

## APPENDIX 3

# PROPER FUNCTIONING CONDITION

**Proper Functioning Condition** - Riparian-wetland areas are functioning properly when adequate vegetation, land form, or large woody debris is present to dissipate stream energy associated with high waterflows, thereby reducing erosion and improving water quality; filter sediment, capture bedload, and aid floodplain development; improve flood-water retention and ground-water recharge; develop root masses that stabilize streambanks against cutting action; develop diverse ponding and channel characteristics to provide the habitat and the water depth, duration, and temperature necessary for fish production, waterfowl breeding, and other uses; and support greater biodiversity. The functioning condition of riparian-wetland areas is a result of interaction among geology, soil, water, and vegetation.

**Functional-At Risk** - Riparian-wetland areas that are in functional condition but an existing soil, water, or vegetation attribute makes them susceptible to degradation.

**Nonfunctional** - Riparian-wetland areas that clearly are not providing adequate vegetation, land form, or large woody debris to dissipate stream energy associated with high flows and thus are not reducing erosion, improving water quality, etc., as listed above. The absence of certain physical attributes such as a floodplain where one should be are indicators of nonfunctioning conditions.

Next, the definition of PFC must be analyzed. One way to do this is by breaking the definition down as follows:

“Riparian-wetland areas are functioning properly with adequate vegetation, land form, or large woody debris is present to:

- 1) dissipate stream energy associated with high waterflows, thereby reducing erosion and improving water quality;
- 2) filter sediment, capture bedload, and aid in floodplain development;
- 3) improve flood-water retention and ground-water recharge;
- 4) develop root masses that stabilize streambanks against cutting action;
- 5) develop diverse ponding and channel characteristics to provide the habitat and the water depth, duration, and temperature necessary for fish production, waterfowl breeding, and other uses;
- 6) support greater biodiversity.”

Riparian areas are functioning properly with there is adequate structure present to provide the listed benefits applicable to a particular area. The analysis must be based on the riparian area’s capability and potential. If, for example, the system does not have the potential to support fish habitat, that criteria would not be used in the assessment. (BLM, 1993)