

burrheads, cattails, and soft-stemmed bulrush. Seasonally flooded areas include the cattails, tussock sedge, bluejoint, sweet flag, smartweeds, bulrushes, purple loosestrife, and arrow arum. Sweetflag often forms almost pure stands in depressions of wet pastures.

- d. *Open Water Excavated Wetlands (POWZ)*. There are a few open water wetlands within the watershed. Many of these are likely farm ponds created for a variety of purposes. These tend to be hydrologically isolated and fed by a variety of sources.

## **3.2 Riparian Corridors**

The riparian corridor is defined as lands along, adjacent to, or contiguous with perennially and intermittently flowing rivers and streams, and the shores of lakes and reservoirs with stable water levels. Riparian areas form a transition between permanently saturated wetlands and upland areas. The vegetative community and physical characteristics of riparian corridors are strongly influenced by the hydrologic regime: the presence of permanent surface or subsurface water inundation.

Like wetlands, riparian corridors play an important role in water quality, channel stability, erosion control and habitat for wildlife. In addition, they have values more directly related to humans such as aesthetic, recreational and resource values. The focus of the technical strategy was on protecting or restoring the major functions of riparian corridors that relate directly or indirectly to water quality. These functions include hydrologic regulation, filtration of sediment and dissolved nutrients, stabilization of stream structure, and regulation of water temperature.

### **3.2.1 Watershed-Wide Characterization of Riparian Corridors**

Higher order creeks tend to occur in lowlands and are affected by upland land use practices. Examination of the land use patterns indicates that stream corridors in these areas are largely modified by agriculture or development. Alterations to the riparian zone and wetlands as a result of land use changes within the Cayuga Lake Watershed are variable. Additional site-specific data are needed to document these conditions for each stream segment.

Map 5, Land Cover in the Cayuga Lake Watershed shows the land use cover throughout the watershed based on digital aerial photography. An analysis of land uses within 150 feet of the centerline of each stream was carried out based on detailed photo interpretation of aerial photographs. A map of Land Use in the Riparian Corridor (Map 6), and Table 1 and Figure 2 indicate the percent of each land use.

Stream networks are integrally linked to a more extensive network of roadside ditches that need to be considered in riparian restoration efforts. Although functioning only during storm events and spring runoff, there is evidence that this network of ditches within the Cayuga Lake Watershed significantly increases the total volume of discharge and degrades the quality of water entering into their connecting creeks (Schneider 1999). In addition there is evidence from the Roadbank Inventory (G/FLRPC, 2000) that the roadbanks themselves show signs of significant erosion and are a major source of sediment. This, in combination with the road ditch network,