

This guide contains information based on standards put forth in in the Land Development and Subdivision Regulations and the Zoning Enabling Ordinance. It has been developed to help answer some of the more common questions related to the establishment and maintenance of vegetative buffer areas along Lakes Hartwell, Keowee, and Jocassee, and some of their tributaries. It is in no way intended to be a comprehensive instruction manual, and therefore should not be used without consulting the most current adopted vegetative buffer regulations.

Be advised that rules and regulations enforced by other regulatory entities (i.e. Duke Power, Army Corps of Engineers), as well as covenants and restrictions, may also apply.

Last updated on July 12, 2009

RESOURCES

The *Land Development and Subdivision Regulations* and the *Zoning Enabling Ordinance* may be accessed online at the following addresses:

www.oconeesc.com/planning

www.municode.com/Resources/gateway.asp?pid=13747&sid=40



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An overview of VEGETATIVE BUFFER REQUIREMENTS

for lakefront parcels
in Oconee County, S.C.



PREPARED BY
OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT



BUFFER STANDARDS

- To reduce non-point source pollution, a 25-foot wide undisturbed natural vegetative buffer is to be established along the shoreline of Lakes Hartwell, Keowee, and Jocassee, and along perennial streams and wetlands within 1,000 feet of the lakes.

NOTE: The term “establish” refers to the official delineation of the buffer area.

- The establishment of a buffer on a parcel is required for approval of a new subdivision, residential units, or any commercial project.
- Inside the Lake Overlay¹ a buffer must also be established at the time of permitting any dimensional expansion of an existing structure, and at the time of sale or transfer of the parcel. A plat containing the boundaries of the buffer area must be recorded in the office of the Oconee County Register of Deeds.

- Lakefront buffers are measured perpendicular to the full pond contour (Lake Keowee 800’ above MSL; Lake Jocassee 1,110’ above MSL; Lake Hartwell 660’ above MSL)
- Parcels which are more than 25’ from the full pond contour are exempt from the buffer requirement.

- Any structure or object that is an impediment to the establishment of the required buffer shall be moved; in the event such relocation is impractical, the total area occupied by the object may be added to the buffer at another location.
- There is no list of specified plants for the buffer; the only limitation is that **no pesticides, fertilizers, or any other chemical** may be used in any part of the buffer.
- Grasses are acceptable in the buffer, provided they are not cut lower than 12 inches from the ground; no trees larger than 6 inch caliper (4 feet from the ground) may be cut without certification as a hazard by a registered forester or arborist; trees may be limbed up to 50% of their height.

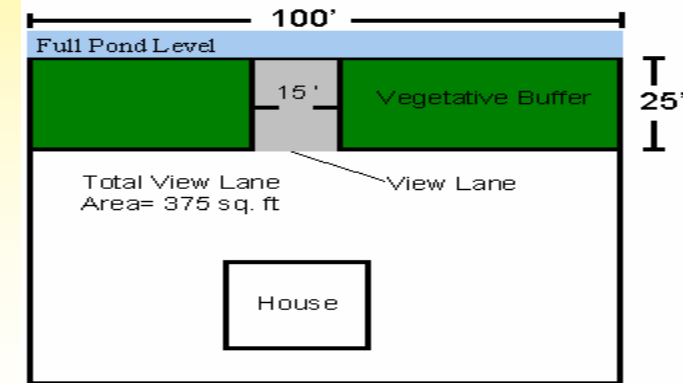
VIEW LANES

View lane areas are portions of a buffer that enhance observation of the lake and surrounding landscapes, and may be designed and maintained as the owner wishes, provided no chemicals are used. The following formula is used to determine maximum view lane areas:

Maximum View Lane Area= .15 X length of lakefront property line X 25 feet

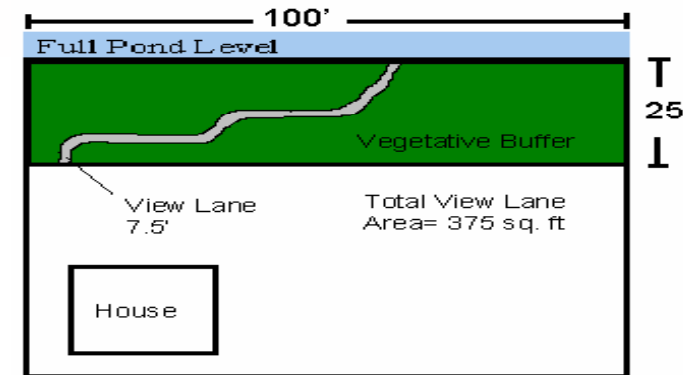
Example 1: Standard View Lane

Parcel with view lane in Vegetative Buffer, extending to the full pond level



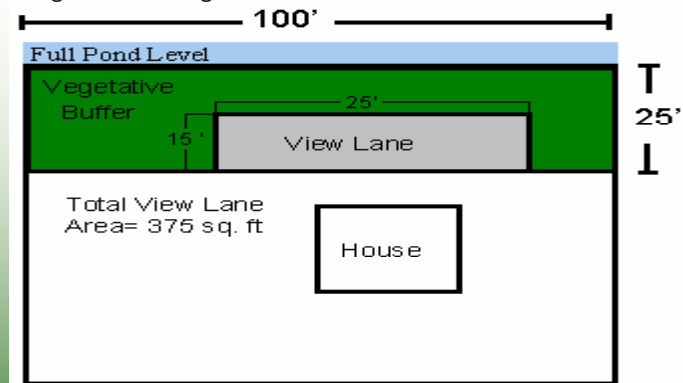
Example 2: Pathway View Lane

Parcel with view lane in Vegetative Buffer, configured as a pathway to full pond level.



Example 3: Overlook View Lane

Parcel with view lane in Vegetative Buffer, on the top of a ridge overlooking the lake.



¹ See Section 38 Article 11 of the Oconee County Code of Ordinances for details.