

Streambank Restoration Cuttings and Plant Materials

Provided by:

The Natural Resources Conservation Service & The Shenandoah Valley Soil & Water Conservation District

Using these cuttings is a great bio-engineering practice that can help stabilize and protect an eroding streambank. They have excellent rooting ability and regrow vigorously. When floods occur the cuttings lie down and allow the water to flow over top, while their roots help anchor soil and protect the bank. Additionally they promote a much greater terrestrial and aquatic habitat than traditional streambank restoration measures.

Important Information about these Plants/Cuttings

- Plant the cuttings as soon as possible—preferably before they break bud.
- Keep them cool and damp until they are planted. (Keep them in a bucket with 4-6" of water in a cool place.)
- These shrubs will grow to be anywhere from 10-15 feet tall.
- The cuttings will form roots the first year, and will do best where there is adequate moisture.

Species of Cuttings Provided

- Red Osier Dogwood
- Streamco Willow
- Bankers Dwarf Willow

Prepare the cuttings

- Cut the whips into 8-12" segments. This is very important; do not attempt to plant the entire whip.
 - Each cutting should have 5-8 good buds on them.
 - If you're planting in rocky soil banks, they should be 8" long.
 - If you're planting in smooth soil banks, they should be 12" long.
 - Make the cuts at an angle—this helps you push them into the soil.

Planting the cuttings

- Plant the cuttings in a staggered pattern on approximately 2' centers (see diagram below).
- Plant several rows of cuttings from the water's edge to approximately 4' up the stream bank. Plant the cuttings about every 2 feet along the edge of the streambank.
 - Begin your first row right at the water's edge.
 - Move up 2' and begin your next row—be sure to stagger this row of cuttings (see diagram below).
 - Move up another 2' up the bank and begin your third row of cuttings—be sure to stagger this row too.
- If the planting site has very soft soil, the cuttings may be pushed into the soil, but most likely a pilot hole must be made first. You can use a screw driver to make a pilot hole in the soil to place the cutting.
- Angle the base of the cutting upstream (see diagram below)
- Most of the cutting should be in the ground. Leave only 2 or 3 good buds out of the ground.
- Be sure to plant the cutting right side up! The buds should point up towards the sky, not down towards the ground.

