VEGETATED FILTER STRIPS

(a.k.a. vegetated/vegetative buffer strips)

Vegetative filter strips are areas of vegetation that are left in-situ in order to act as temporary or permanent, low-cost and effective erosion and sediment control measures. Well-established, existing vegetation can reduce the velocity of surface runoff, promote infiltration and reduce discharge by capturing and holding sediment and other pollutants.

Application

- Determine areas and construction activities that may benefit from leaving vegetation in place such as diversion swales, adjacent to buffers, and identify the locations on the construction drawings.

Existing grass that is **thick** and **matted** is the ***most effective*** type of vegetative filter.

Design and Installation

Vegetative buffer strips to be provided down gradient of sediment fencing according to the following criteria:

  - 3 m for perimeter fencing
  - 15 m for fencing adjacent to a warm water watercourse
  - 30 m for fencing adjacent to a coldwater watercourse supplemented with a second row of fencing 2 metres beyond the initial row

- Avoidance of the area will be required in order to ensure that the vegetation is not trampled and killed.
- Climate conditions and seasonal variability may influence the effectiveness of the vegetation and additional ESC measures may be required during times of vegetation die-back.
- Additional ESC measures upslope of the filter strips may be required if excessive sedimentation is anticipated.
- It may be necessary to delineate the vegetation to remain so that the area can be protected from excavation, grading, foot and vehicular traffic.
- Space will be required to store equipment, vehicles, material and soil stockpiles away from areas where soil compaction and/or vehicle tracking may damage vegetation and tree roots.
- Vegetative filter trips aren't effective at filtering high velocity flows from paved areas, steep slopes or hilly areas without additional ESC measures.

Inspection and maintenance

- Inspect weekly, and before and after significant rainfall (see definition in Section 10.1.2) or snowmelt events, and keep a record of the inspection.
- Repair any damage to fencing within 48 hours and remove, by hand, and dispose of any mounds of accumulated sediment or debris.