Some Native Plants for Lakeshore Landscaping

Joe Pye
Eupatorium maculatum
Ht: 36" Flower: Purple Bloom: July-September
Habitat: Full sun to part shade. Wet to moist soils.

Little Bluestem
Schizachyrium scoparium
Ht: 36" Flower: Amber Bloom: July-September
Habitat: Full sun to part shade. Moist to dry soils.

Fringed Sedge
Carex crinita
Ht: 36" Flower: Green Bloom: May-June
Habitat: Full sun to part shade. Wet to moist soils.

Flat Topped Aster
Aster umbellatus
Ht: 36" Flower: White Bloom: July-August
Habitat: Full sun to full shade. Moist to wet soils.

Northern Blazing Star
Liatris ligulistylis
Ht: 36" Flower: Purple Bloom: July-August
Habitat: Full to part sun. Wet to dry soils.

Boneset
Eupatorium perfoliatum
Ht: 36" Flower: White Bloom: June-August
Habitat: Full sun to part shade. Wet to moist soils.

Marsh Milkweed
Asclepias incarnata
Ht: 36" Flower: Purple Bloom: June-August
Habitat: Full sun to part shade. Wet to moist soils.

Blue Flag Iris
Iris versicolor
Ht: 36" Flower: Blue Bloom: June-July
Habitat: Full sun to part shade. Wet soils.

Green-headed Coneflower
Rudbeckia laciniata
Ht: 48" Flower: Yellow Bloom: July-September
Habitat: Full sun to part shade. Wet to moist soils.

Fox Sedge
Carex vulpinoidea
Ht: 24" Flower: Green Bloom: May-June
Habitat: Full sun to part shade. Wet to moist soils.

Technical Assistance

Expert assistance may be available to homeowners wishing to determine the best methods for managing their shoreline for fish, wildlife, and water quality. Assistance may include on-site consultations, project design, cost estimation, and guidance throughout project installation and maintenance. Contact your respective conservation district for assistance (see list below).

Cost-Share Grants

Cost-share grants may be available from your conservation district for restoring shorelines with native vegetation and correcting or preventing shoreline erosion (see list below). Grants can pay 50-75% for plants and other materials on projects that will provide benefits to the lake, and therefore the public.

Permits

Contact the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for information on required permits for shoreline projects.
http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/permits/water or 651-296-6157

Permits may also be needed from cities/townships or watershed districts.

Locate any utilities in the area before you dig (Gopher One-Call - 651-454-0002).

Metro Conservation Districts

Anoka Conservation District
1318 McKay Dr. NE, Suite 300
Ham Lake, MN 55304
763-434-2030
www.anokaswcd.org

Carver Soil & Water Conservation District
11360 Highway 212 Suite 6
Cologne, MN 55322
952-466-5230
www.co.carver.mn.us/departments/LWS/swcd.asp

Chisago Soil & Water Conservation District
38814 Third Ave.
North Branch, MN 55056
651-674-2333
www.chisagoswcd.org

Dakota County Soil & Water Conservation District
4100 220th St. West, Suite 102
Farmington, MN 55024
651-480-7777
www.dakotaswcd.org

Hennepin Conservation District
417 North 5th St., Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612-348-9938
www.hcd.hennepin.mn.us

Isanti Conservation District
380 South Garfield St.
Cambridge, MN 55008
763-689-3224
www.isantiswcd.org

Ramsey Conservation District
1425 Paul Kirkwold Dr.
Arden Hills, MN 55112
651-266-7270
www.co.ramsey.mn.us/cd/index.htm

Scott Soil and Water Conservation District
7151 West 190th St., Suite 125
Jordan, MN 55352
952-492-5425
www.scottswcd.org

Sherburne Soil & Water Conservation District
14855 Highway 10
Elk River, MN 55330
763-241-1170 Ext. 3
www.sherburneswcd.org/index.html

Washington Conservation District
1380 West Frontage Road, Hwy. 36
Stillwater, MN 55082
651-275-1136
www.mnwcd.org

Wright Soil and Water Conservation District
311 Brighton Ave. South, Suite C
Buffalo, MN 55313
763-682-1970
www.wrightswcd.org

LANDSCAPING
On Lakeshores

Metro Conservation Districts

A partnership between the eleven soil and water conservation districts of Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Ramsey, Scott, Sherburne, Washington and Wright Counties.

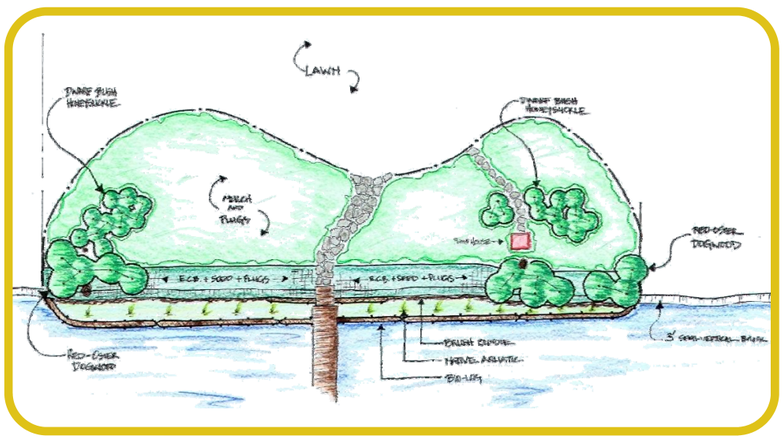
Prepared by the
ANOKA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Healthy Lakes

Healthy, desirable lakes have diverse plant communities, robust fisheries, and accommodate various types of recreation. The most important part of any lake is the near-shore area. The shoreline is critical for fisheries, water quality, and the lake's overall ecology. Property values and lake enjoyment are closely tied to these same things. But the shoreline is also where our activities have the greatest potential to affect the lake. This places special responsibility upon lakeshore homeowners. There are also special challenges to lakeshore landscaping, including wave action, ice jacking, muskrats, and others. Fortunately, there are special landscaping approaches that are attractive and functional for both the homeowner and the lake ecosystem.

Lakeshore Landscaping Principles

- *Create an "outdoor room"*
  with defined boundaries and features of interest.
- *Avoid large empty spaces*
  which are uncomfortable, just as empty indoor spaces are uncomfortable.
- *Frame your view of the lake*
  by placing taller features on the sides, shorter in the middle.
- *Use curved lines*
  that are more appealing than straight lines and sharp angles.
- *Create a flowing transition*
  of native vegetation between manicured areas and the lake.
- *Use soft engineering*
  to prevent or correct shoreline erosion.
- *Use native plants*
  through custom plantings, or by favoring those growing naturally.
- *Preserve in-lake vegetation*
  because it is critical for fish, wildlife, and water quality.
- *Coordinate with your neighbors*
  to create contiguous blocks of habitat and compatible landscaping.



Soft Engineering

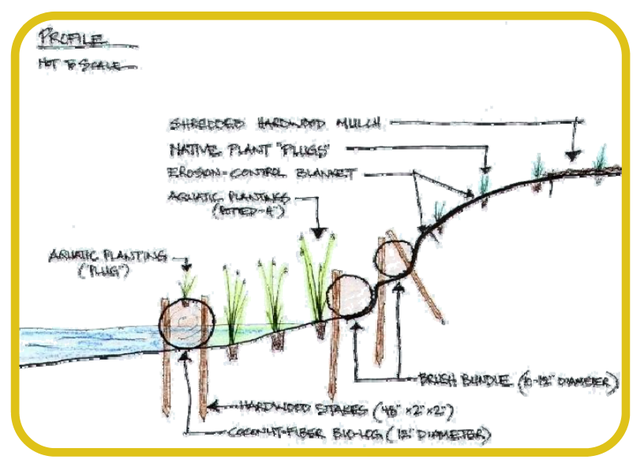
A major challenge of lakeshore landscaping is correcting or avoiding shoreline erosion. Soft engineering mixes engineering techniques with ecological principles to overcome these challenges. It relies heavily on deep-rooted native plants in conjunction with a myriad of inert materials to stabilize shorelines. Where traditional "hard" engineering was designed for erosion control and water confinement, soft engineering incorporates the goals of fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, and aesthetics.

Benefits of Soft Engineering Techniques:

- *Less expensive*
- *More resilient, self repairing*
- *Longer lasting*
- *Fish, wildlife, and water quality benefits*

Examples of Soft Engineering Tools:

- *Restore deep-rooted native grasses and wildflowers*
- *Coconut-fiber "biologs" absorb waves, build shoreline, and create a smoother shore. These become incorporated into the shore over time.*
- *Erosion control fabrics help stabilize the shoreline until the vegetation is established.*



Native Plants

Will your lakeshore gardens be sensational or stunted? A big part of the answer is plant choice. Most plants at traditional nurseries are adapted for upland areas, not areas where they will have "wet feet." Additionally, some non-native garden plants are invasive and harmful to native plant communities. Look at nurseries that carry native plants and you'll find an abundance of unique flowers and fountain-like grasses that will thrive at the water's edge.

Benefits of Native Plants:

- *Adapted to lakeshore stresses, such as periodic flooding or drought.*
- *Deep root systems prevent erosion, and encourage infiltration and treatment of water before it runs into the lake.*
- *Beneficial to wildlife such as butterflies and birds.*
- *Can look formalized or more natural depending on your preferences with plant spacing, grouping, mulching, and borders.*

Lakeshore Gardens

We plant gardens around our homes and elsewhere in our yards, so why not near the lakeshore, especially if you have lawn to the edge? In part, it is because non-native plants available at traditional nurseries don't thrive in the wet lakeshore environment. Use native plants to create lakeshore gardens that can range from formal to naturalized, and can provide substantial benefits to wildlife and the lake.