

TABLE 1-1 Federal Agency Definitions of "Riparian"

Agency	Definition
Bureau of Land Management (1999)	A riparian area is an area of land directly influenced by permanent water. It has visible vegetation or physical characteristics reflective of permanent water influence. Lake shores and stream banks are typical riparian areas. Excluded are such sites as ephemeral streams or washes that do not exhibit the presence of vegetation dependent upon free water in the soil.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1998)	Riparian areas are plant communities contiguous to and affected by surface and sub-surface hydrologic features of perennial or intermittent lotic and lentic water bodies (rivers, streams, lakes, or drainage ways). Riparian areas have one or both of the following characteristics: (1) distinctively different vegetative species than adjacent areas, and (2) species similar to adjacent areas but exhibiting more vigorous or robust growth forms. Riparian areas are usually transitional between wetlands and upland.
U.S. Forest Service (2000)	Riparian areas are geographically delineated areas, with distinctive resource values and characteristics, that are comprised of the aquatic and riparian ecosystems, floodplains, and wetlands. They include all areas within a horizontal distance of 100 feet from the edge of perennial streams or other water bodies.... A riparian ecosystem is a transition between the aquatic ecosystem and the adjacent terrestrial ecosystem and is identified by soil characteristics and distinctive vegetation communities that require free and unbound water.
U.S. Forest Service Region 9 (Parrott et al., 1997)	Riparian areas are composed of aquatic ecosystems, riparian ecosystems and wetlands. They have three dimensions: longitudinal extending up and down streams and along the shores; lateral to the estimated boundary of land with direct land-water interactions; and vertical from below the water table to above the canopy of mature site-potential trees.
U.S. Department of Agriculture NRCS (1991)	Riparian areas are ecosystems that occur along watercourses and water bodies. They are distinctly different from the surrounding lands because of unique soil and vegetation characteristics that are strongly influenced by free or unbound water in the soil. Riparian ecosystems occupy the transitional area between the terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Typical examples would include floodplains, streambanks, and lakeshores.
U.S. EPA and NOAA Coastal Zone Management Act (EPA, 1993)	Riparian areas are vegetated ecosystems along a water body through which energy, materials and water pass. Riparian areas characteristically have a high water table and are subject to periodic flooding and influence from the adjacent waterbody. These systems encompass wetlands, uplands, or some combinations of these two land forms. They will not in all cases have all the characteristics necessary for them to be classified as wetlands.
Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team (FEMAT, 1993)	Riparian Reserves are portions of watersheds where riparian-dependent resources receive primary emphasis and where special standards and guidelines apply to attain Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives. Riparian Reserves include those portions of a watershed required for maintaining hydrologic, geomorphic, and ecologic processes that directly affect standing and flowing waterbodies such as lakes and ponds, wetlands, and streams.