

Appendix L: Quantifying Habitat Types for Acquisition Projects

For an acquisition project or combination project with an acquisition component, the applicant must quantify the acreage of lake, riparian, tideland, upland, or wetland habitat present on the property to be acquired to determine the required matching share; for more information see the “Matching Share” section. For this purpose, uplands are those areas that fall outside of other specified habitat types and their buffers.

Riparian acreage may include the entire channel migration zone and floodplain. For guidance to determine the channel migration zone for a riparian project, the applicant may refer to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s 2020 [Riparian Ecosystems, Volume 2: Management Recommendations](#).

For quantifying buffers around lakes, tidelands, and wetlands, a sponsor may choose to apply a “standard buffer” or a “site-specific buffer.” The standard buffer is a simple method for quantifying habitat types. The site-specific buffer is based on the Site Potential Tree Height at 200 years.

- The **standard buffer** requires a 200-foot buffer around lakes, streams, channel migration zones, floodplains, and tidelands. Wetlands that are hydrologically connected to fish-bearing waters also have a 200-foot buffer; those that are not connected to fish-bearing waters have a 100-foot buffer.
- The **site-specific buffer** requires that a buffer of one, Site Potential Tree Height at 200 years is used around all habitat types except wetlands. For wetlands, the site-specific buffer width should be based on the county critical area ordinance.

When using the site-specific buffer, the application will reference the Site Potential Tree Height used and the section of county code where the wetland buffer widths are listed. The applicant may use the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s [SPTHmapping tool](#) to determine the appropriate Site Potential Tree Height.

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Regardless of the above calculation methods used, all property areas outside of these habitat types and their buffers are considered "uplands" for the purposes of determining an applicant's required matching share.

Note: The "standard" and "site-specific" buffers are tools for a streamlined, consistent approach for estimating relative proportions of habitat types for the purpose of applying for a SRFB acquisition grant. If a restoration project is subsequently pursued on the property, regulatory buffers may vary by jurisdiction.