

Buffer Rules

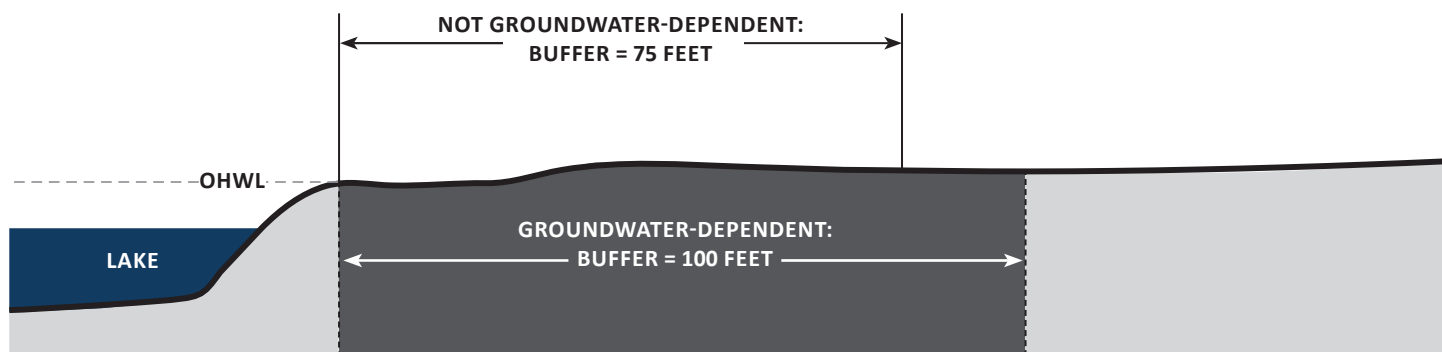
See BCWD Rule 4.2.1 for buffer rule triggers and Rule 4.3 for buffer zone widths.

Brown's Creek Watershed District rules require buffer zones adjacent to water resources when certain triggers are met. The width of a buffer zone is dependent on the type of resource (lake, stream, or wetland) and whether the resource is groundwater-dependent¹.

Lake Buffers

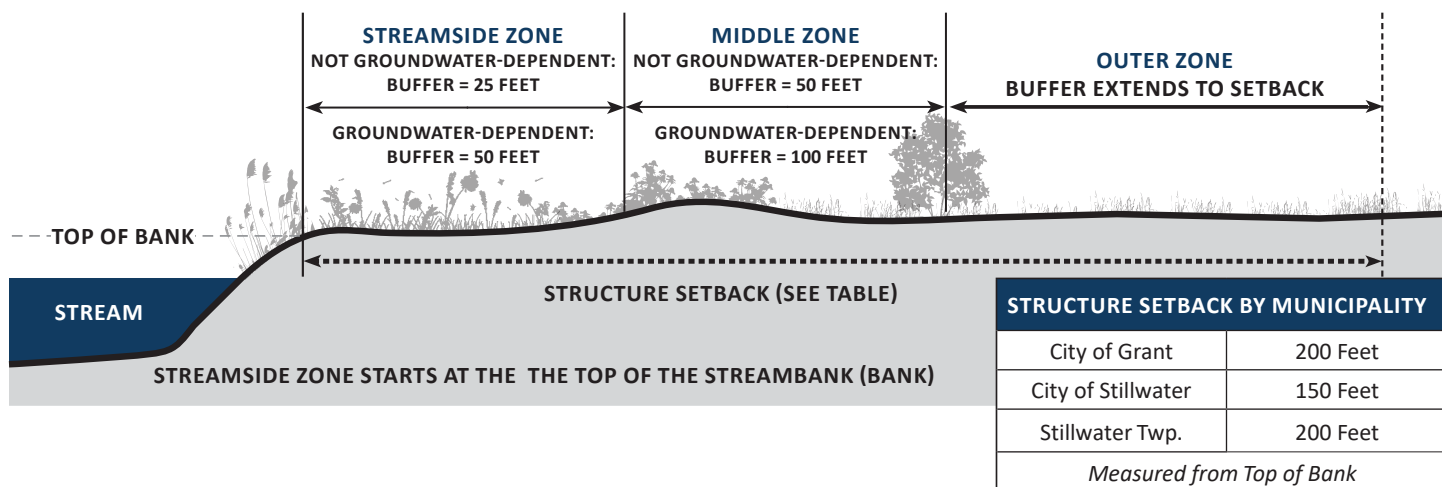
The Ordinary high-water level (OHWL) is the boundary of a public water and indicates the elevation of the highest water level annually maintained long enough to leave evidence on the landscape, commonly indicated by a change from predominantly aquatic to predominantly terrestrial vegetation. For basins and flowages, it is the operating elevation of the summer pool.

Lake buffers extend from the OHWL across the landscape. The required buffer width is determined based on whether the lake is groundwater-dependent.



Stream Buffers

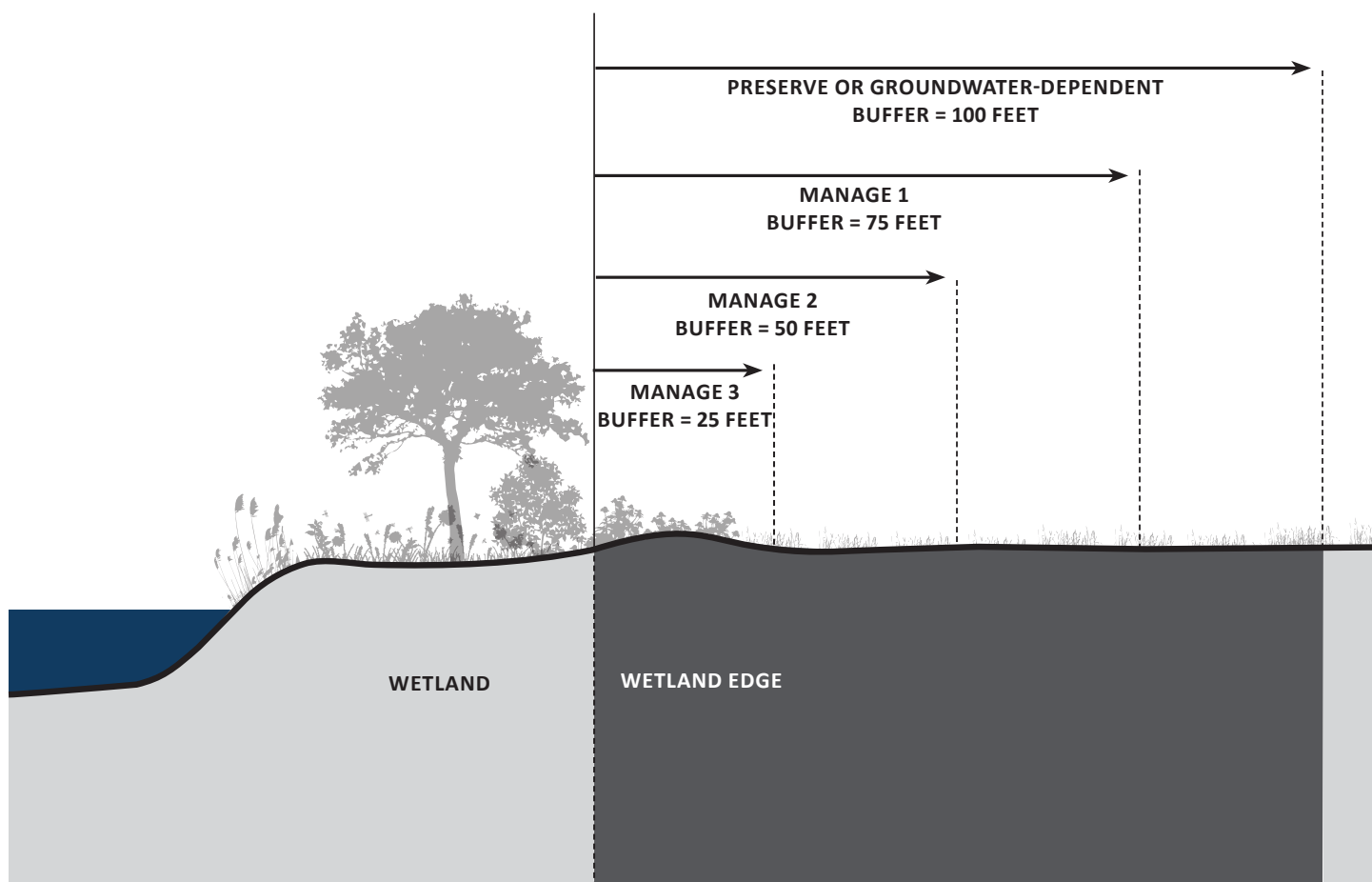
Stream buffer widths are divided into zones starting at the top of the streambank. The buffer widths are doubled for the streamside and middle zones for groundwater-dependent streams, including Brown's Creek and its tributaries.



The materials provided here constitute guidance, offered to support permit applicants' compliance with the BCWD rules. They do not replace careful reading of the rules, and BCWD permitting decisions will be based on an applicant's compliance with the rules, not guidance.

Wetland Buffers

The wetland buffer rule applies to wetlands greater than one acre in size and all groundwater-dependent wetlands. The wetland edge is determined through a wetland delineation.



Additional Buffer Considerations

There are additional buffer considerations if the resource is in the 100-year floodplain, is a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources designated natural community, and if there are steep slopes. See the Additional Buffer Considerations guidance document for more information.

1 Groundwater-dependent resources in the Brown's Creek Watershed include Brown's Creek and its tributaries, as well as some lakes and wetlands. BCWD can confirm whether or not your project impacts a groundwater-dependent resource.

The materials provided here constitute guidance, offered to support permit applicants' compliance with the BCWD rules. They do not replace careful reading of the rules, and BCWD permitting decisions will be based on an applicant's compliance with the rules, not guidance.