

Critical Area 100-ft Buffer Planting Mitigation & Bonding Requirements

- A permit is required for all tree and vegetation removal in the Critical Area, including dead trees.
- Vegetation removal in the 100-ft buffer is required to be mitigated by replanting native trees and shrubs to the extent practicable. If site constraints prevent replanting the entire mitigation, the remaining mitigation can be paid in fees-in-lieu of replanting at the same rate.
- An approved Planting Plan or Buffer Management Plan (inside the 100-foot or extended Buffer) and planting bond are requirements of the permit. A property map that can be used to assist property owners with creating a mitigation plan can be downloaded at <https://www.calvertcountymd.gov/1537/Interactive-Maps>
- There are 3 types of Buffer Management Plans (Examples can be found on the County’s Critical Area webpage at <http://www.co.cal.md.us/index.aspx?NID=1246>

Simplified Buffer Management Plan (SBMP) – Can be prepared by the property owner for small projects such as tree removal and invasive plant control & maintenance.

Minor Buffer Management Plan (MiBMP) – Required to be prepared by a certified landscape professional, architect or engineer for mitigation up to 5,000 square feet(sf).

Major Buffer Management Plan (MaBMP) - Required to be prepared by a certified landscape professional, architect or engineer for mitigation greater than 5,000 square feet(sf).

- Trees, shrubs or any vegetation removed must be replanted (mitigated) with an equivalent square footage (sf) of native trees and shrubs (see Table 1 below).
- A refundable planting bond is required to assure adequate survival of the required planting. From the time of the replanting, bonds are held for at least 2 years. Planting seasons are March 15-May 15 and September 15-November 30.
- Refer to Table 1 below to calculate how many trees and shrubs are needed to achieve the required replanting sq ft.
- The mitigation required for a dying or diseased tree is 100 square feet (sq ft).
- Removal of a completely dead tree does not require mitigation or bonding. The affected area is required to be stabilized with native vegetation as necessary.

Table 1 - Planting Credits¹

Vegetation Type	Minimum Size Eligible for Credit	Credit Allowed (Square Feet)	Maximum Percent of Credit
Canopy tree	2-inch caliper and 8 feet high	200	N/A
Canopy tree	3/4-inch caliper and 6 feet high	100	N/A
Understory tree	3/4-inch caliper and 6 feet high	75	N/A
Large species shrub	1-gallon and 3 feet high	50	30
Small species shrub	1-gallon and 18 inches high	25	20
Herbaceous perennial	1-quart	2	10
Planting cluster 1	1 canopy tree; and 3 large shrubs or 6 small shrubs	300	
Planting Cluster 2	2 understory trees; and 3 large shrubs or 6 small shrubs	350	

¹Cluster 1&2 options are available only for Buffer establishment and Buffer mitigation of less than 1 acre

- The **Calvert County Native Plant List for Mitigation** is for the property owners use and indicates the acceptable tree and shrub species that can be used to satisfy planting mitigation for SBMPs. This list is available on the County's Critical Area webpage at <http://www.co.cal.md.us/index.aspx?NID=1246>
- Other native plant links and relevant information for professionals preparing a MiBMP or MaBMP can also be found on the Critical Area webpage.
- The planting bond is paid **after** the permit has been approved at permit issuance.
- After the mitigation has been planted, notify the Department of Planning & Zoning Office (410 535 2348) to schedule an initial bond inspection. Photos can be provided in lieu of an initial planting inspection for smaller plantings to start the 2-year "bond clock".
- After the initial bond inspection/planting has been approved, a final bond inspection will be tentatively scheduled for 2 years later. At that time, notify the Planning & Zoning Office to schedule a final inspection to release your bond.
- The planting bond will be returned after the final inspection confirms that a satisfactory survival rate has been achieved.