

RESIDENTS WHO OWN WATERFRONT PROPERTY HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO MAINTAIN AND PROTECT THE NATURAL SHORELINE, IN ORDER TO SAFEGUARD THE HEALTH OF OUR LOCAL WATER BODIES.

LAC LA BICHE COUNTY IS HOME TO NUMEROUS LAKES AND WATER BODIES.

These water bodies are the source of the County's drinking water, home to many species of flora and fauna and the site of countless recreational activities.

Concerned about activities that are impacting local shorelines? Call Lac La Biche County's Planning & Development department at 780-623-1747.



Lac La Biche County
welcoming by nature.

PROTECT OUR SHORELINES AND WATER BODIES

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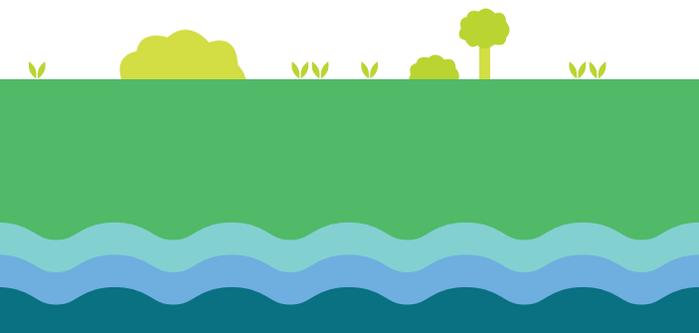
Environmental Reserves and riparian areas protect our water bodies.

RIPARIAN AREAS ARE THE LANDS DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO LAKES, RIVERS, STREAMS AND WETLANDS.

Typically you'll see aquatic plants and grass, shrubs and trees that thrive in a water-rich environment located on riparian areas along shorelines. Riparian vegetation is vital to the health of our lakes and rivers. This vegetation traps sediment that would otherwise enter the lake or river and affect water quality. It reduces erosion and flooding. Riparian vegetation maintains and improves water quality by diluting and absorbing toxins and excess nutrients entering the system through water run-off. Finally, riparian vegetation is home to a diverse array of insects and animals. Riparian areas can be designated as Environmental Reserves by the municipality, meaning they must be left in their natural states to protect the adjacent water bodies.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Many landowners may wish to make changes to the shorelines on their properties. Common unauthorized activities include adding structures, clearing vegetation, adding fill, sand or rocks, cleaning or harrowing the beach, or building retaining walls. These unauthorized activities on municipal lands have a negative impact on our water bodies' delicate ecosystems. Leaving the shoreline in its natural state is the best way to protect our local water bodies.



SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS AND ALTERNATIVES		
ACTIVITY	IMPACT	ALTERNATIVE
<p>INFILLING Adding fill to the shoreline to create beaches and docks or to extend the property.</p>	<p>Infilling destroys fish spawning and rearing habitat and changes the underwater landscape by causing sediment to settle into deeper offshore areas. In addition, infilling alters natural shoreline currents which can increase erosion or flooding downstream.</p>	<p>Maintain or restore the shoreline to its natural state by protecting or replanting natural vegetation. Some riparian vegetation common to Alberta are Saskatoon bushes, balsam poplar trees and reed canary grass. Use public beaches or boat launches. Focus landscaping upland from the shoreline and riparian areas.</p>
<p>INSTALLATION OF RETAINING WALLS AND OTHER STRUCTURES Installing retaining walls to landscape the shoreline, or building fire pits, gazebos or other structures.</p>	<p>Retaining walls actually increase erosion downstream by altering natural shoreline currents and hardening the natural shoreline. Riparian vegetation absorbs wave energy, reducing erosion. Retaining walls do the opposite. Structures remove vegetation, which increases erosion and reduces the riparian area's ability to act as a buffer.</p>	<p>Protect or replant native vegetation that naturally stabilizes the shoreline. Remove all structures and leave the shoreline in its natural state.</p>
<p>DESTROYING OR REMOVING RIPARIAN VEGETATION Removing riparian or aquatic vegetation to create beaches, extend property, widen the view, or to clean up the lawn along the shoreline.</p>	<p>Without riparian vegetation, bank stability is reduced and erosion will increase. Biodiversity along the shoreline is lost, along with food and habitat for fish and wildlife. Water run-off enters the lake without dilution, increasing toxins, sediment and excess nutrients in the water.</p>	<p>Protect or replant native vegetation. Dispose of yard waste at one of the County's landfills or transfer sites, not along the shoreline.</p>
<p>INTRODUCING NUTRIENTS AND TOXIC RUNOFF Introducing excess nutrients (excess nitrogen and phosphorus cause algae blooms) and toxins to water bodies from leaking septic systems, the use of fertilizers, animal waste from grazing livestock and fuel spills.</p>	<p>Toxins and excess nutrients degrade water quality, kill fish and increase algae blooms.</p>	<p>Maintain and upgrade septic systems as necessary. Refrain from using fertilizers and herbicides and reduce lawn watering. Keep livestock as far away as possible from shoreline areas.</p>