

# Planting along the Water's Edge



## Where to plant

- ▲ Plant **at or near the water's edge** in perpetually moist soil or gravel.
- ▲ During normal flow conditions, plant at the waterline or up to 6 vertical inches above the waterline.
- ▲ Planting may be done at the base of vertical banks, but these locations may have to be planted while standing in the river.
- ▲ Before planting, walk your stretch of creek or river to identify targeted areas along the water's edge.
- ▲ Where possible, seek locations that provide some degree of natural protection from grazers, such as tangled exposed tree roots, or adjacent to logs or boulders.

## When to plant

Plant as soon as possible, **within 48 hours of pickup**.

## How to plant



## When to water

1. Use a garden trowel to dig a small hole at or near the water's edge.
2. Remove plant from its container and place in the hole.
3. Fill the hole with wet soil, then gently tamp.
4. Use a bucket to provide each plant with slow, even watering.
5. Place branches loosely on top and around plants for grazing protection.

If the river level drops this summer, consider providing supplemental watering every two weeks until plants are established or water levels return to normal. If river levels remain stable, no additional watering will be needed.

## Spacing Plants

- ▲ If you have limited suitable shoreline, consider spacing plants **12-18 inches apart** at or near the water's edge.
- ▲ For individuals with more river frontage, consider spacing plants **2-3 feet apart**, so that more of the riparian area is vegetated.
- ▲ Install **3 or 4 of the same species in a row** so they will grow into a cluster, then alternate species.

Enhancing the riparian zone at the water's edge with a diversity of strong-rooted native plant species helps restore bank stability, reduce flood damage, improve water quality, provide wildlife habitat, and support long-term river health.

**Thanks for your stewardship!**



# Getting to Know Your Plants



Charmaine Richardson



## Switchgrass

Large, strongly rooted bunch grass that can grow more than 5 feet tall. It dissipates flood energy, filters sediment, and provides excellent bank stability. It also provides habitat for birds and forage for livestock.

Joseph A. Marcus



## Emory sedge

Graceful and attractive sedge forming large colonies that provide exceptional bank protection and can withstand significant flood events. This sedge is palatable to livestock and deer, so make sure to protect plants with branches.

Images courtesy of Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. Photographs by:  
Stephanie Brundage  
Gene Sturla  
Bruce Leander



## Beaked spikerush

Sedge that quickly expands to colonize bare areas at the water's edge. Livestock and deer are not as likely to eat this species.



## Bushy bluestem

Native bunchgrass that stands out with large, furry seedheads that can grow more than three feet tall and produce enough seed to naturally reseed adjacent areas. The pioneer plant creates favorable conditions for other riparian plants to establish.



## Whitetop sedge

Visually striking sedge with attractive white flowers and underground rhizomes that help stabilize soils at the waterline.



Learn more about these plants and riparian stewardship:

Purchase *Your Remarkable Riparian Field Guide* online from the Nueces River Authority, or check out the riparian toolkit at [hillcountryalliance.org](http://hillcountryalliance.org).

## Tell the Story

Help us track your restoration impact by participating in the:

**[Community Planting Survey](#)** to track where these plants are going.

**[Photo Monitoring Program](#)** to document riparian area changes over time.

Find these resources here: <https://kerrcountyriverfoundation.org/gis.html>



**Become a student of your riparian area by documenting the healing process.**