Give Your Shoreline a Make-over!

before

1. Cleared, manicured lot – lacks shade and privacy; loss of native plants leads to more erosion, runoff and work for you!
2. Runoff – flows over solid surfaces accelerating erosion; pollutants and excess silt degrade habitat for aquatic life.
3. Chemical fertilizers and pesticides – degrade water quality, are hazardous to your health, can be deadly for fish and other wildlife.
4. Lawn to the water's edge – lacks deep roots required to stabilize bank.
5. Hardened shoreline – can deflect erosion downstream, eliminates "natural filtering" of pollutants and sediment, degrades habitat.
6. Artificial beach – requires ongoing sand replacement, reduces water quality, degrades aquatic habitat.
7. Old 2-stroke engine – dumps 25–40% of fuel, un-combusted, into water and air.
8. Solid crib dock – destroys aquatic habitat, alters currents, can deflect erosion downstream.
9. Malfunctioning septic system – allows phosphorus and bacteria to leach into adjacent waterways.
10. Harmful household chemicals and cleaners – damage septic system and degrade water quality.

after

1. Prune trees rather than removing them; plant low maintenance native trees and shrubs to reduce erosion and absorb runoff.
2. Replace solid surfaces with porous materials where possible; redirect runoff into settling areas, away from the water's edge.
3. "Mow it high and let it lie"– leave grass 8 cm (3") high to retain moisture, mulch clippings for fertilizer.
4. Start a buffer – leave some grass uncut along the water's edge; restore with deep rooting native plants.
5. "Soften" your shoreline – improve erosion protection with native trees, shrubs, grasses and aquatic plants.
6. Create a "dry land" beach above the high water mark; let imported sand erode away naturally and native plants grow back.
7. Use a well maintained electric motor, or a 4 or 2-stroke engine that meets or exceeds EPA 2006 guidelines.
8. Remove solid dock – try a pipe, cantilever or floating dock, avoid treated wood; use public access where possible.
9. Replace and properly maintain your septic system – consult an expert.
10. Use environment-friendly products, or alternatives like baking soda and vinegar.