B. Tennessee Riparian Buffer Site Assessment

This form is intended to document a potential riparian planting site and to serve as a prioritization tool for scoring and comparing it against other potential planting sites.

I. Project Site Landowner/Address

Landowner Name:_____

Landowner Contact (Phone/Email): _____

Project Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Land Ownership (circle one): Federal State City NGO Private

Stream Name (or nearest downstream): _____

II. Existing Riparian Buffer Characteristics

Does the landowner own land on both sides of the stream? Yes No

<u>Stream frontage on left side facing downstream</u>

- Length in ft: _____
- Current buffer condition (circle one):

  Bare Soil Open/Mowed Shrubs Shrubs/Trees Trees
- Existing buffer width (mix of trees, shrubs, grasses) in ft (measure from top of stream bank to buffer edge): _____

<u>Stream frontage on right side facing downstream</u>

- Length in ft: _____
- Current buffer condition (circle one):

  Bare Soil Open/Mowed Shrubs Shrubs/Trees Trees
- Existing buffer width (mix of trees, shrubs, grasses) in ft (measure from top of stream bank to buffer edge): _____

Attach a map: *Shade in the targeted planting area on a map (e.g., Google map, local tax map).*

III. Site Assessment

A. Is the landowner supportive of the riparian planting and willing to ensure that the riparian buffer will be protected?

If NO, eliminate this site as a candidate. **If YES**, answer the questions in Section B.

B. Answer the following questions to score the candidate buffer planting site and then use that score to rank it against other sites being considered for planting. Assign one point for a "yes" answer. The site with the lowest total score is given the higher priority in planting.

CANDIDATE SITE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS	Yes (1)/ No (0)
1. Does the buffer contain a mix of trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants (grasses, wildflowers)? An ideal buffer contains a mix of native vegetation that maximizes a buffer's functions and benefits (see Appendix A). For example, if the area is mostly grasses, it would receive a score of zero.	
2. Is the width of the existing buffer (mix of trees, shrubs, grasses) on each side of the bank at least twice the width of the waterbody? This question assesses whether there is currently an adequate buffer width and is based on a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) guideline.	
3. Does the site offer shading to the stream or contain seedlings or saplings that will mature into shade-bearing trees? A critical function of an urban buffer is to provide at least partial shading to the adjacent waterway to allow for cooling of its waters. Many aquatic insects and fish cannot survive in warm waters and in urban areas where the source of runoff is often from blacktop, shading by trees is of utmost importance.	
4. Are the banks free of active excess erosion? A good indication is that you can walk along the edge without concern of a bank collapsing. Actively eroding streambanks are an indication that there is insufficient root protection being provided by the streamside plants. In urban areas where the water flows can be "flashy" (i.e., rise and fall quickly) and carry a great deal of energy, it is particularly important that the stream banks be well protected by an extensive and deep root system.	
TOTAL POINTS	

NOTES:

The Tennessee Urban Riparian Buffer Handbook Series

This handout is one of a series of supporting appendices to the **Tennessee Urban Riparian Buffer Handbook**. To download go to: http://tn.gov/agriculture/topic/ag-forests-urban

A. The Tennessee Urban Riparian Buffer
B. Tennessee Riparian Buffer Site Assessment
C. Creating a Tennessee Urban Riparian Buffer
D. Tennessee Native Riparian Plants List
E. The Threat of Invasive Plants to Tennessee Urban Riparian Buffers
F. Organizing and Conducting a Riparian Buffer Community Planting
G. Properly Installing Plants: How to Plant Trees and Shrubs