



The Importance of Your Waterfront Shoreline

Shorelines are small but critical ecozones. Specifically, *shorelines are transition areas between two ecosystems - water and land.*

Shorelines serve vital functions related to a healthy water body.

- 1st - Shorelines provide wildlife habitat for fish, invertebrates, and birds.
- 2nd - Shorelines offer biodiversity - a rich and healthy food chain.
- 3rd - Shorelines create natural water filtration.
- 4th - Shorelines offer erosion control from wake and waves.
- 5th - Shorelines filter pollutants from entering a water body through surface runoff.

Understandably, shorelines are referred to as a water body's *Ribbon of Life*. The best type of waterfront shoreline is a **natural shoreline**, because the native flora and fauna found within your lake basin perform the above stated functions.

The 2018 *Hutchinson Environmental Services Limited (HESL) Report* regarding Oak Lake and residential shorelines, stated that only 20% of the entire lake's perimeter is natural. Also, the Report stated that individual properties around the lake are highly developed, with an average development footprint per property of nearly 50%. In addition, natural buffer areas were lacking, with 69% of all properties containing none whatsoever!

For residents, making small changes to your waterfront shoreline can produce dramatic improvements for both the health of Oak Lake and the quality of enjoyment for its residents. It's as easy as imitating the pictures below.

BEFORE

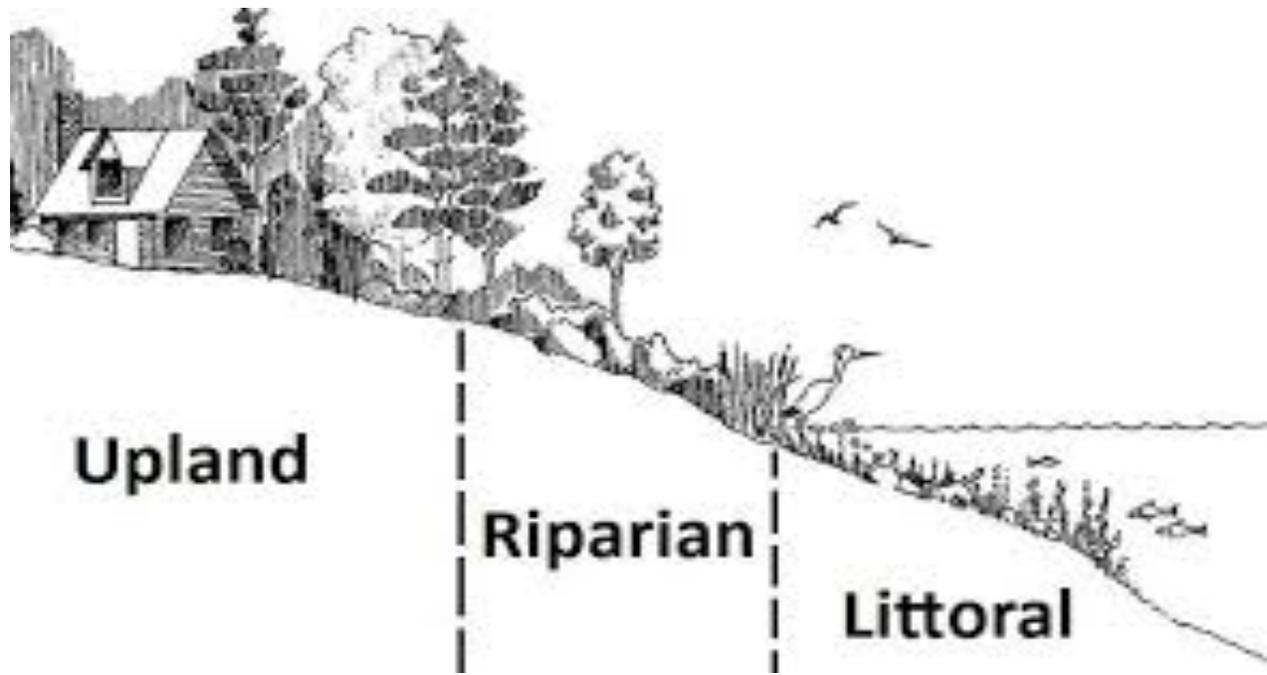


AFTER



Generally, shorelines have three key areas:

- (1) The Upland Shore (2) The Riparian Zone (3) The Littoral Area



<p>The Upland Shore is where you enjoy your waterfront home or cottage up to the shoreline.</p> <p>Trees and shrubs are very important in this area as they act as habitats for birds and other species, with roots being important habitats for fish, while also keeping soil in place via root systems.</p> <p>Adding a 'buffer area' comprised of shrubs, plants, or food gardens near your septic system provides them with nutrients for growth, while at the same time, limiting nutrients from reaching the lake. Make sure that root systems do not interfere with the septic bed itself.</p> <p>If possible, limit or nullify the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides within this area. As an alternative, numerous organic alternatives to traditional fertilizers are available in the marketplace.</p>	<p>The Riparian Zone is the meeting place between wet and dry ecosystems.</p> <p>This zone is important for water filtration by interrupting surface runoff and absorbing pollutants from septic systems and fertilizers.</p> <p>Native local plants and shrubs attract different birds and insects (including pollinators).</p> <p>Limiting geese can be done easily by keeping a 2-foot height of native plants in this zone.</p>	<p>The Littoral Area extends from the high-water mark to one meter into the water.</p> <p>The area is critically important for habitat, including zooplankton, invertebrates and fish.</p> <p>Native plants grow in these wet areas at the shore. Their roots systems are extensive and help keep soil in place, while also providing safe harbor for wildlife.</p> <p>Rocks, stumps, and deadwood in these areas are very important habitat elements and should wherever possible, be undisturbed.</p> <p>Any work performed in this area will require a permit from The Lower Trent Conservation Authority.</p>
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For residents interested in learning more about the importance of natural shorelines or the re-naturalization process, please view the following videos from the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association (FOCA).

Healthy Shorelines: <https://youtu.be/C-8FTWAHqaY>

Healthy Waterfront Habitats: <https://youtu.be/zOGU8O1zJow>

Pollution Prevention: <https://youtu.be/JPWDXou0PAg>

To order native flora directly, including flowers, plants, shrubs or trees, utilize the *Ontario Native Plants* website at office@onplants.ca. For information on the types of soils or native flora in-and-around Oak Lake's watershed, please contact a member of the FOOL Executive at friendsofoaklake@gmail.com.

Finally, contact a local business or organization that can offer advice and/or materials for shoreline improvement projects, including:

Lower Trent Conservation
441 Front Street Trenton, ON
613-394-4829
www.ltc.on.ca

Connon Nurseries
956A Old Highway #2 Trenton, ON
613-392-0402
www.connon.ca

GreenUp Ecology Park
383 George St., North Peterborough, ON
705-745-3238
www.greenup.on.ca/ecology-park

Sincerely,

Scott Symons
Friends of Oak Lake

