



ADVICE FOR WATERFRONT PROPERTY OWNERS TO MAINTAIN LAKE HEALTH, WATER QUALITY AND PROTECT SENSITIVE WILDLIFE

Natural areas of shoreline along lakes in the Okanagan are rapidly disappearing. Water quality, wildlife and property values are at risk when natural areas are removed or degraded. Natural shorelines help act as buffers to land use impacts on the lake, protecting the lake from erosion, toxic chemical spills, excessive sediment depositing in the lake, reduced water quality and other undesirable effects. Support the health of shorelines and lakes by following the recommended practices and avoiding those that cause impacts.

DO

- Be aware of provincial and local government regulations that govern development in your community.
- Learn about provincial and local government permit and approval requirements before you consider the following activities near a shoreline, stream, wetland or other sensitive area:
 - » removing or altering plants
 - » disturbing soils
 - » constructing buildings and structures
 - » constructing roads, trails, docks, wharves, bridges
 - » creating hard surfaces such as decks and pavement
 - » installing works for flood protection
 - » developing drainage systems and utility corridors
 - » servicing sewage and water systems
 - » servicing subdivisions
- Plant a buffer of vegetation between the lakeshore and your lawn and driveway.
- Provide shade trees near the lakeshore.
- Retain native vegetation where it exists.
- Whenever possible, plant native species to restore shoreline vegetation.
- When accessing the beach, a designated pathway is preferable and avoids damage to vegetation in the riparian buffer.
- Consistent with safety, maintain dead and dying trees to support species at risk and other wildlife. Many cavity nesting birds and other wildlife depend on tree cavities for survival.
- Consider a shared dock consistent with provincial regulations/directions.
- Maintain permeability of surfaces to avoid surface erosion and help filter rainfall and surface water.
- Consider testing water quality in areas where septic fields have been historically installed adjacent to lakes and creeks.

DO NOT

- Do not add sand or soil to beaches.
- Do not remove sticks and debris from beaches as these help feed algae and small organisms that feed fish, consume organic material and maintain a clear, clean lake.
- Development is regulated within 30 m of the high water mark of lakes and streams; avoid construction of permanent structures like gazebos and patios.
- Do not install retaining walls near beaches.
- Except where required for safety or to highlight navigation hazards, avoid the use of lights near the water; where possible and not required, turn lights near water off at night.
- Avoid the use of lawn chemicals (fertilizers, weed killer, pesticides & herbicides) and washing cars in close proximity to lakeshores.



IDEAS FOR PLANTS TO INCLUDE AS PART OF A HEALTHY SHORELINE

Trees

Black Cottonwood, Water Birch, Mountain or Sitka Alder, Paper Birch, Pacific Willow.

Shrubs, Sedges and Grasses

Red-Osier Dogwood, Tall Oregon Grape, Nootka Rose, Sandbar Willow, Blue or Red Elderberry, Smooth Sumac, Sedges, Giant Wild Rye.

SOURCES FOR PLANTS:

Grasslands Nursery in Summerland and Sagebrush Nursery in Oliver sell native and dryland plants and provide advice and installation services.

MORE IDEAS TO KEEP YOUR SHORELINE HEALTHY AND HAPPY:

Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society <http://www.okanagansimilkameenstewardship.ca>

On the Living Edge: Your handbook for Waterfront Living <http://tinyurl.com/living-by-water>

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