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Extension Service

**RIPARIAN AREA TRANSECT  
DATA FORM**

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Weather: \_\_\_\_\_

Stream/Site Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**What You Need:**

- 100-foot tape measure       Riparian Area Transect data form
- 15-foot rope with a ring attached in the middle of its length       Instructions
- Plant and tree identification books or charts

**Procedure:**

1. Set the transect. Stretch the transect tape measure from the water's edge or a clearly discernible high water line perpendicular to the stream into the riparian area. Hold the two ends so that the tape is stretched out to its full 100' length. The tape is divided into five parts, each 20 feet long. These divisions mark off five 20-foot "zones" in the riparian area, "Zone 1," "2," "3," etc.
2. Count trees. Place the ring on the 15-foot rope over the transect tape. Start from the 0-foot mark, and walk parallel to the transect tape towards the 100-foot mark. Each time you reach one of the 20-foot marks, check to see if the rope touches any trees, shrubs, etc. by using the rope to measure out a circle with a diameter of 15 feet (an area with a radius of 7.5 feet, with the attached ring as the centerpoint). Identify any plants within the diameter of the area that the rope covers. Then tell the recorders whether the plants are conifers or hardwood trees; or shrubs; and the zone that they are in.



3. Record data. Record your data on the back of this form. The recorders should fill out the information about the transect site at the top of the data form, record the number of conifers, hardwood trees and shrubs. Additional comments about dead wood, side channels, etc., may also be recorded. Either during the data collection or after, enter data on the graph on the reverse of this form. Shade in the box above the appropriate zone in either the conifer or hardwood category. Shade one box per tree tallied.

## RIPARIAN AREA TRANSECT

Date:

Student's Names:

Stream:

Estimated slope (rise/run) of stream bank:

Zone	Conifers	Hardwoods	Shrubs	Additional Comments
<b>1</b> Set 15' rope at 20' from water				
<b>2</b> At 40' from the water				
<b>3</b> At 60' from the water				
<b>4</b> At 80' from the water				
<b>5</b> At 100' from the water				

Other Observations:

## RIPARIAN AREA TRANSECT DATA GRAPH\*

Conifer	Hardwood	Conifer	Hardwood	Conifer	Hardwood	Conifer	Hardwood	Conifer	Hardwood
<b>ZONE 1</b>	<b>ZONE 2</b>	<b>ZONE 3</b>	<b>ZONE 4</b>	<b>ZONE 5</b>					

\*Shade in the box above the appropriate zone in either the conifer or hardwood category. Shade one box per tree tallied.