

POLLUTION PREVENTION

Through the Docktalk program, FOCA encourages landowners to enhance wildlife habitat.

WHY? The benefits include:

Wildlife on the shoreline

A natural shoreline provides wildlife with food, shelter, protection, and nesting areas on land or in water. Ninety percent of life in the lake lives in or passes through the shallow water below the shoreline. Shoreline alteration is the largest threat to habitat around lakes. Sand from beaches migrates and can cover spawning grounds. Retaining walls remove habitat. (See FOCA's Natural Shorelines fact sheet.)

Lakes full of fish

Fish have specific needs for their everyday habitat and spawning grounds. Water temperature, oxygen levels, protection, etc. play a role in each species ideal habitat, and ultimately their survival. Protecting and enhancing spawning areas and sheltering spots near shorelines supports fish populations.

Wildlife watching

Enhancing habitat will make your waterfront property wildlife-friendly. Grab binoculars and keep count of what visits and how often. Seventy per cent of land animals interact with shoreline environments at some point in their lifecycle.

Healthy shorelines

Healthy shoreline habitat, packed with native plants, shrubs, and trees, prevents erosion, assists in flood control, and filters pollution. Scattered debris along the water's edge, such as fallen logs, not only provides habitat but also helps protect against erosion and ice damage. Healthy habitats are better equipped to keep invasive species out.

Help threatened species

Many animals and plants are threatened or of special concern because they do not have the habitat they need to survive. Examples include the common loon, spotted turtle, and lakeside daisy. Enhancing habitat can provide crucial support to these species. Find out what wildlife are in danger in your locale and could use your help.

Wetland water control

Wetlands are among the most diverse ecosystems in the world. Wetlands act as sponges, filters, and water flow control. They soak up runoff, absorb pollutants, block sediment, and release the water at more moderate speeds.

Wildlife means all wild mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, invertebrates, plants, fungi, algae, bacteria, and other wild organisms.

Find out how you can enhance wildlife habitat...

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HOW?

FOCA encourages landowners to prevent pollutants from entering the lakeside environment.

Enjoy a natural shoreline

Native species have inherent pest resistance and adaptations to local conditions so they don't need fertilizers or pesticides. Native flowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees absorb and filter rainwater as it runs off your property, and prevent the shore eroding. (See FOCA's Natural Shorelines fact sheet.)

Sit back and put nature to work for you

Use natural care techniques; they focus on healthy soil, choosing the best plants for your area, and making nature look after itself. Consider alternative ground covers for active-use areas, and keep mowed areas to a minimum.

Burn dry, seasoned wood only

Avoid putting toxic chemicals into the air: Burn wood, not household garbage. Dry wood burns cleaner. Small pieces combust better because they have more surface area.

Be a good boater

Perform repairs and fill gas tanks away from the water. Use spill-prevention equipment. Cover the ground where maintenance is done, and use drip pans during engine work. Use non-toxic bilge cleaners or bilge cloths. Dispose of waste oil at hazardous waste facilities.

Reduce waste

Whatever comes to the cottage has to leave somehow. Reduce garbage significantly with reusable products (e.g. plates, bags, mugs). Buy items in as little packaging as possible, preferably recyclable packaging.

Properly dispose of hazardous waste

Oil, solvents, paint, batteries, and many cleaning products have hazardous ingredients so they need special disposal at hazardous waste depots. Find out who accepts hazardous waste near your cottage or take it home to your local hazardous disposal facility.

Resources online:

www.foca.on.ca
www.ec.gc.ca/cppic
www.gca.ca
www.burnitsmart.org
www.cleanboater.com
www.wdo.ca
www.myfootprint.org

Your local contact: