

## Do-It-Yourself Projects to Protect Your Shoreline

By: Lynn Gallice, Shoreland Technician



**Tackling your shoreline erosion problem can seem a bit intimidating, but there are some things you can do that are inexpensive and very effective at controlling erosion on your shoreline.**

**\*Remember, before starting any shoreline work, consult the MN DNR. You may need a permit.**

### Here are some simple things you can do yourself:

**Create a No Mow buffer!** If you stop mowing, deep rooted native vegetation may come up along your shoreline. Not only will this taller vegetation have deeper roots to hold your soil, your new no mow buffer will also protect your shoreline from erosion caused by stormwater runoff. We would be happy to come out to your property to identify the plants that you already have coming up. We can suggest great pollinator and wildlife friendly native grasses and wildflowers to add to your vegetation.



Photo courtesy of Minnesota Native Landscapes



**Protect Your Soil!** Wrap your eroding shore with erosion control fabric and then plant native vegetation. Erosion control fabric holds your soil while your native plants are establishing themselves. Stake the fabric down and bury the edges in soil to hold it in. Native plants have extensive root systems that hold soil in place.

**Create a Native Plant Buffer!** This is easy to do. Start by removing or smothering the existing turf grass. If you have smothered the turf grass, you can plant native plants and shrubs right into the dead turf. If you have removed the turf and have bare soil, you can seed with native grasses and wild flowers. Protect the seeded area with an erosion control blanket. Be sure to mow a few times the first year to prevent weed growth. You can add native plant plugs (inexpensive 6 pack size) to this planting at any time. Remember, mowed turf grass roots are only about an inch long and will not hold your shoreline soil in place.



Photo courtesy of Minnesota Native Landscapes



**Plant Natives!** Plant native shrubs and plants into the open soil where your shoreline is eroding. Some excellent choices for shorelines are Red-osier Dogwood, Meadowsweet, False Indigo, Lake Sedge and Blue Flag Iris. These are just a few of the many attractive and functional native shrubs, sedges, grasses and wildflowers that will help stabilize a shoreline.

**Install a Coir Log at the Toe of your Shoreline.** The toe is where the land and water meet and a coir log is a coconut fiber log that can be temporarily staked in to support your shore. Native plants can be planted behind, into and in front of the coir log. This log will break down and dissolve over a few years, leaving well established plants to stabilize your shore.



These easy projects will slow down erosion, filter runoff water before it enters the lake or river and enhance pollinator and bird habitat on your shoreline. Call the SWCD at 320-983-2160 with questions about how to apply these techniques to your shoreline.