



LAKEHEAD REGION
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

BENEFITS OF A NATURAL SHORELINE

March 2021



Naturalized, vegetated shorelines boasting native trees and shrubs are key to co-habiting with wildlife and living in harmony with the land. Not only do shoreline buffers provide wildlife habitat, they also protect banks from erosion, reduce risks of flooding, absorb contaminated runoff, require less maintenance, and discourage nuisance geese. Kick up your feet and let nature do the work!

Stormwater runoff can contain pollutants such as fertilizers, road salt, vehicle fluids, and soil particles. By encouraging water to infiltrate into the soil, microorganisms living underground can begin to tackle these contaminants and prevent the pollutants from entering our watersheds. Refer to LRCA's How to Naturalize Your Shoreline resource to get started.



Water Quality

Vegetation at the water's edge slows and filters runoff that would otherwise flow directly into the watershed. Without shrubs and trees, mowed lawns act as a hard surface over which rainwater flows, flooding lakes and depositing pollutants directly into the water.

Aquatic Habitat

Shade from plants at the water's edge helps moderate lake and river temperatures, maintain oxygen supplies, and support fish populations and associated aquatic life.



Wildlife Habitat

The buffer next to a river or lake is often referred to as the “ribbon of life”. This namesake comes from the fact that 70% of terrestrial wildlife and 90% of aquatic life depend on shorelines during some stage of their life. Foliage offers shelter while berries and seeds from native trees and shrubs provide food.



Reduced Flood Frequency

Buffers slow the velocity of surface runoff, giving it time to absorb into the ground and reducing the intensity of flooding. By reducing direct drainage into the lake, vegetation helps the lake regulate its water levels.



Erosion Prevention

Roots anchoring trees, shrubs, and perennials into the soil help hold the bank in place and prevent degradation. Natural shorelines adjust to natural disturbances and provide stability turf grass cannot offer.



A Beautiful View

Natural shorelines attract lovable wildlife while deterring geese; they protect property values from decreasing due to loss of land or water damage; and they are less work to maintain than a pristine lawn! Offering more quality time for relaxation at the lake.



For more information check out www.watersheds.ca.

