

Lakeshore Stewardship Vital to Keeping Lakes Healthy

Lakes are the pride and joy of Minnesotans, but the loss of their native aquatic and near shore lake vegetation as a result of increased lakeshore development is a grave threat. Both shoreline and aquatic plants are critical in maintaining a clean and healthy lake. Their loss results in severe negative consequences.

When aquatic vegetation is removed from a lake, it causes a chain reaction, resulting in murky water and loss of critical habitat for waterfowl and native fishes. Without aquatic plant's roots stabilizing the lakebed, it can easily be stirred up by waves and wind, creating cloudy water conditions. Native walleye and bass are driven out by undesirable fish such as carp that thrive in these dirty water conditions.



Native plant removal from lakeshores can have an equally negative impact. Native shoreline vegetation acts as a buffer, filtering polluted runoff and trapping excess nutrients before they enter the lake. Their roots hold the soil in place and prevent erosion and property loss. In addition to these water quality benefits, native plant buffers provide critical habitat for pollinators and other native wildlife, deter nuisance wildlife such as geese, and create an attractive privacy screen while leaving plenty of room for water access from a dock or beach.

Retaining or replacing natural shoreline and aquatic vegetation is critical to a lake's health. Lakeshore owners have the power to make a difference on their shore through proper lakeshore restoration and stewardship. Doing this will improve lake water quality, which has a direct impact on property value, recreation opportunities, fisheries, and more.

To learn how to install your own lakeshore restoration project and watch the "Our Lakeshore Connection" video, visit the "videos" tab at www.SRWMO.org. The SRWMO offers grants to residents wishing to do projects including lakeshore restorations. Applicants are encouraged to learn more by contacting Jamie Schurbon (jamie.schurbon@anokaswcd.org or 763-434-2030 ext. 21).

The Sunrise River Watershed Management Organization is a joint organization of the cities of East Bethel, Ham Lake, Columbus, and Linwood Township. Its purpose is to manage local water issues.

