

# Lake-Friendly Actions Along the Shoreline

By Andréa LaMoreaux – Education Director for NH Lakes

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## Increase Your Property Value

If wisely managed, a shoreline property can function as an effective buffering system between the lake and the surrounding landscape. If you own shoreline property, please read the following tips below and try to implement at least one on your property to help keep Pleasant Lake healthy. At the same time, you will be protecting, and perhaps even enhancing, the value of your shoreline property!

*“Tips than can protect and even enhance the value of your shoreline property”*

## Avoid Dumping Sand or Creating New Beaches.

- ✓ Sandy beaches that are not naturally occurring will not last. The sand will either be carried away by water currents or will slowly settle into the bottom of the lake, where it will contribute to the rate of lake filling in and aging.
- ✓ The addition of sand along the shoreline will smother bottom-dwelling organisms, alter the food chain, destroy fish spawning and nesting sites, and damage fish gills. As the lake becomes shallower, more sunlight will reach the lake bottom, which can lead to increased plant growth.
- ✓ It is illegal to dump sand or create a beach in New Hampshire without a permit from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES). For permit information, visit

[www.des.nh.gov/wetlands/](http://www.des.nh.gov/wetlands/) or contact DES at (603) 271-2147.

- ✓ Do not remove trees and other vegetation within 250-feet of the shoreline unless you have received a Comprehensive Shore Land Protection Act Permit which instructs you how to do so.

Trees and shrubs help to stabilize the soil and reduce the amount of polluted water that flows into lakes and other surface waters. For permit information, visit

[www.des.nh.gov/cspa/](http://www.des.nh.gov/cspa/) or contact DES at (603) 271-2147.

- ✓ Do not remove rocks and native aquatic plants. Rocks and aquatic plants help break waves and prevent erosion and are important to maintaining the ecological health of water bodies.



***You need a permit to remove trees and other vegetation within 250 ft of the shoreline***

## Do Not Bathe Yourself or Your Pets in the Water.

- ✓ Soaps and shampoos will add unwanted nutrients and other pollutants to the lake. Even camping soaps or biodegradable soaps may contain undesirable pollutants.
- ✓ Bathing in the lake can introduce bacteria scum and particulates.

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## Restore Altered Shorelines.

Much of the shoreline along New Hampshire's lakes has already been altered and degraded by removing natural vegetation for the construction of docks, houses, lawns, and roads. While it is not required by law for shoreline property owners to restore altered shorelines, it is encouraged. It is also relatively easy!

- ✓ Convert a human-made sandy beach to a completely vegetated area.



*Vegetated shorelines help improve and protect lake quality.*

- ✓ If you must have a sandy human-made beach, make it smaller, or construct a perched beach. A perched beach is one with little or no slope that is set back from the water. Perching a beach will help correct erosion problems on a sloping, sandy beach that leads directly to the water. Contact DES for permit requirements at (603) 271-2147.
- ✓ Limit foot-traffic to and from the shoreline by providing only one meandering pathway surrounded by vegetation.
- ✓ Prevent polluted water from flowing off your property and into the lake by redesigning walkways and paths, and by adding rain gardens and vegetative buffers.

- ✓ If you are aware of a potential shoreline restoration project in your watershed, contact the New Hampshire Lakes Association (NH LAKES) at [info@nhlakes.org](mailto:info@nhlakes.org) or (603) 226-0299 to share this information. NH LAKES is currently working on developing a statewide Lake Conservation Corps<sup>SM</sup> program to involve high school students in shoreline restoration projects to help protect and improve the quality of lakes and ponds.

## Avoid Attracting Waterfowl - Don't Feed the Waterfowl.

- ✓ Feeding waterfowl will attract more to the site. A single goose can create up to three pounds of waste per day. Waterfowl waste can contain significant amounts of phosphorus (the nutrient used in plant and algal growth).
- ✓ Fecal matter can contain harmful parasites and bacteria that can contaminate swimming areas, causing what is commonly called "swimmers itch" for some people.
- ✓ Waterfowl are healthier when they consume the foods they naturally forage.

## Avoid Attracting Waterfowl - Make Shoreline Property Unattractive to Waterfowl.

- ✓ Grassy lawns attract geese and ducks. Providing barriers, such as dense shrubs, between the shoreline and the property will discourage waterfowl from visiting the lawn.

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### Do not remove aquatic plants without a permit.

- ✓ Aquatic plants help prevent erosion by stabilizing lake bottoms and shorelines with their roots and by absorbing wave energy.
- ✓ Aquatic plants are also important for fish spawning and nursery areas, and provide habitat for the insects and other organisms that support the entire food chain of the lake.
- ✓ Not only is it illegal to remove aquatic plants without a permit, removing native plants may open up habitat for invasive exotic plants to take over.
- ✓ Before any exotic plant, such as variable milfoil, can be managed, the water body must have a long-term management plan approved by DES. For more information, visit [www.des.nh.gov/wmb/exoticspecies/](http://www.des.nh.gov/wmb/exoticspecies/) or contact DES at (603) 271-2248.

### Thank You:

These lake protection tips, and many more, are discussed in the New Hampshire Lakes Association's newest educational publication "*Help Protect New Hampshire's Lakes: A guide to wise lake and watershed stewardship.*" This 39-page booklet features a wealth of information and attractive photos of New Hampshire's lakes.

To purchase your copy, contact (603) 226-0299 or [info@nhlakes.org](mailto:info@nhlakes.org), or send your \$5 payment and mailing address to NH LAKES at 84 Silk Farm Road, Concord, NH 03301.

The New Hampshire Lakes Association (NH LAKES) is a member supported, non-profit organization dedicated to protecting New Hampshire's lakes and their watersheds.

For more information, visit [www.nhlakes.org](http://www.nhlakes.org)

or Call (603) 226-0299.