

Lake Wise Info Sheet



Shoreland Best Management Practices for Lake-friendly Living.

Benefits

-  Water Quality
-  Wildlife Habitat
-  Protection & Resiliency

State agencies & programs that support lakeshore conservation:

- VT Department of Taxes Current Use Program
- VT DEC Clean Water Initiative & Water Source Protection Programs
- VT Fish & Wildlife Habitat Protection Program
- VT Dept. of Forests, Parks, & Recreation County Forester Program

Related Info Sheets:

- Lakeshore Buffers
- Low Impact Lakeshore Development
- Lake-friendly Yard Maintenance

CONSERVE & PROTECT LAKESHORES

Living shorelands for long-term lake health



Description.

There are many ways to protect and conserve your land to meet environmental, financial, and family goals. Protecting the natural conditions of your shoreland ensures the long-term health and resiliency of your lake while benefitting your family, lake community, and future generations.




Conservation ensures your efforts to protect, restore, and enhance your lakeshore will continue into the future.

Applicability.

For lakeshore landowners that want to protect the ecological integrity of their land in perpetuity. Conserving land does not necessarily mean giving up landowner rights. There are many land management options and conservation techniques including the development of a voluntary land management plan and engaging in a legally binding conservation easement.

How to.

Document and communicate your vision. Take the time to clearly define your values, goals, and objectives for conservation whether the property will remain in the family, be sold at a future date, or become part of a larger preservation project.

-  Consider the property in its entirety and plan for individual goals. Balance your development goals with ecological impact.
-  Be specific and clear about what you want to achieve. Remember that “preserving the natural uneven ground, native vegetation, and duff later of a 100’ vegetated buffer” is more specific than “preserving the natural beauty of the lakeshore.”
-  Take the time to share your ideas early on with the people who will be affected by your choices – family members, neighbors, conservation groups. Their input can provide valuable insight, gain support, and avoid pitfalls.



VT Lake Wise Program

VERMONT

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT DIVISION



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Lakeshore conservation benefits people of all ages who enjoy the beauty and recreation that lakes offer.

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How to. Ensure the longevity of your plan.

- ☀ **Conservation easements** are voluntary legal agreements between landowners and a land trust or government agency to regulate future development while retaining ownership. Easements may be donated or sold. There can be tax advantages associated with this type of agreement.
- ☀ **Family trusts, deeds, and wills** can be used to incorporate conservation goals. In most cases, these are not permanent restrictions and can be altered by future landowners.
- ☀ **Develop a land management plan** and work with your county forester or a land manager to learn about your land and management opportunities, such as the **Forest Stewardship Program (FSP)** to manage for timber, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, recreational opportunities, and many other benefits.
- ☀ **Sell or donate your land** to a conservation organization at fair market value or as a bargain sale. Some conservation groups are willing to purchase land if it provides significant benefits to wildlife habitat, recreation, water quality, or scenic preservation.

Benefits of conserving your lakeshore.

Maintains naturally vegetated and stable shores essential for protecting lake water quality, ecosystems, and resiliency.

Supports critical ecological functions of soil stability, water filtration, and nutrient cycling now and in the future.

Protects biodiversity hotspots and favorite places from development and destruction.

Helps your community by protecting water, wildlife, and places that benefit well being.

Can increase property values, lower property taxes, encourage more efficient development, and reduce the need for water filtration facilities.

Partnerships & Opportunities in Vermont...

- 💧 **Conserve Wildlife Habitat** - USFWS Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program; VT Fish & Wildlife EQIP for Wildlife Habitat
- 💧 **Manage Forests** - US Forest Service Forest Stewardship Program, VT Dept of Forests, Parks, & Recreation County Forester Program
- 💧 **Conserve Land** - The Nature Conservancy, Vermont Land Trust, The Vermont Community Foundation, Find a local land trust
- 💧 **For Farmers** - NRCS Conservation and Incentive Programs

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