

Difference

How to Conserve Calgary's Shorelands

As the owner of a waterfront property, you play an important role in conserving Alberta's shorelands. These areas account for less than 2% of the land, but are essential for the survival of 80% of the fish and wildlife in our province.

Consider the difference you could make!



By keeping Calgary's shorelands healthy, you can:

- Stabilize banks and reduce property erosion.
- Improve water quality. Healthy shoreland plants filter out sediment and contaminants before they reach the water.
- Maintain food, shelter, nesting sites and travel corridors for wildlife.
- Provide fish with food, cover from predators and shade during high temperatures.
- Replenish the groundwater and maintain higher stream flow during dry periods.
- Maintain attractive watercourses for recreation and leisure.

You can sustain our shorelands by following these landscape and yard maintenance tips!

- Retain natural vegetation and landscape with native plants* to:
 - Provide a well-vegetated buffer between the watercourse and the developed area
 - Stabilize slopes and minimize bank erosion
 - Lessen the need for fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, which are detrimental to fish, wildlife, vegetation and our human neighbours downstream
 - Avoid introducing non-native vegetation such as purple loosestrife, creeping bell flower, caragana and Eurasian milfoil, which compete with plants around them and disrupt natural plant communities.
- Consider planting native shrubs and grasses for bank stabilization instead of using rock or retaining walls, which do not provide fish and wildlife habitat.
- Refuel and fix lawn mowers and other equipment well away from waterbodies to prevent oil and gas from leaking into the water. Remember that any contaminants spilled on the ground will eventually be washed into the water supply.
- Consider composting your yard waste and using it in place of fertilizer. Dumping or storing yard waste or other garbage on shorelands is illegal.

Calgary shoreline altered by human activity



A relatively healthy shoreline in Calgary

- Retain materials such as rocks, leaves, stumps and dead trees within natural areas of the shoreland. These materials are natural fertilizers, help prevent soil erosion and provide wildlife habitat. It is often illegal to remove them.
- Look for natural alternatives to chemical fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides wherever possible. If their use is necessary, follow the directions and store and apply them well away from water to prevent contamination of the watercourse. Allowing these chemicals to enter the watercourse is illegal.
- Clean up pet faeces to avoid polluting our waterways.

* Shrubs and trees that are native to Calgary's shorelands include: saskatoon, water birch, red osier dogwood, balsam poplar and various willows (including sandbar, beaked, pussy and peach-leaved). See the Alberta Native Plant Council website at www.anpc.ab.ca for more information.

Thanks for keeping Calgary's shorelands healthy!



New Landscaping and Construction Projects

- Contact the regulatory agencies listed on the back panel to ensure that you have the proper approvals before you begin new landscaping or construction projects. Remember, the Government of Alberta owns the bed and shores of waterbodies in most cases.
- Adhere to The City of Calgary's regulations for development setbacks (the distance away from the bank) before constructing buildings and other structures.
- Discuss project plans with your neighbours and community association. Local river conservation groups (see back panel) offer valuable information and helpful advice.
- Consider using interlocking bricks to construct driveways, patios, and sidewalks. Paved surfaces prevent rain and snowmelt from replenishing groundwater. This increases surface runoff, which causes erosion and washes sediment and other contaminants into nearby rivers.
- Don't alter a watercourse by changing the riverbed, shores or banks. In-filling, straightening and widening banks will modify watercourse flows and could cause flooding or erosion. These alterations are also illegal without proper approvals.
- Consider protecting shorelands through a land donation or a conservation easement if subdividing your property.

Additional Information

Documents

Alberta Conservation Association 1-877-969-9091
(Toll free)
Caring for Shoreline Properties, Changing the Way We Look at Owning Lakefront Property in Alberta.

Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Project (403) 382-4358
Caring for the Green Zone: Riparian Areas and Grazing Management.

The City of Calgary, Development & Building Approvals 268-5311
Development Controls: Lands Adjacent to Calgary's Rivers.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada 292-5160
Land Development Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Habitat.

Federation of Alberta Naturalists (780) 427-8124
Naturescape Alberta: Creating and Caring for Wildlife Habitat at Home.

Websites

Alberta Native Plant Council www.anpc.ab.ca
Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Program www.cowsandfish.org

Bow River Basin Council www.brbc.ab.ca
Land Stewardship Resource Centre www.landstewardship.org

Living By Water Project www.livingbywater.ca
Parks Foundation, Calgary www.parksfdn.com

U.S. Federal www.usda.gov/stream_restoration/
Interagency Stream Restoration Working Group

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Make the

Regulatory Agency Contacts

If you are considering:

- Landscaping or constructing in the floodplain, including the watercourse and the river banks. This includes: constructing house decks/patios, buildings and fences; clearing or re-grading land; stabilizing banks

Contact:

The City of Calgary, Development & Building Approvals 268-5311
Alberta Environment 297-6582
Fisheries and Oceans Canada 292-5160
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Public Lands (403) 340-5451

Phone#

- Discharging or withdrawing water and/or dumping any materials in or beside a waterway or storm sewer

The City of Calgary, Wastewater 268-5731
The City of Calgary, Bylaw Services 268-5707
Fisheries and Oceans Canada 292-5160
Alberta Environment 297-6582

- Removing plants and/or aquatic vegetation from shoreland areas

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Public Lands (403) 340-5451
Fisheries and Oceans Canada 292-5160
Canadian Wildlife Service 292-4103
Alberta Environment 297-6582

- Subdividing your property

The City of Calgary, Development & Building Approvals 268-5311

- Removing weeds from shoreland areas

Alberta Environment 297-6582

Other Organizations to Contact

Alberta Conservation Assoc. (toll free) 1-877-969-9091
conserving and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat
Bow River Project 948-8516
enhancing shorelands and controlling weeds
Inglewood Bird Sanctuary 221-4500
conserving and enhancing wildlife habitat

Nature Conservancy of Canada 262-1253
donating or selling land for land conservancy (easement)
Parks Foundation, Calgary 974-0751
donating land
Trout Unlimited Canada 221-8360
restoring and enhancing fish habitat

Caring for
Shorelands along
Calgary's Waterways