Renew Our Waters

Every choice counts.

Restore Your Shore

Redefining the "perfect" shoreline will provide beauty and color to the shoreland, increase habitat for wildlife and ultimately increase water quality.

The number of people living near and using Northeast Wisconsin's waters is at an all time high and continues to increase. You may have purchased your water front property because you enjoy fishing, swimming, boating, bird watching or simply unwinding by dangling your feet in the water. As more and more of us buy or build homes on the shores of our lakes and rivers, we threaten the very qualities that brought us there.

"Perfect Shoreland Lot" - Not so Perfect

Decades of traditional lawn maintenance have led to ideas about what the "perfect shoreland lot" should be. Large lawns mowed all the way to the water's edges and no aquatic vegetation are seen at properties on lakes and rivers across Wisconsin. Creating this "perfect shoreland lot" has led to a serious loss of natural shoreland habitat and poor water quality on thousands of lakes.

To protect our waters and the recreation we enjoy, we must redefine our definition of the perfect shoreland lot and begin to landscape for wildlife and water quality.

What's the Problem?

Plants that were a natural part of the water's edge prior to development provided more than beauty and color to the shoreland. Plants, both living and dead, provided habitat for wildlife both in and out of the water. Water quality is improved when the plant and animal community on the water's edge thrives. Native plants on the shore and in the water filter pollutants entering the water. By altering the water's edge of our lakes and rivers, we have destroyed habitat, disrupted the natural balance and decreased water quality.

Bringing "Natural" back to Nature

To protect our waters and the recreation we enjoy we need to redefine our definition of the perfect shoreland lot and begin to landscape for wildlife and water quality. Create a buffer zone, which is a natural strip of vegetation along your property's frontage. The goal of a bufferstrip is to restore the shoreline, both on shore and in the water, with the vegetation that occurred there naturally. This includes, trees, shrubs, wildflowers, shoreline plants, grasses and submersed aquatic vegetation. For more information on shoreland restoration visit our website RenewOurWaters.org.

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Stormwater is rain or snowmelt and water from things people do, like overwatering the lawn or washing the car. We can choose products carefully and shape our lawns and pavement so water sinks in. When we do, runoff is reduced, pollutants filter out and streams and groundwater are protected.

Untreated runoff is the biggest threat to our nation's water quality, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Let's make the small, important changes that will reduce that threat and improve water quality and our lives!

Realize
What touches the ground enters the water

RenewOurWaters.org