

How to Use This Guide

This document is designed to provide guidance for active restoration by riparian planting, from determining where and when it is needed to assessing the planting project. It is not a “cook book” approach with prescribed recipes, but more describes options and considerations for a variety of situations.

Information presented in this guide was collected from local restoration groups (watershed councils, conservation districts, and landowners), planting professionals (contractors, agency personnel, industry groups), researchers (in published and unpublished literature), and monitoring data collected on actual projects.

The major concepts presented in this guide are:



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Setting Planting Objectives

Why?

Site Selection

Where?

Planting and Establishment

What? When? How?

Maintenance

When? How Much?

Monitoring and Assessment

What Happened?

Information Needed for Successful Planting Projects

In order to get the best match between site potential and objectives, and to have clear expectations for the restoration site, it is important to know:

- historic vegetation patterns
- historic and present land use
- historic and present channel conditions
- soil type and condition
- flood and low-flow information
- species suited to the site and to the zones within the site
- species available as wildling stock, cuttings, or from nurseries
- competing vegetation present, with locations and intensities
- wildlife, livestock, diseases, and insects on site

Skills Needed for Successful Planting Projects

In order to get the best performance from purchased or harvested stock, the following skills or resources are recommended:

- ability and facilities to properly transport, store, and plant stock
- ability to monitor planted stock for survival, vigor, damage, and competition

ability to maintain sites in terms of competing vegetation and browse protection

- ability to map and/or document planted stock, planting efforts, and maintenance

Costs Associated with Successful Planting Projects

Costs associated with planting projects typically include:

- functional assessment
- site plan
- site preparation
- planted stock
- planting efforts and recordkeeping
- stock protection
- monitoring
- maintenance

It is important to have clear and realistic expectations of when and how a project will achieve its objectives. The survival of planted stock, as well as their growth rates, is dependent on site conditions, planting method, protection, and maintenance. The time needed for canopy closure, free-to-grow status, and increased shade are all dependent on the level of care provided, especially in the first few years following planting.