



Riparian Revival

The restoration of riparian area health is a series of pathways that begin with some basic questions:

- ◆ *What did the riparian area look like in the past (sometimes the distant past)?*
- ◆ *What are the characteristics (physical and vegetative) now?*
- ◆ *What direction is the riparian area heading under present management?*
- ◆ *What is the potential of the riparian area if I make management changes?*

In most cases, riparian area health didn't change overnight. The unravelling of riparian areas and the decline in health are changes that have been going on for decades; largely unnoticed, unobserved, but cumulative in effect. It's part of our history of development. The rate of recovery will be based on where we start and where we live. Water is the driver of riparian areas so recovery will be slower in arid areas and faster in well-watered ones. Changes in the watershed or drainage area which affect amount and timing of runoff will also be a factor in predicting recovery rates. What is possible depends on the degree of change on the riparian reach and how many pieces are left to aid recovery. This diagram will help you appreciate the riparian revival pathways and also the chance of encountering a dead end.

