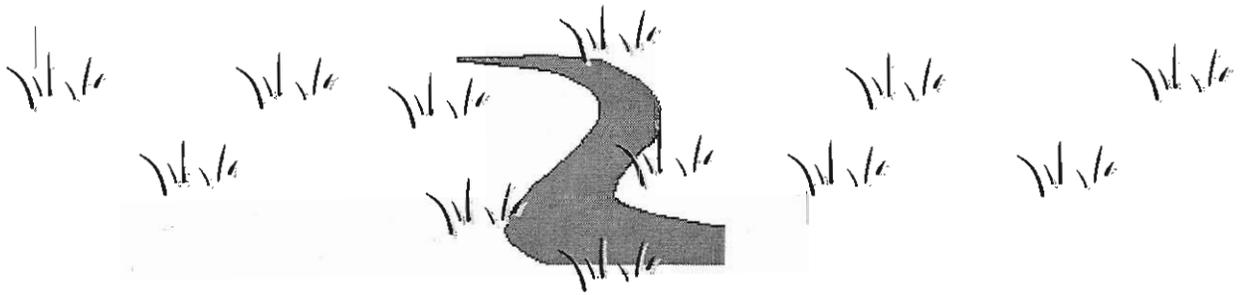


The Licking County Property Owner's Guide To



Stream Maintenance

Courtesy of the Licking County Planning Department and the Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District

In Ohio, the right of maintaining clean and free-flowing waterways belongs to the property owner. In an effort to assist owners on the "do"s and "don't"s of stream clearing and maintenance, the following guidelines are provided:

Removal of logs and debris

- 1) When removing logs and debris from stream channels, do not pull whole trees out unless the roots have completely detached from the stream bank. By cutting the tree trunk away from its base, the stump will remain in the ground to hold the surrounding soil in place, thus preventing soil erosion and sediment runoff into the stream.
- 2) If possible, keep all machinery or equipment from entering the stream channel, where hazardous chemicals such as oil and gasoline may leak into the water. If in-channel equipment must be used, contact the Army Corp of Engineers (1-866-502-2570) for written approval. Also, a floodplain permit application must be filed with the Licking County Planning Department (740-670-5200).

Stream bank stabilization

- 1) Rocks, boulders and clean, concrete rip-rap (no asphalt or other chemically-treated road debris) may be used for stream bank stabilization along eroding banks. When placing rip-rap in the channel, align the pieces so that water is redirected to the center of the stream channel, like shingles on a rooftop. This will help prevent further erosion of the stream bank underneath.
- 2) Minimize the amount of rip-rap used. All material placed in the floodplain displaces water and raises flood water levels in the event of a major storm. While it is important to prevent stream bank erosion around bridges and roads, please be

courteous of property owners downstream who may feel the effects of rising flood water!

- 3) Do not alter the direction or width of present waterways. Streams are dynamic, ever-changing bodies of water that release their gravitational energy by flowing downstream through meandering channels. When channels are straightened, the speed of the flowing water increases, creating greater water velocities that must be compensated for downstream. The Army Corp of Engineers oversees and regulates all stream channelization projects, including filling and dredging activities. Please contact their office, as well as the Licking County Planning Department, before initiating any work.

Vegetation

- 1) One of the best steps a property owner can take to protect his/her property from soil erosion, flooding, and water quality problems is to seed and maintain vegetation and trees around waterways.
- 2) Warm season, wet weather grass seed and mulch should be planted within 15 to 20 feet of the stream bank on both sides, or wherever top soil is exposed at the ground surface. Trees should be planted close-enough to provide shade to the stream channel, but not so close that future channel meandering may cause the trees to fall down. The grass and tree roots absorb water runoff, prevent soil erosion, and improve water quality by shading surface water and "buffering" the fertilizers, pesticides, and other chemicals that would otherwise end up in the stream or groundwater. Vegetation buffers are particularly valuable in agricultural areas.

Floodplain Areas

The Licking County Flood Damage Prevention Regulations restrict the storage of topsoil, gravel, or other fill material in the floodplain. During a flooding event, this material, unless confined, will wash into the stream channel and potentially divert or elevate floodwater. Old lumber and construction materials, yard waste, and other debris can clog up culverts and bridges. To store fill material, or any other debris in the floodplain, please apply for a floodplain permit at the Licking County Planning Department (740-670-5200).

If you have any questions or comments on the information presented above, please contact the Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District office at (740) 670-5330, or the Licking County Planning Department at (740) 670-5200. We thank you for your cooperation!