



The value of native veg.

Riparian land is usually the most fertile and productive part of the landscape: providing benefits to both agriculture and the natural environment.

Riparian land helps to maintain healthy rivers, by:

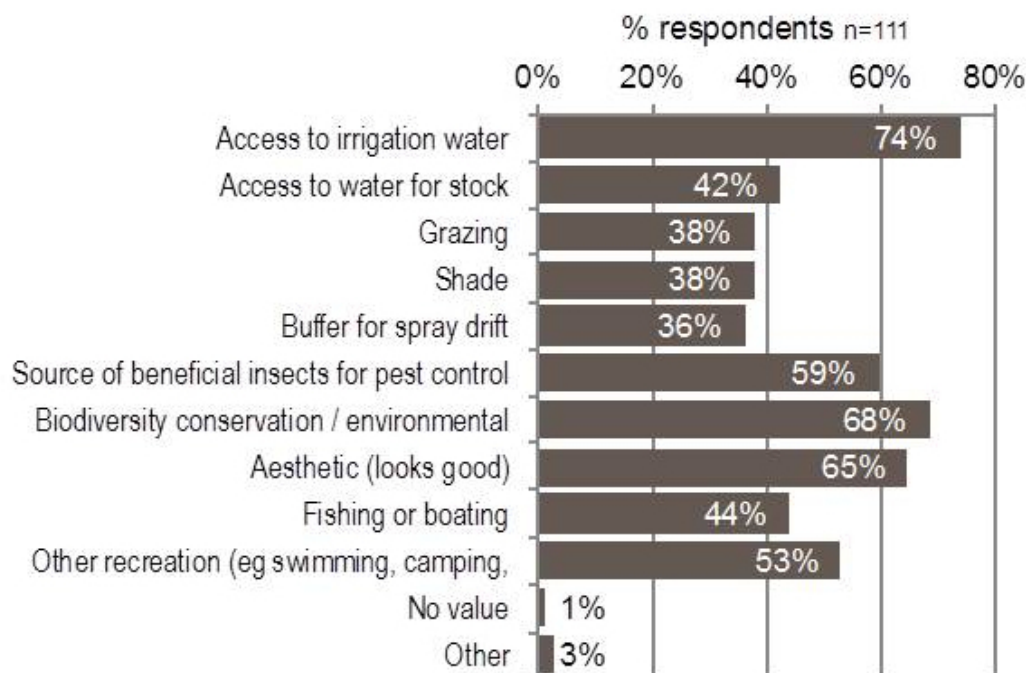
- Moderating in-stream water temperatures through shading (ensuring healthy in-stream life).
- Supplying nutrients and food for aquatic animals (bugs, logs, leaves falling from over hanging vegetation).
- Providing logs to help stabilise riverbanks and riverbeds as well as providing in-stream habitat.
- Maintaining good water quality through filtering sediments, nutrients and contaminants from overland flow.

It also supports agricultural production. It provides valuable services for ag production, like access to water, nutrient cycling, water filtration, breakdown of chemicals, natural pest control, carbon sequestration and storage and pollination.

Here's what you've told us about the value of native veg...

According to the soon-to-be-released 2014 Cotton Practices Survey:

- The average length of riparian zones on cotton farms is 8km.
- Close to 70 per cent of cotton farms containing a riparian area.
- When asked about value of riparian areas: 74 per cent of respondents recorded access to water as being the most important value, followed by biodiversity conservation (68 per cent), aesthetics (65 per cent) and as a source of beneficial for natural pest control (59 per cent).



So, what can you do on-farm to protect riparian areas?

Land management practices directly impact the health of riparian land and its ability to provide services to a farming business. **Best management practices** such as excluding stock; weed and pest control; and maintaining a diversity of living and dead standing and fallen native vegetation will help optimise the services riparian land can provide your business.

These **videos**, featuring our CottonInfo technical specialist for NRM Stacey Vogel, outline what a healthy river and riparian area look like and what you can do to maintain their health:



Maintaining healthy riparian areas



Healthy rivers

What do other growers say?

Anthony Barlow - 'Wyadrigah' Mungindi:

“Riparian areas are part of the natural landscape that need preserving. In my experience, riparian zones on irrigated cotton farms clearly can't be farmed, and are rarely grazed these days, so they



aren't negatively affected by selective or over-grazing, or by erosion of river banks from stock creating pads down to the water. That is the case with our riparian zones. The area along the Barwon River in particular hasn't been stocked for about 30 years."

[Click here to read a case study on Anthony's NRM.](#)

Harvey Gaynor - former Auscott Midkin farm manager, now Auscott CEO. Instigated regeneration of riparian areas at Midkin in 2001:

"We tried to work with nature rather than recreating it. By leaving the land alone, it regenerated itself the way nature intended. We didn't plant any trees or grass, but allowed natural regrowth which occurred largely after a single flood event.

Today, attention is paid to anything that has a negative impact on or around the area, for example cultivation, and the maintenance of roads running close to the creek which could lead to erosion. Care of these areas has become a habit and second nature to our business, in line with our overall ethos of caring for the environment."

[Click here to read a case study on Midkin's NRM.](#)



Where can you go for more?

For more information:

- Visit the [myBMP natural assets module](#).
- Visit the [CottonInfo NRM page](#).
- Contact our [CottonInfo technical specialist for NRM, Stacey Vogel](#).



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Best Practice

