

SHORELINE LANDSCAPING

Native plant species along shorelines have environmental & economic benefits

Environmental Management & Resource Committee



Lakefront property owners are encouraged to plant native vegetation along shorelines to help promote and maintain the health of Arrowhead Lakes' most notable amenity - our lakes. There are numerous environmental and economic benefits to having a riparian buffer zone or buffer strip that includes native vegetation.

A buffer strip is an area that is comprised of trees, shrubs, grasses and forbs that links the land with the water. Ecologists, water quality specialists and conservationists all agree that having naturally vegetated buffer zones are critical to maintaining healthy waters.

Benefits for Healthy Lakes

A major benefit of a buffer strip is its ability to filter stormwater or water runoff following a rain event. Pollutants within stormwater include excess nutrients, harmful chemicals, bacteria like E.coli and litter. Nutrients are absorbed through the buffer vegetation, thus reducing water contamination. In addition, buffer grasses can help slow the velocity of surface runoff. In contrast to conventional turfgrass, natural riparian vegetation has extensive root systems that anchor shoreline soils and prevent erosion. Excess sediments which enter our lakes through erosion and stormwater can affect water quality and degrade habitat quality. Sediment accumulation also affects lake water depth and, in time, can determine what recreational activities are viable in a lake.

Nuisance waterfowl such as geese are less likely to forage, roost and defecate in areas with variable vegetation heights that buffer strips provide.

While individual property buffer strip characteristics will vary, it is always recommended that native plants be used. Native plants, those naturally found in a geographic region, are more likely to survive and require less maintenance once established.



As much as 70-95 percent of incoming sediment and 25-60 percent of incoming nutrients and other pollutants can be removed from runoff with a riparian buffer.

Buffer Benefits for the Bank

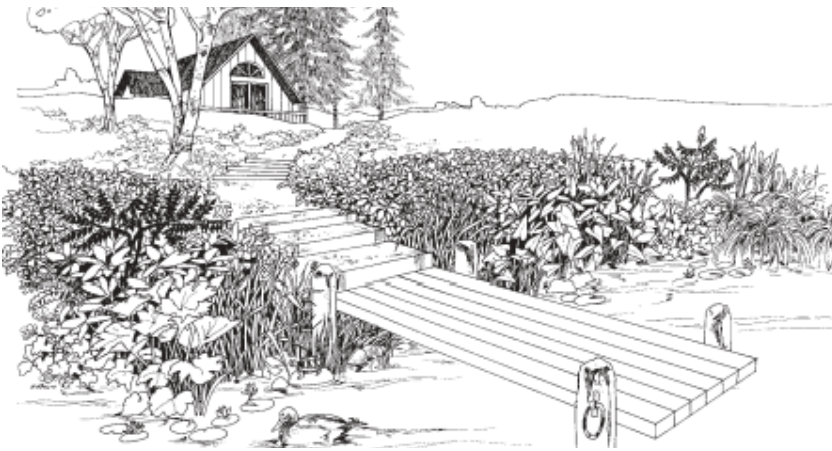
- Aesthetically pleasing landscaping can contribute to higher property values
- Native vegetation is generally low-maintenance meaning less mowing and use of chemical applications
- Lake maintenance like dredging is less likely to be needed since buffers reduce erosion and sedimentation
- Sound absorption by plants can reduce noise and help maintain peacefully outdoor experiences
- Increase in wildlife habitat can promote recreational value for birding, fishing and boating activities



Native Plant Species

Appropriate vegetation is key to effective buffer strips and shoreline stabilization. Native plants can provide beneficial habitat, anchor soils and enhance the beauty of your property.

Arrowhead Lake is part of Zone "5b" on the [USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map](#). This map is the standard by which gardeners can determine which plants are most likely to thrive at a location. Plants can be selected based on a variety of factors like light and soil moisture needs, bloom time, height and most importantly whether a species is native to the area.



Resources for Homeowners



Scan the QR Code with your smart phone camera



View a [list of resources](#) and extensive information about native plants, buffer strips, and water pollution.



This list is comprised of website links for PennState Extension articles and resources, EPA, PA Association of Water Districts, USDA, native plant lists and more! You can also find this list on the EM&R Committee page in MyALCA.



If you are interested in joining the EMGR Committee, contact: Janice Miller Lion-janicemillerlionalca@gmail.com or Kelli Majiros-majiroska@gmail.com