



I will plant native vegetation and allow already established vegetation to flourish of already established vegetation and allow all invasive plant species. I will have my sewage holding tank inspected regularly. I will refuel my boat using spillage control devices like a spill control system, fuel whistle, flow-control fuel container or a spill recovery system. I will eliminate the use of pesticides

One Simple Act for the LAKE

2009 Shoreline Naturalization Info Session Lake Wabamun

SUMMARY

On August 29, 2009, the Alberta Conservation Team (ACT) in association with the Wabamun Watershed Management Council (WWMC) had a unique opportunity to facilitate a Shoreline Naturalization Info Session at Lake Wabamun. This information session was open to full time and part time residents interested in learning about the benefits of a vegetated shoreline, getting information about the regulatory steps required, and learning about simple actions homeowners can do to get started prior to modifications. A total of 15 residents attended this event, making this first ever naturalization session a success.

PURPOSE



The Federation of Alberta Naturalists (FAN) delivers the Living By Water Homesite Consultation program at lakes throughout Alberta. The Alberta Conservation Team partnered with FAN in 2008 and 2009 to deliver homesite consultation at Lake Wabamun in cooperation with the WWMC. The shoreline naturalization info session was developed as an extension to the homesite consultations; to give residents the knowledge to follow through on one of the major recommendations given during the homesite consultation program: naturalizing their property and surrounding shoreline.

The goal of the shoreline naturalization session was to enable homeowners to effectively naturalize their shorelines and thereby improve the overall health of Lake Wabamun. By the end of the session, residents knew the steps required to begin naturalizing their shoreline. The approvals process was covered by Alberta Environment, the planning and planting process was demonstrated by Sheldon Helbert and the overall context was provided by the WWMC.



THE INFORMATION SESSION

Valuable information was provided by all of the experts who helped develop this session. Residents learned that there are many elements involved when modifying your shoreline property. The elements discussed during the information session at Wabamun included:

Research & Planning:

- ✚ Gather historical records of high water marks, and measured property lines.
- ✚ Sketch out (to scale) your proposed plan for development.
- ✚ Determine soil quality and whether additional soil needs to be added, and in what volume.
- ✚ Determine manpower and materials needed (eg. number of plants, shovel or bobcat).

Approval Process:

- ✚ Jurisdiction over the shoreline and actual water body for all Alberta lakes can be generally divided into these areas:

- From property line to high water mark (municipal reserve): municipal legislation
- From high water mark to lake bed and shore: provincial legislation – specifically;
 - Water Quality & Quantity – Alberta Environment
 - Lake Bed and Shore – Public Lands
 - Fish Populations – Sustainable Resource Development
- Fish Habitat & Navigable Waters: federal legislation



- ✚ Under the Water Act, it is mandatory to provide notice to neighbors of proposed development of your property.
- ✚ Application form(s), sketch of plans, report, pictures and construction details are all required for the approval process and may need to be considered by all levels of government depending on the type of work proposed. Professional advice and consultation is recommended.
- ✚ Approval time may vary, so apply 1 year in advance prior to development on your property.



Vegetation Selection and Landscaping:

- ✚ Slope of land: a slope of 1:5 or lower is ideal when considering adding/removing soil and grading the land. This gradient is effective for preventing erosion.
- ✚ Select quick establishing, local plants and refer to a native plant or shoreline vegetation book as a reference.
- ✚ If approval from the municipality or county has been granted, vegetative cuttings from shrubs and trees can be collected in the fall and soaked in a cool, dark place over the winter. These cuttings can be planted in the spring.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Many individuals offered their time and expertise at this event, and were essential in making the event a success:

Sheldon Helbert, Senior Environmental Scientist – EBA Engineering Consultants, Ltd
Muhammad Aziz, Water Approvals – Alberta Environment
Doug Jeremy, Water Approvals – Alberta Environment
Kelly Aldridge, Chair – Wabamun Watershed Management Council

In addition, the host property for the naturalization session belonged to Mr. Doug Aldridge and Mr. Kelly Aldridge, with planned naturalization activities scheduled to continue in 2010.

RESOURCES PROVIDED

Additional resources were provided during the information session. These included:

- WWMC brochures (view at www.wwmc.ca)
- Alberta Conservation Association book – Caring for Shoreline Properties
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada booklets – The Shore Primer, The Dock Primer, The Fish Habitat Primer
- FAN information on the Living by Water program
- Various wetland ecology and western Canada plant reference books
- Reference for shoreline modification – A Beginners Guide to Shoreline Ecological Restoration, prepared by Sheldon Helbert
- ACT compiled list of local suppliers for native plant species
- One Simple Act for the Lake Commitment Cards

