan

For hardwood buffers

\$350 per acre for a 10 year lifespan

\$500 per acre for a 15 year lifespan

Eligible component costs are as follows:

- Site preparation – mechanical and/or chemical
- Labor
- Seedlings
- Seed for ground cover (Fescue is discouraged)
- Herbaceous plantings/shrubs
- Protective Fencing

Contact the Lord Fairfax SWCD for more information at:

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