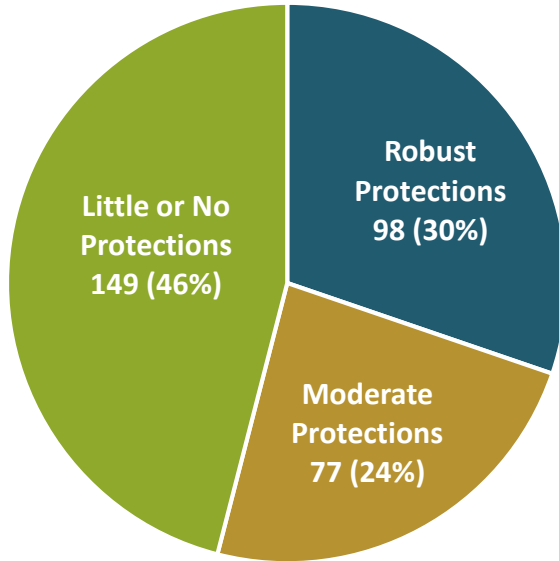


How Many Square Miles of River Corridor are Protected?

Protection of river corridors helps reduce flood and fluvial erosion hazards and improve water quality and aquatic habitat

175 sq. miles of river corridors have protections in place

Types of River Corridor Protection (square miles and percent)



Robust Protections

- State Held River Corridor Easements
- State Protected Wetlands
- State/Municipal Protected Floodways
- Act 250 Parcels

Moderate Protections

- Public Lands
- Conservation Easements/Ownership
- Municipally Adopted River Corridor Bylaws
- Flood Hazard Area Protection Bylaws

DATA ANALYSIS

River corridors encompass the area of land surrounding a river. They provide for the meandering, floodplain, and riparian functions necessary to restore and maintain a naturally stable or least erosive form of the river, thereby minimizing erosion hazards over time. Lands within a river corridor are at higher risk to fluvial erosion. Giving rivers room to move avoids costly measures to protect investments, which often increase erosion upstream and downstream and adversely affect public safety, landowners, and river ecosystems.

The Division has delineated river corridors for streams with a drainage area greater than two square miles, which encompasses 324 square miles of land statewide. Over half the river corridor area (175 square miles) has some type(s) of protection; however not all types of protection are equal. State ownership and/or regulation with specific water resource-based land use restrictions are likely to result in more robust river corridor protections. Both robust and moderate protections help to ensure stable streams and rivers.

Naturally stable streams and rivers are a tremendous community asset. If river corridors are not protected at the community level, the State will bear an ever-increasing burden (i.e., in terms of flood disasters and associated human misery) when there are less and less places on the landscape where streams can expend the flows and erosive energy of a flood.

NEXT STEPS

River corridor protection is important to river and stream stability and has economic benefits. Specifically, we aim to help increase these protection efforts through:

- Work with regional planning commissions to assist municipalities with preparing town river corridor maps
- Continue development of the Flood Resilient Communities Program
- Finalize a model river corridor and floodplain protection bylaw to assist municipal land use planning and regulation