













## THE RIBBON OF LIFE

The shoreline, where land, water and air meet, is a dynamic and interdependent ribbon of life. Here, seaweeds, eelgrass, birds, fish and many other critters find nourishment for survival. We, too, rely on healthy shorelines for sustenance.

If you are lucky enough to have a healthy, well-vegetated shoreline, the best thing you can do to protect your property from erosion is to leave the shoreline alone and let it do the work - naturally! While erosion is a natural process which nourishes shorelines and beaches, we also want to protect shoreline properties.

### 12 SIMPLE STEPS TO PROTECT YOUR SHORELINE PROPERTY

-  Retain vegetation on shoreline banks and bluffs. Native trees and plants hold soil in place on slopes, filter pollutants and provide wildlife habitat.
-  Protect your property by building and locating structures the maximum distance possible from the high water mark.
-  Accept that some erosion is natural along bluffs, in order to nourish beaches, and plan accordingly with adequate setbacks.
-  Consult an expert for ways to "soften" your shoreline. Hard shorewalls are expensive, have a finite lifespan, disrupt natural processes and cause erosion elsewhere. They also destroy important fish and wildlife habitat.
-  Minimize erosion by managing upland runoff; use natural ground covers and porous materials that allow runoff to be absorbed and filtered naturally.
-  Check regularly for non-native invasive plants and report their occurrence to the appropriate authority.
-  Pump out your septic tank regularly - every two years for a field system. Site drain fields as far as possible from the shoreline.
-  Use environmentally friendly alternatives to toxic chemicals and pesticides; maintain your equipment to prevent leaks and spills.
-  Give clear instructions to your contractors and monitor their work.
-  Use public marinas or shared boat facilities when possible. Private boat docks can shade valuable fish habitat; wood preservatives present in some building materials can be a source of pollution.
-  Share beach access with neighbours where possible, to limit structures and walkways in sensitive areas.
-  Prevent pets from harassing wildlife and dispose of pet waste properly.

*Note: Always check local regulations before making changes below the high water mark. Permits are required to construct shoreline structures or operate machinery.*

## SHORE CARE - THE BENEFITS

Shore care means less work, not more! You will help preserve water quality and safeguard your family's health. You will also protect the beauty of your shoreline, maintaining its investment value. Extra benefits include more time to relax and enjoy!

**Be prepared for climate change! Naturally vegetated shorelines can help resist erosion. Consider "retreat" planting away from your shoreline to keep pace with rising sea levels.**



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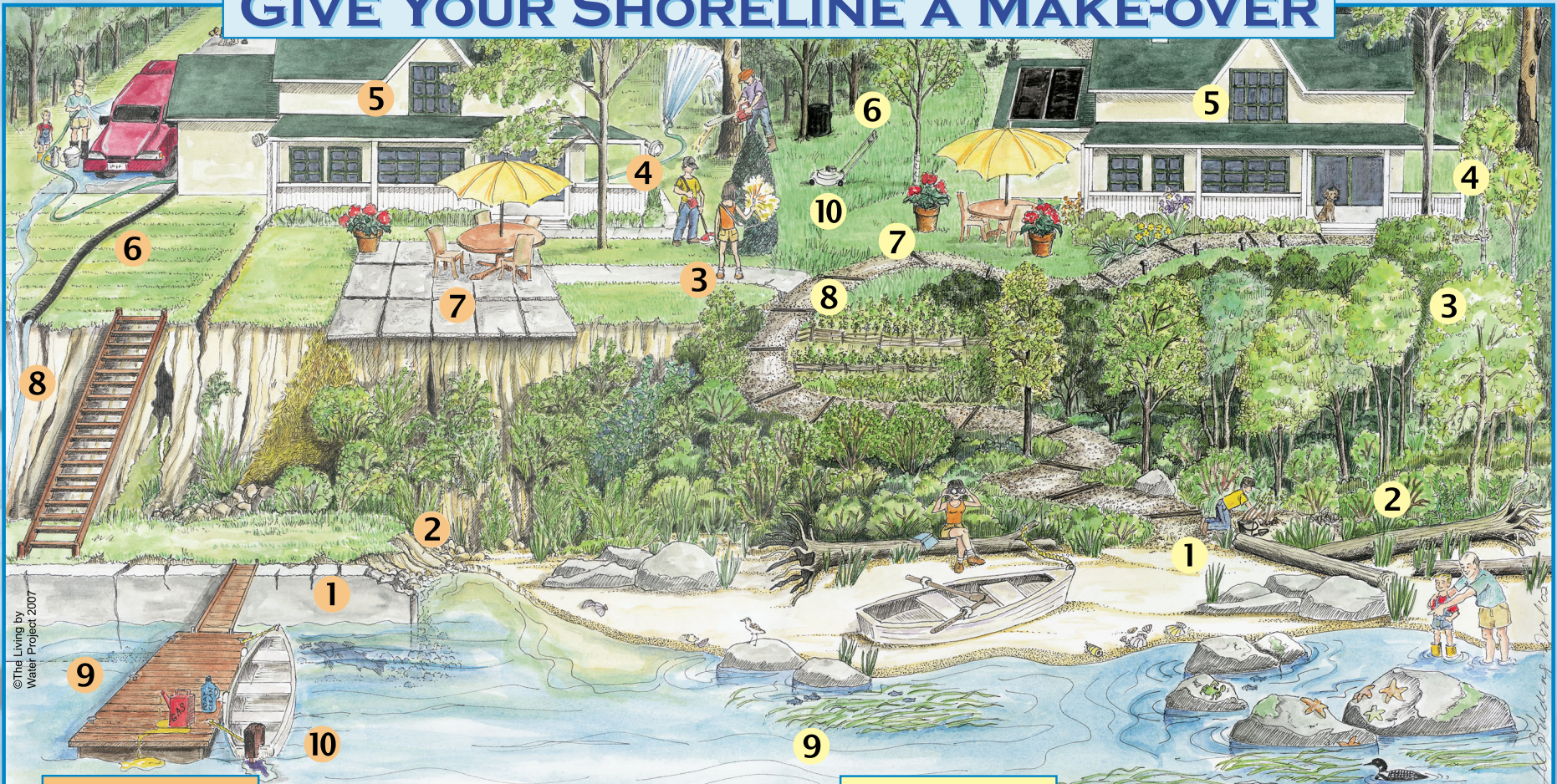
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# LIVING ON THE COAST



Simple Tips ...  
Lasting Benefits

# GIVE YOUR SHORELINE A MAKE-OVER



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## BEFORE

1. Hardened shorelines accelerate erosion, eliminate the shoreline's "filtering" ability, degrade habitat.
2. Removal or rearrangement of natural debris leaves your shoreline vulnerable to erosion.
3. Chemical fertilizers and pesticides reduce water quality, are deadly for fish and other wildlife.
4. Cleared "manicured" lots lack shade and privacy. Loss of native plants leads to more erosion, runoff and work for you!
5. Harmful household chemicals and cleaners damage septic systems and degrade water quality.
6. Malfunctioning septic systems and improper waste disposal degrade water quality; can lead to beach closures for swimming and shellfish harvesting.
7. Runoff flows over solid surfaces, accelerating erosion; excess silt degrades habitat for fish and other aquatic life.
8. Inappropriate beach access, such as steep stairs, destabilizes banks and leads to increased erosion.
9. Private docks, piers and boat ramps destroy eelgrass beds and habitat for fish and other wildlife.
10. Poorly maintained engines leak oil and other petroleum products and waste 25-40% of fuel.

## AFTER

1. Work with an expert to "soften" your shoreline; improve erosion protection with native trees, shrubs, grasses and beach logs.
2. Resist the urge to "tidy up"; let organic debris like beach logs and fallen trees act as a natural seawall.
3. Landscape with low maintenance native plants. Mow lawns high using a mulching mower.
4. Prune trees, rather than removing. Plant native trees and shrubs to reduce erosion and absorb runoff.
5. Use environmentally friendly products and cleaners, or alternatives like baking soda and vinegar.
6. Repair and maintain your septic system (consult an expert). Compost house and yard waste.
7. Replace solid surfaces with porous materials. Redirect **rainwater onto porous surfaces**, away from shore.
8. Share beach access with neighbors, maintaining a narrow winding trail. Avoid accessing steep banks.
9. Use public docks and boat launches where possible; consider replacing your dock with a low impact private access option (**e.g. a mooring buoy or floating dock anchored outside eelgrass beds**).
10. Use a well-maintained electric or push mower, and a 4 or 2-stroke boat motor that meets or **improves upon EPA 2012 guidelines**.