

Features of a Healthy Stream

- Clean, cool water that is rich in oxygen
- Streamside (riparian) vegetation to provide food, nutrients and shade to the stream
- Plant roots to stabilize the stream banks, minimizing soil erosion
- Pools, riffles and large woody debris provide homes for fish and insects
- Streambeds of clean gravel and cobbles
- Floodplains that increase the capacity of the stream to hold water during high flows

Riparian Areas Increase Bank Stability

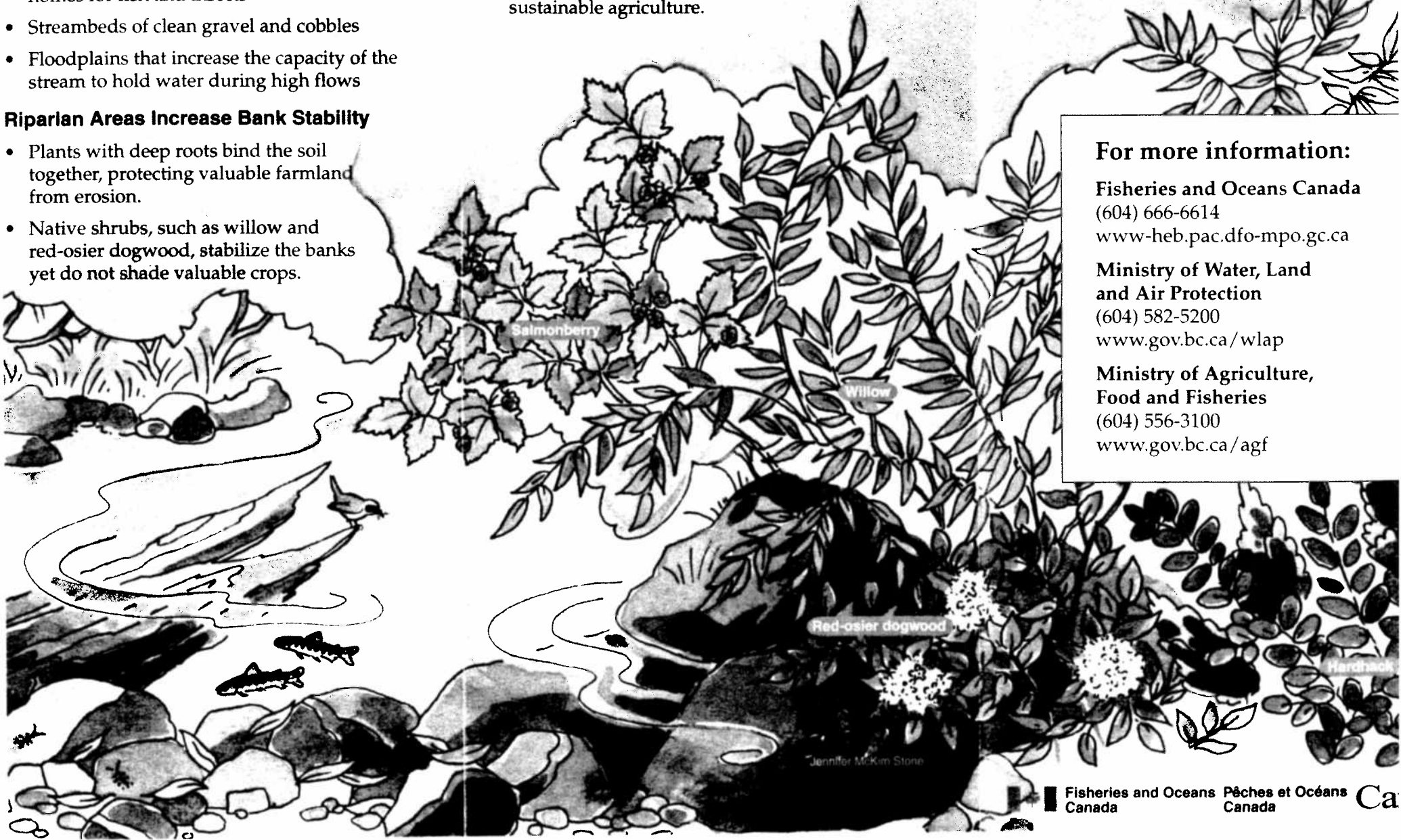
- Plants with deep roots bind the soil together, protecting valuable farmland from erosion.
- Native shrubs, such as willow and red-osier dogwood, stabilize the banks yet do not shade valuable crops.

Riparian Areas Improve Water Quality

- Streamside vegetation acts as a buffer from farm activities, reducing the amount of sediment and excess nutrients transported by runoff, improving water quality.
- Clean water promotes increased beef and milk production and reduces the transmission of diseases.
- Good water quality supports healthy crops and sustainable agriculture.

Riparian Areas Improve Drainage

- Overhanging vegetation shades the stream and reduces the growth of instream grass improving drainage and decreasing maintenance.
- Improved drainage increases the product of farmable land and allows crops to be planted earlier in the spring.



For more information:

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