



# Re-vegetation

## Establishing Vegetative Cover

Lake friendly living  
means using lakeshore  
BEST MANAGEMENT  
PRACTICES

### BMP

Re-vegetation: Acceptable best management practice for addressing new cleared area and impervious surface under the Shoreland Protection Act (Chapter 49A of Title 10, § 1441 *et seq.*).

### LAKE BENEFITS

Natural plant communities growing along a lakeshore provide erosion control, bank stability, and wildlife habitat. Well distributed vegetation, including the duff layer, provide for bank stability and offer greater resilience to flood damage and ice damage. Vegetative cover provides water quality benefits by filtering stormwater pollutants from upslope erosion and intercepting and storing precipitation. These natural communities are also vital for wildlife and aquatic habitat.

### MATERIALS

Depending on method employed, can include flagging, stakes, or other temporary demarcation. Native plantings, planting list, planting soil, mulch, shovel/spade.

#### Description:

Re-vegetation is a best management practice (BMP) that can be proposed as part of a Shoreland Permit application for the establishment of vegetative cover within the Protected Shoreland Area, all land located within 250 feet of the mean water level of a lake that is greater than 10 acres in surface area.

**Re-vegetation as a BMP** will be required within the Protected Shoreland Area when:

- Project proposes new cleared area on a parcel which is **currently more than 40% cleared area**; or
- Project proposes new cleared area on a parcel which will **take the parcel beyond 40% cleared area**.

**Re-vegetation as a BMP** may be an option within the Protected Shoreland Area when:

- Project proposes new impervious surface on a parcel which is **currently more than 20% impervious surface**; or
- Project proposes new impervious surface on a parcel which will **take the parcel beyond 20% impervious surface**; or
- Project location will be on a **slope of 20% or more**.

#### Next Steps

##### (1) Identify the area proposed for re-vegetation:

This area shall be **equivalent or greater in size** and should be at the same distance or closer to the lake than the proposed new cleared area. Preferred re-vegetation locations include areas **contiguous with existing vegetative cover** and areas along, or in close proximity to, **the immediate shoreline**. If you are proposing **re-vegetation to mitigate for stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces or for a steep project slope**, you must demonstrate that (a) new vegetative cover will manage, treat, and control erosion due to stormwater runoff from that portion of impervious surface that exceeds 20 percent of the protected shoreland area; or (b) new vegetative cover will provide for a stable slope for the project such that there will be minimal erosion and minimal negative impacts to water quality, respectively.

#### Vegetative Cover:

Mixed vegetation consisting of trees, shrubs, groundcover, and duff, as defined under the Shoreland Protection Act. Grass lawns are not considered areas of vegetative cover.



A no-mow zone establishes the foundation of vegetative cover. After a period of time, it can create a lush forest groundcover.



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### (2) Select method for re-vegetation:

Re-vegetation methods include:

- (a) **Establishment of a no-mow zone** — see example below and for more details see [Establishing No-Mow Zones](#).
- (b) **Development of a re-vegetation planting plan** — see example below and for more details see [Planting and Maintaining Vegetation Areas](#) as well as [Live Staking Vegetation](#).

#### (a) Establishment of a No-Mow Zone

**Demarcate** the area that has been selected for re-vegetation, as referenced in your approved shoreland permit application. **Stop mowing/maintaining** the area. A No-Mow Zone allows native plants to colonize the area. Over time, natural succession will allow the area to return to vegetative cover consisting of a mix of trees, shrubs, saplings, and groundcover, including duff that is beneficial to the lake and shoreland. As an option, planting a few of your favorite native species in this area, such as blueberry bushes, dogwoods, flowering viburnums, or desirable tree species is an great way to jumpstart re-vegetation.

#### (b) Development of a Re-Vegetation Planting Plan

**Demarcate** the area that has been selected for re-vegetation, as referenced in your approved shoreland permit application. **Prepare a planting plan** for the area. You can prepare a planting plan independently or in cooperation with your local nursery. If you work with your local nursery to develop your plan, it is best to ensure that only native plants common to your lake or area of the state are selected. A planting plan is a method that will jumpstart the establishment of vegetative cover and allows you to select some of your favorite native species common to your lakeshore. The planting plan should incorporate a mix of woody vegetation, including both trees and low growing vegetation native to the area. The area covered by the planting plan must not be mowed with the aim of returning the area to vegetative cover over time.

#### Planting Plan Resource

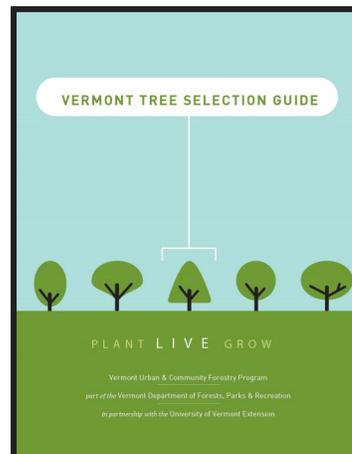
[Vermont Tree Selection Guide](#) — [vtcommunityforestry.org/sites/default/files/pictures/vmtree\\_guide.pdf](http://vtcommunityforestry.org/sites/default/files/pictures/vmtree_guide.pdf)



A recently established no-mow zone immediately along the shoreline. As natural succession occurs, this shoreline will see an increase in bank stability and habitat value, both aquatic and terrestrial.



A recently established no-mow zone along a steep slope. Tree root systems are excellent at stabilizing steep slopes and may be more cost effective than designing and installing a wall.



This tree selection guide provides guidance on how to identify the right tree for the right place. A range of species selection criteria can allow a landowner to identify what would be best for a re-vegetation planting plan.

