

Natural River permit requirements

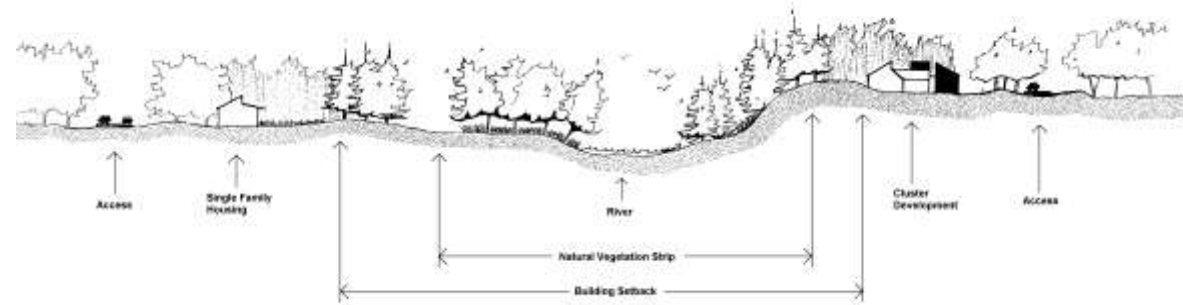
A Natural Rivers zoning permit is required for most development activities within 400 feet of a designated Natural River. Activities which require this permit include:

- Building a house, garage, deck, or other structure.
- Building an addition to an existing structure.
- Altering land in areas of high groundwater.
- Changing the use of the property (i.e., from residential to rental cabins.)
- Cutting in the natural vegetation strip.
- Splitting property into smaller parcels.

Establishment of a campground, canoe livery or rental cabins in a state-zoned area requires a special use permit **in addition** to a zoning permit.

In some cases it is difficult to meet a building setback or use standard because of the physical limitations of the property, inadequate lot size, or the desire to build an addition to an existing structure which does not meet setbacks. If for any reason you cannot meet a zoning standard, a variance from the standards is required in order to build on your lot.

If you are located in a state-zoned area, applications for Natural Rivers zoning permits, special uses and variances may be obtained from the State Natural River Zoning Administrator. Zoning permit and minor variance applications are reviewed by the Zoning Administrator. Major variance applications and special use permit applications are forwarded to the Huron River Natural River Zoning Review Board for review. This is a seven member board made



up of mostly local representatives, with one Department of Natural Resources representative.

If you're not located in a state-zoned area, zoning permit, special use and variance applications must be obtained from your local zoning official. Special use permit and variance applications are usually reviewed by the local Zoning Board of Appeals.

Riverfront development standards

	Mainstream	Tributaries
Building Setback	125 ft.	50 ft.
Minimum Lot Width	150 ft.	150 ft.
Natural Vegetation Strip	50 ft.	50 ft.
Septic Setback	125 ft.	125 ft.

- Minimum area for new lots is 50,000 square feet.
- Most new commercial or industrial uses are prohibited. However, campgrounds, rental cabins and canoe liveries are allowed if they meet specific standards.
- Dredging or filling where the land surface is within four feet of the high groundwater level is prohibited.
- Selective trimming of trees and brush for a filtered view of the river is allowed in the

natural vegetation strip. Clearcutting or establishment of new lawns is prohibited.

- Docks must be no more than four feet x 12 feet, with no more than four feet extending into the river.
- Mineral exploration is prohibited within 300 feet of the river on private land (1/4 mile on state land).

Natural vegetation strip

Maintenance of a "natural vegetation strip" or "greenbelt" of woody vegetation on both sides of the river serves several beneficial purposes. Root systems absorb nutrients, stabilize the soil and help prevent erosion. Natural vegetation provides wildlife and fisheries habitat and cools water temperatures. The vegetation strip also provides an effective, aesthetically pleasing visual screen, giving privacy to property owners and screening development from river users. Lawns maintained to the river's edge perform none of these functions.

Commercial activity in the Natural River District

Small home occupations are allowed if you obtain a zoning permit. Commercial campgrounds, canoe liveries and rental cabins

are allowed if you obtain a special use permit. However, other businesses and industries are generally prohibited. You must request a land use variance if you want to establish a business other than those mentioned. Applications for land use variances can be obtained from the state or local zoning administrator. Such variances are not often approved.

Other required permits

The following permits are necessary in all cases, whether you are in a state or locally zoned area:

1. If any of your activities involve filling of wetlands or the floodplain, or involve work below the "ordinary high water mark" of the stream, a permit is necessary under the provisions of various laws.
2. Any earth change within 500 feet of a stream requires a soil erosion and sedimentation control permit.
3. All applicable local building and zoning permits must be obtained.

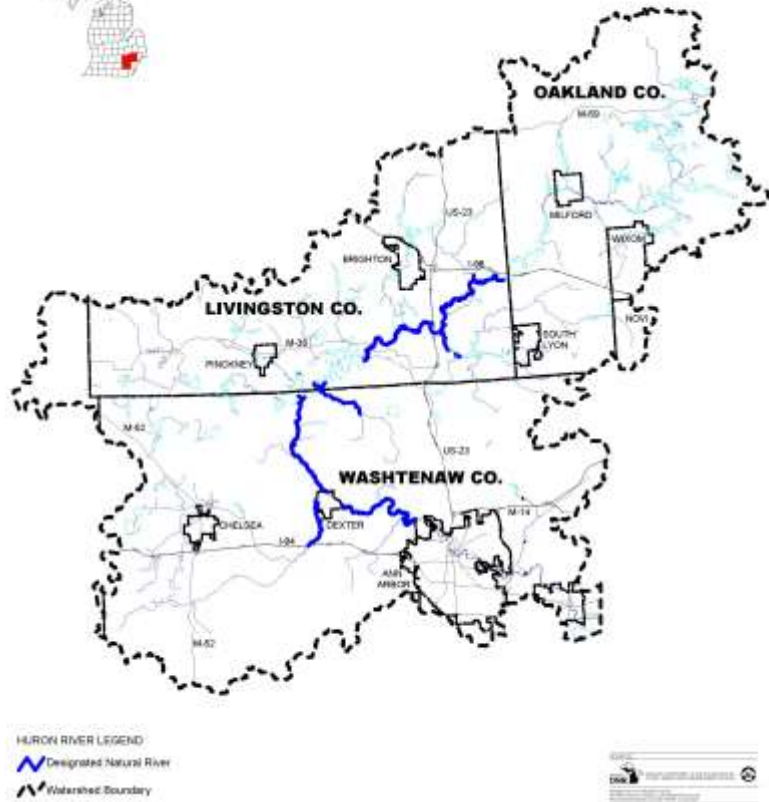
Permits for work in wetlands, floodplains, or in the stream itself must be obtained from the Department of Environmental Quality, Land and Water Management Division. Permit applications are available at P.O. Box 30458, Lansing, MI 48909. Contact your county building department regarding soil erosion and sedimentation control permit applications.

DEQ OFFICES

Shiawassee – 517.625.5515

Jackson – 517.780.7690

HURON RIVER



STATE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Huron River - Matt Fry
517.373.6868
Lansing Office

STATE-ZONED TOWNSHIPS

County	Township
Washtenaw	Webster Dexter

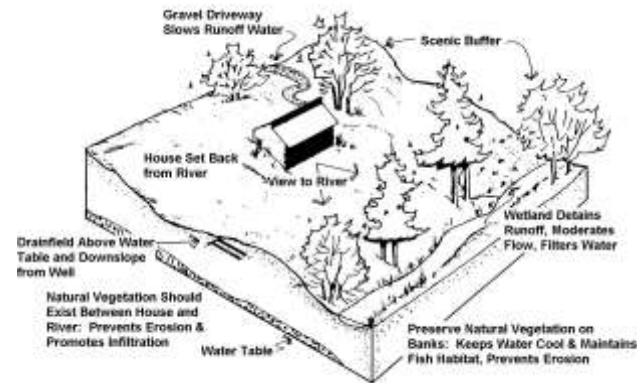
LOCALLY ZONED TOWNSHIPS

County	Township/Phone
Livingston	Green Oak – 810.231.1333 Hamburg – 810.231.1000
Washtenaw	Scio – 734.665.2123

Michigan's Natural Rivers Program

The Huron River and many of its tributaries were designated "Wild-Scenic" Rivers in May 1977, under the provisions of the Natural Rivers Part 305, 1994 PA 451. As a result of this designation, new development and land uses within 400 feet of the river's edge must meet certain zoning standards. This brochure is designed to assist the riverfront property owner in understanding the various permit requirements for building along the river.

Below is an illustration which depicts how some of the natural characteristics of a site and how proper development on the site helps preserve the vital functions and character of sensitive river areas.



NATURAL RIVERS PROGRAM

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Lansing, MI 48909-7946
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www.michigandnr.com

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Guide for Property Owners and Local Officials



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DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES