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Understanding, Living With,  
& Controlling

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# Shoreline Erosion

A Guidebook for Shoreline Property Owners

*Third Edition*



## Acknowledgments

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The Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council is the voice for Northern Michigan's waters. We are dedicated to protecting our lakes, streams, wetlands, and ground water through respected advocacy, innovative education, technically sound water quality monitoring, and thorough research. We achieve our mission by empowering others and we believe in the capacity to make a difference. We work locally, regionally, and throughout the Great Lakes Basin. We were formed in 1979 and have a history of working closely with lake associations and shoreline property owners on water resource management issues.

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[www.jfnfoundation.org](http://www.jfnfoundation.org)

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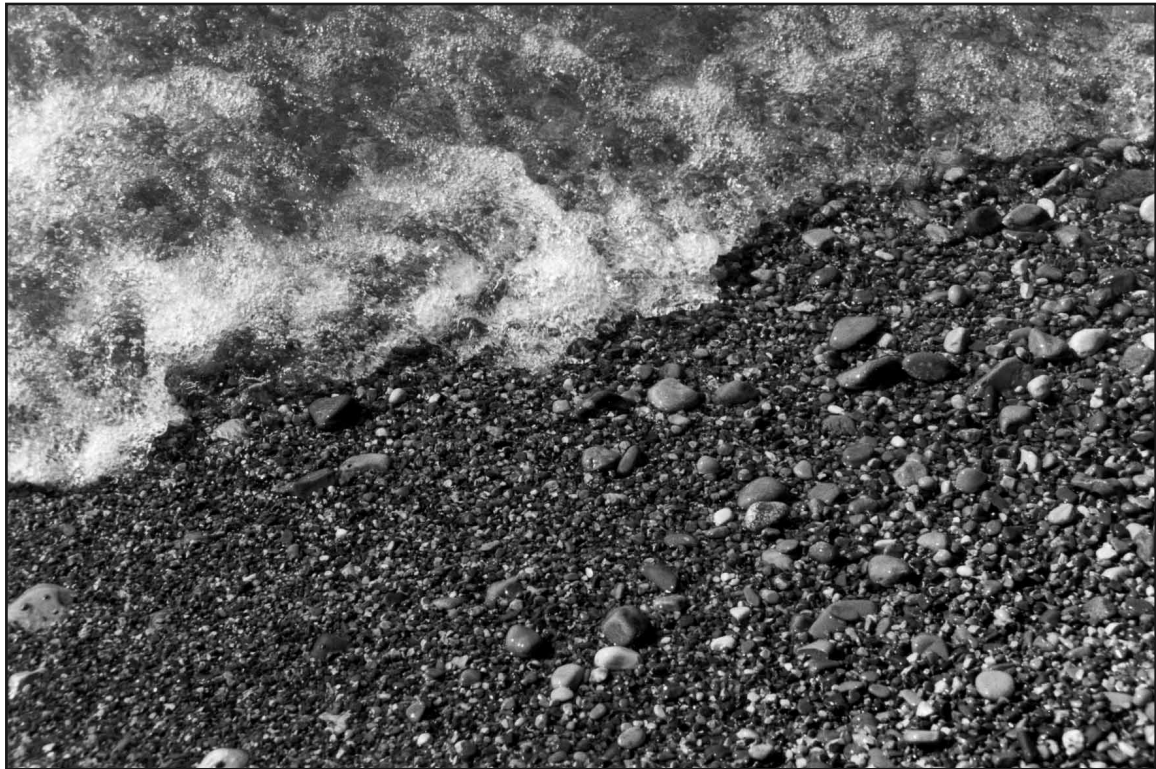
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# Section One

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## *Introduction to Shoreline Erosion*



*Waves gradually expend their energy on this sloping gravel shoreline helping to protect shoreline soils against erosion.*

Shorelines do not exist in an unchanging condition... Unfortunately, nature's dynamic equilibrium and human efforts to control it are often a poor mix.

## Section One: *Introduction to Shoreline Erosion*

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Erosion is the wearing away of the land surface by the action of wind, water, ice, or gravity. Sedimentation is the deposition of eroded soils in waterways or other locations.

Shorelines do not exist in an unchanging condition. Erosion and the transport and deposition of sediments are natural processes along shorelines. There is often a net balance between the amount of shoreline eroded and the amount of new shoreline created by sedimentation – a condition known as dynamic equilibrium.

Natural erosional processes typically proceed very slowly, on a geologic rather than a human time scale. The plants and animals that live along the shoreline can adjust to these slow changes, maintaining a stable, healthy, productive ecosystem. In fact, some species have adapted to live in erosional areas. For example, bank swallows nest in steep, eroding bluffs and wood turtles lay their eggs in eroding sandy streambanks. Studies have revealed that preventing natural shoreline processes can upset overall ecosystem stability. Trying to eliminate all shoreline change is like trying to still the very waves and currents that cause it.

Human activities or disturbance along shorelines and throughout watersheds can bring about changes that greatly accelerate the natural erosional process, often with profound environmental or economic impacts. Accelerated erosion can lower the stability and productivity of aquatic habitats and may have serious implications for landowners.

Large scale efforts to control accelerated soil erosion and sedimentation, from both inland and shoreline sources, have been ongoing by a variety of state and federal agencies since the dust bowl conditions of the 1930's. In the past, much of the focus of shoreline erosion and its control has been on the coastlines of the oceans and the Great Lakes, where erosion has the potential to be most severe and have catastrophic consequences. The approach has often been one of

pure structural engineering, without considering the influence of, or impact to, ecological systems.

Information pertaining specifically to inland lakes and streams has been slow to develop, has been largely unavailable to shoreline property owners in an understandable form, and has generally not taken an ecosystem approach. As a result, some accelerated erosion problems have gone unnoticed or unchecked, and many erosion control projects which have been constructed are either inappropriate or ineffective for inland waters.

The trend in recent decades for shoreline living, coupled with shoreline development patterns, has contributed to accelerated erosion. Natural shoreline erosion is also now perceived as a problem, whereas on previously undeveloped shorelines subtle changes

in shoreline configuration were rarely noticed and not considered a situation that needed controlling. Some lakeshore developments do away with the natural shoreline in favor of bulkheads or other erosion control structures as a matter of course. Quite often these structures are not needed.



*Emergent marsh plants, such as this hardstem bulrush (Scirpus acutus), have disappeared in many areas following shoreline development, exposing the shore to greater erosive forces.*

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## Section One: *Introduction to Shoreline Erosion*

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Many people in our society do not accept the moveable nature of shoreline property, but rather seem to expect that shorelines will be permanently fixed in perpetuity and recorded as such in land titles, similar to other surveyed property boundaries. Unfortunately, nature's dynamic equilibrium and human expectations as well as our efforts to control it are often a poor mix.

This guidebook focuses on the erosion and sedimentation caused by the energy of streams and inland lakes acting on their shorelines. Its goal is not to help shoreline property owners make their shoreline unchanging, but rather to inform about shoreline processes and help guide actions to control nature in a way that is not utterly futile or environmentally harmful. It attempts to present an unbiased overview of the pros and cons of different methods. However, it seems clear to Watershed Council staff that one method, biotechnical erosion control, provides the most cost-effective, environmentally friendly and aesthetically appealing alternative to controlling accelerated shoreline erosion.

Understanding shoreline erosion and developing effective protection strategies is a complex subject. The information in this guidebook is the result of an extensive literature search, discussions with experts on this topic, and the experience of the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council staff with conditions and residents of northern Michigan lakes and streams. Research on this project revealed that there is no overall recipe for a successful erosion control project, and there are many contradicting pieces of advice.

New methods and refinements of old methods are constantly being developed. Each site involves a unique set of circumstances and generally requires a customized solution.

Even though there have been numerous studies and publications on this topic, there are no manuals with generic plans for shoreline protection projects which are guaranteed to work. However, by utilizing the information contained in this guidebook and following an organized plan to assess problems and evaluate the pros and cons of potential solutions, the likelihood of choosing an appropriate and successful action will be improved.

# Section Two

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## *Understanding Shorelines and Shoreline Erosion*

Beaches have been called one of the most effective defense structures in the world. Sand or gravel beaches can resist forces that tear apart rigid structures after a few seasons.



*Excessive sand bedload plagues many trout streams.*



## Section Two: Understanding Shorelines and Shoreline Erosion

Shorelines are areas of unending conflict between the land and the natural forces of wind, waves, gravity, and currents. There is a connection between the shoreline and the adjacent water body. What happens in the water affects what happens on land, and vice versa. It is important to understand this relationship in order to manage erosion and sedimentation problems.

### Shoreline Types

Among the most important factors influencing shoreline erosion on both lakes and streams are the features of the shoreline, particularly the materials composing the shoreline and the type of shoreline formation.

### MATERIALS

Shoreline materials are derived from adjacent surface sediments, deterioration of rock cliffs, sediments transported long distances and deposited by flowing water, the disintegration of shells, and the production of organic soil (a soil composed of partially decomposed plant materials) in marshes and other wetlands.

The composition of the land surface in the Great Lakes basin has been modified by a series of glaciations over the last million years, the last of which ended 10 to 12 thousand years ago. In addition, various postglacial stages of the Great Lakes modified many areas of the landscape. As a result, most areas are covered by erodible deposits ranging from pure sand to pure clay to a mixture of different soil particles called till. However, bedrock outcrops are found in some areas. Nearly all the natural lakes in the Great Lakes basin were formed by glacial action. Therefore, glacial deposits are the most available source of shoreline materials.

The erodibility of a shoreline is a function of the amount of erosive energy reaching the shore versus the resistance of the shore material. There are six basic types of shoreline materials: rock, gravel, sand, silt, clay, and organic material. Each type has a different ability to resist erosion. **Figure 1** portrays the erodibility of five of the different types of shoreline materials by current velocity.

Rocks and gravel are heaviest, and may require large amounts of energy to move. Sand, silt, and organic

materials (not shown in figure) are the most erodible. Clay is not very erodible because the tiny particles stick to one another (termed cohesiveness). The root systems of woody vegetation greatly augment the strength of all types of soils.

### FORMATIONS

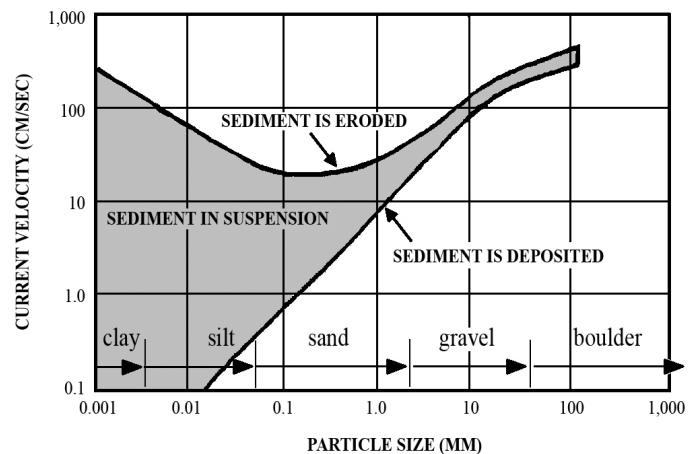
There are four basic forms of shorelines on both lakes and streams: 1) cliffs and bluffs, 2) gently sloping plains and beaches, 3) dunes, and 4) wetlands. A combination of these may occur at a single location.

### Cliffs and Bluffs

Cliffs and bluffs are high, steep banks at the water's edge. Cliffs are primarily composed of rock, while bluffs are composed of unconsolidated materials.

The rock types composing cliffs may have originated from sediments deposited on the beds of ancient seas (i.e., sedimentary rocks such as limestone or sandstone), or rocks forged in the intense heat of the earth (i.e., metamorphic or igneous rocks like quartzite or granite). Although all rock cliffs are relatively resistant to rapid erosion, sedimentary rocks are most erodible.

The erodibility of bluffs is variable, depending on their particular physical characteristics. Bluffs may consist of the same materials throughout (such as sand or silt), a mixture of different materials deposited by glaciers (glacial till), or distinct layers of different materials.



**Figure 1:** Erodibility of different shoreline materials by streamflow.

## Section Two: *Understanding Shorelines and Shoreline Erosion*

Bluffs are most susceptible to erosion when the waves or currents erode the base (toe) of the slope. The steeper the face of the bluff, the more susceptible it is to erosion. High bluffs (over 20 feet) are more likely to experience erosion problems than low bluffs due to the weight of the bluff itself and the potential energy of runoff flowing down the bluff face. Steep, high bluffs can collapse suddenly in a landslide (also known as mass wasting, bluff slumping, falls, or debris flows) due to soil instability or human alteration.

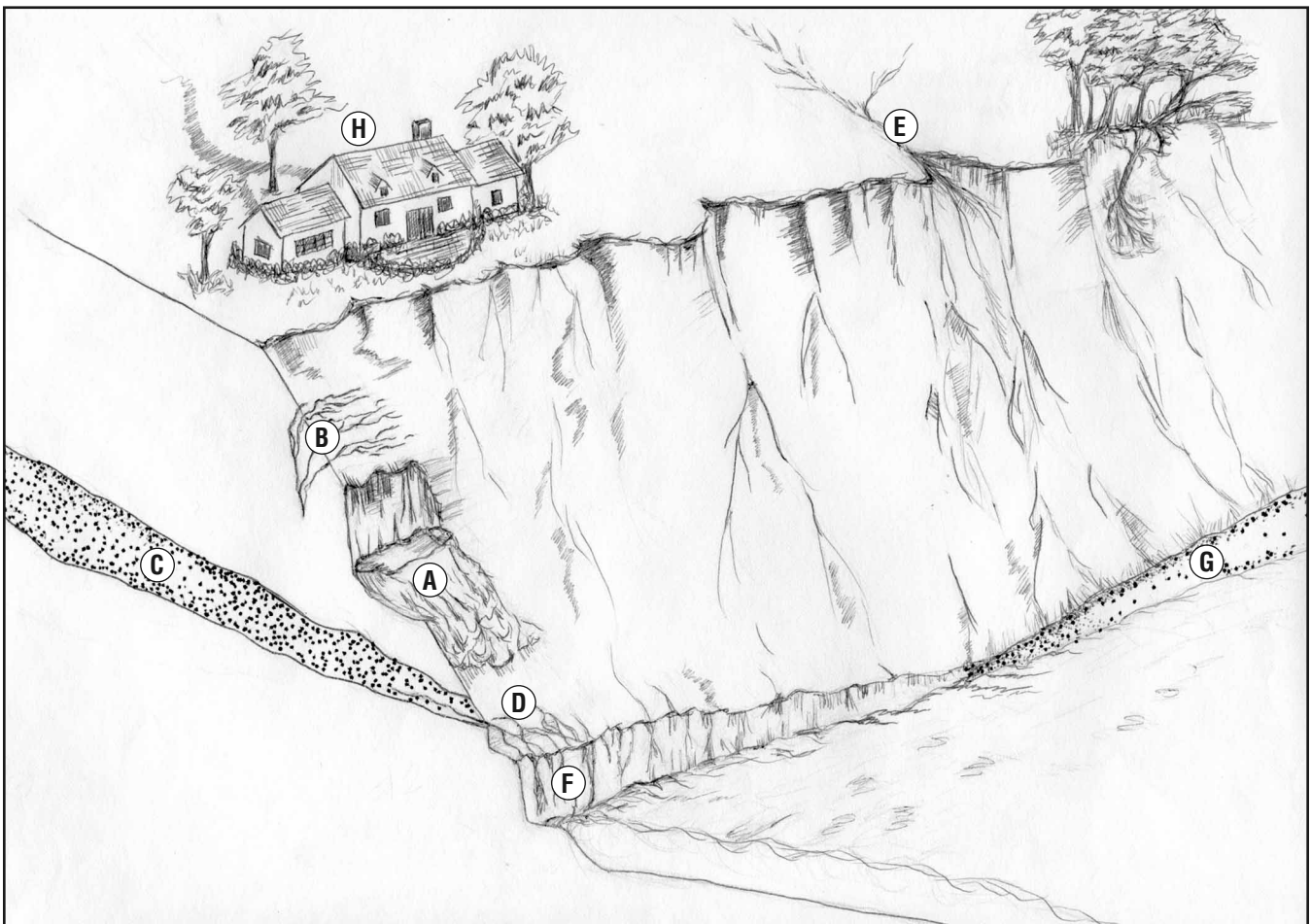
The discharge of ground water makes any area of the land surface more erosion-prone because it moves soil particles away from the point of discharge. However, ground water discharge from bluffs presents a more serious threat to soil stability than in flatter areas. This is especially true when layers of different soils are present because the discharge of ground water can be concentrated in a small area, intensifying its

effect. **Figure 2** shows a conceptual drawing of a shoreline bluff.

### Plains and Beaches

Sloping plains and beaches are the most common shoreline forms. They are composed of loose sediments, ranging from silt to boulders, which slope gently up to and away from the water's edge. A beach is the zone of sediment that extends from the low water line to the beginning of permanent vegetation. Most of the beach is dry during calm weather. During windy weather on lakes and some large rivers, waves approach from offshore, breaking and surging up the face of the beach. Beaches are the product of erosive forces, sediment supply and movement, and the near-shore land profile.

Beaches have been called one of the most effective defense structures in the world. Sand or gravel beaches can resist forces that tear apart rigid structures after a



**Figure 2:** A conceptual drawing of a shoreline bluff. A—bluff slump, B—stress cracks, C—sand layer, D—seepage, E—overland erosion and gully, F—eroding toe, G—toe partially protected by beach, H—heavy structure in disturbed area.

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## Section Two: *Understanding Shorelines and Shoreline Erosion*

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few seasons. Sand is the most common beach material. It is the only sediment which can build lakeward as well as erode landward. Shoreline recession rates are usually low or nonexistent wherever there is a wide beach.

### Dunes

A dune is a hill or mound of loose, wind-blown material, usually sand. Although some dunes could also be considered bluffs, bluffs typically have steeper sides than are possible with sand dunes. Dunes are normally associated with oceans and the Great Lakes, but on some large inland water bodies wind may blow beach sand into small, low dunes. Dunes are harsh environments due to rapid sand movement, wide temperature fluctuations, drought, and low nutrient levels. The sparse vegetation, which helps to build and stabilize dunes by slowing wind velocity and trapping windblown sediment, can be damaged by excessive foot traffic or other types of disturbance. If vegetation disappears, the dune can be blown away, eliminating an important shoreline feature and a potential source of sand for beach nourishment.

### Wetlands

Wetlands usually occur in combination with a low plain. They develop in areas where the water table is high enough during the growing season that the vegetation community is dominated by plant species tolerant of wet soil conditions. Some wetlands develop in areas protected from wave action, such as by an offshore bar. If conditions change so that waves attack this type of wetland, rapid erosion and wetland loss may result. Other types of wetlands develop in front of sand beaches in the presence of wave activity and nearly continuous inundation. These wetlands, often vegetated with rushes, function to diminish wave energy on the shore, and trap and hold bottom sediments. Their loss may result in beach erosion.

## Streams and Streambanks

A stream is a body of water flowing in a more or less uniform direction along a path of least resistance from a higher elevation to a lower elevation within

a catchment area or watershed. Some ecologists consider a stream's ecosystem (a functioning system consisting of living organisms interacting with nonliving components) to include its entire watershed. This is because many features and conditions in the watershed influence stream characteristics. These include geology, hydrology, land use, climate, soils, topography, and vegetation. In addition, conditions which occurred in the distant past, such as glacial meltwater and logging, have had lasting effects on stream characteristics.

### WATER FLOW

The water flowing in streams originates from precipitation in the watershed. The water gets into the stream channel by direct precipitation, overland runoff, throughflow (water which flows briefly through the upper layers of the soil), and ground water discharge. Direct precipitation and runoff reach stream channels rapidly, throughflow reaches the channel after a moderate lag time (hours or days), and ground water flow has a long delay (months or even years).

### Watershed Drainage

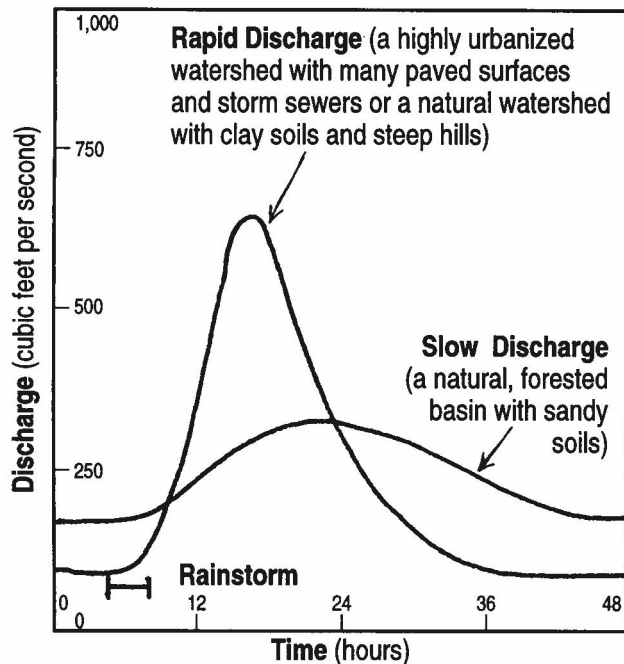
Each watershed is different in the way water moves through it to the stream channel. The way precipitation is routed through the watershed has a great impact on stream level fluctuation, water temperature, and the biological character of streams. In watersheds where the precipitation is drained rapidly, streams typically have higher flood peaks and lower base flows. In watersheds where the precipitation is drained slowly, streams have steadier flows and less extreme flooding.

Ground water flow characteristics depend on the porosity of the soil along with the slope of the water table. This means that watersheds with sandy soils and large elevational differences are most likely to have high amounts of ground water input. One way to illustrate a stream's flow regime is to plot the discharge over time. This is called a hydrograph. **Figure 3** compares the hydrograph of streams in watersheds with rapid and slow drainages.

## Section Two: *Understanding Shorelines and Shoreline Erosion*

### Physics of Stream Flow

To properly manage streams, it is essential to understand the basic concepts of how water moves through channels. This is a complex topic. In fact, much of our knowledge of these concepts comes from carefully controlled laboratory studies, which may have



**Figure 3:** Idealized hydrograph of two similarly sized streams in watersheds with fast and slow discharge following a rainstorm.

limited applicability to field situations. However, better understanding and application of these concepts can be achieved by careful observation of the stream under a variety of conditions.

### Velocity

Given a steady discharge volume, the velocity of the water in a stream may change over the length of the stream in response to different channel characteristics. A narrow, deep, evenly contoured section of channel is likely to have greater velocity than a section with a wide, shallow, convoluted streambed. Velocity is greatest in areas with steeper streambed slope (called gradient and usually measured in feet of elevation drop per mile of stream channel). A smooth section of stream channel will have greater velocity than one with rough surfaces. Rough surfaces may be due to conditions such as a large amount of woody debris or

many large boulders. The velocity of a stream can be classified into three flow categories:

- 1) Subcritical (or tranquil) flow - This is found in relatively deep, low velocity (slow) streams. If externally generated waves (such as those created by a rock thrown into the water) can travel upstream, then subcritical flow is present. The flow in most streams is subcritical.
- 2) Critical flow - This occurs at the point where the force of the moving water is equal to the force of gravity. Externally generated waves travelling upstream remain stationary over the bottom.
- 3) Supercritical (or rapid) flow - An area of high velocity found in rapids or where water pours over ledges. Externally generated waves travelling in an upstream direction will actually be swept downstream relative to the bottom. Supercritical flow may produce internally generated standing waves caused by a "rebound" of turbulent water. Standing waves are different than externally generated waves.

### Power

Mechanically speaking, power is defined as the rate at which work is done. In the case of a stream, power is evident as the ability of the stream to erode its bed and banks and transport sediment. Examples of stream power would be a stream's ability to transport one cubic yard of sand an average of 10 feet downstream in a day (low power) or move large boulders during a flood (high power). The higher the stream's velocity, the greater its power.

Stream power can be subdivided into two components: total stream power and specific stream power. Total stream power is the product of the combination of channel gradient and total discharge. Specific stream power expresses stream power per unit of streambed area. Small streams with a steep gradient have high specific stream power, but low total power. Their banks might erode, but they probably will not undermine a house located some distance away in the foreseeable future. On the other hand, large rivers in flat terrain have low specific power but high total stream power. Their current may not usually sweep you off your feet, but they can move large amounts of sediment and meander large distances over the course of a lifetime.

## Section Two: Understanding Shorelines and Shoreline Erosion

### Shear Forces

Water velocity is not evenly distributed throughout a stream channel. Highest velocities are usually found more or less in the centers of channels because of frictional drag on the channel margins. However, bends in the stream, and rocks, logs, and other objects can deflect water and alter current velocities. When there is a large difference in water velocity across the stream channel, shear forces (relatively swiftly moving water masses sliding past others of slower speed) are induced. The shear forces create turbulence (swirling flow) which exerts erosive force on the stream banks and beds. In areas of great turbulence, a current contrary to the main flow (called an eddy) may develop.

The location of shear forces are greatly influenced by channel shape. In narrow, deep stream channels, shear forces are greatest on the channel sides. In wide shallow channels, shear forces are greatest on the streambed. The higher the shear force, the greater the erosion potential. Figure 4 shows examples of the distribution of shear force in several types of stream channels.

### SEDIMENT TRANSPORT

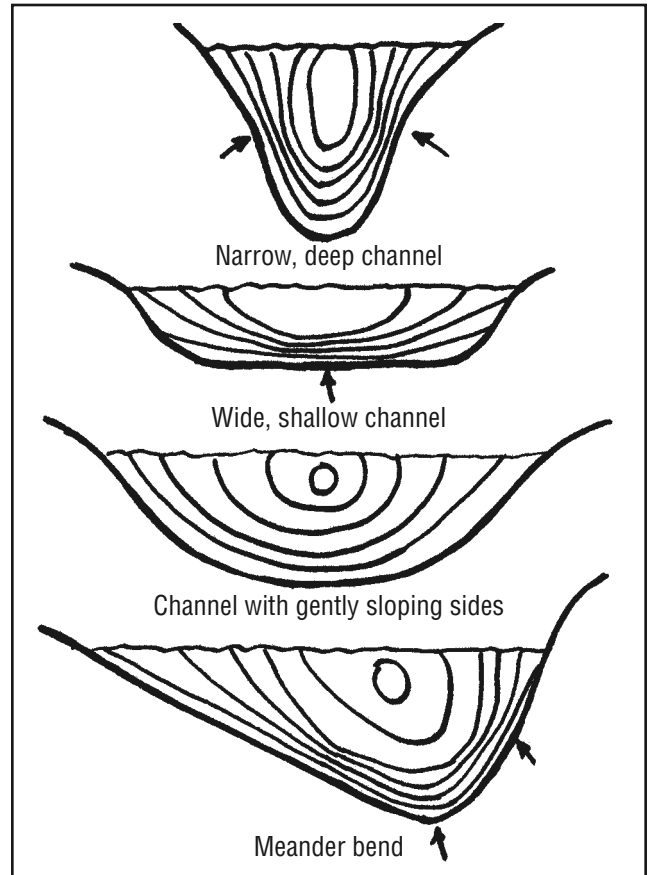
All streams transport sediment from the headwaters to the mouth. This occurs as suspended sediment and bedload.

#### Suspended Sediment

Suspended sediment usually consists of light organic material or tiny particles of silt and clay carried in the water column by turbulent streamflow. If the suspended sediment levels are high enough, the water may appear muddy. The amount of suspended sediment can be measured relatively easily by filtering a known volume of water and weighing the material trapped by the filter.

#### Bedload

Bedload consists of larger or heavier sediment particles which are transported by rolling, sliding, or bouncing along the streambed. Even though the stream water may appear crystal-clear, excessive bedload (usually sand) may be present which can decrease bank stability and degrade aquatic habitat. It is difficult to quantify the amount of bedload without specialized equipment and detailed studies.



**Figure 4:** Distribution of shear forces in several types of stream channels. Lines show areas of equal current velocity, with highest velocity always near the center of the channel. Arrows indicate areas of greatest shear force and turbulence.

The term for sediment deposited by a stream is alluvium. Channels which are composed of sediments originally deposited by the river are termed alluvial channels. This is in contrast to streams which flow through bedrock channels.

#### Balance of Erosion and Deposition

Although there is almost always change occurring within stream channels (erosion in some areas and deposition in others), a stream is considered well balanced (or stable) if the following three conditions are present:

1. The power of the water and the resistance of the channel are in equilibrium;
2. The streambed remains at a relatively constant elevation; and
3. The material swept downstream by the current is replaced by an equal amount of material carried from upstream.

## Section Two: *Understanding Shorelines and Shoreline Erosion*

When the equilibrium of a stream is upset, the stream will compensate in some way to bring the system back into balance. The basic factors which upset stream equilibrium are changes in water supply or discharge volume; sediment input or sediment load; channel width, depth, slope, and roughness; water velocity; and distribution of shear forces. The most common compensating actions are streambank erosion, bed scouring or incising, and buildup of bed and banks.

In cases where the streambed is being scoured, the banks become steeper. This may cause them to lose their base of support and begin the erosion process. When streambeds buildup due to erosion and sedimentation upstream, the channel volume may be decreased. Subsequent flood events may exceed the channel capacity, and the power of the flood waters may erode the banks.

### ANATOMY OF A STREAM

The portion of a stream channel that virtually always contains water is termed the low flow or base flow channel. The active (or bankfull) channel is a broader area that contains flowing water frequently enough that it lacks significant vegetation. The floodplain may occupy a very broad area which is occasionally inundated, but which is covered with permanent terrestrial vegetation.

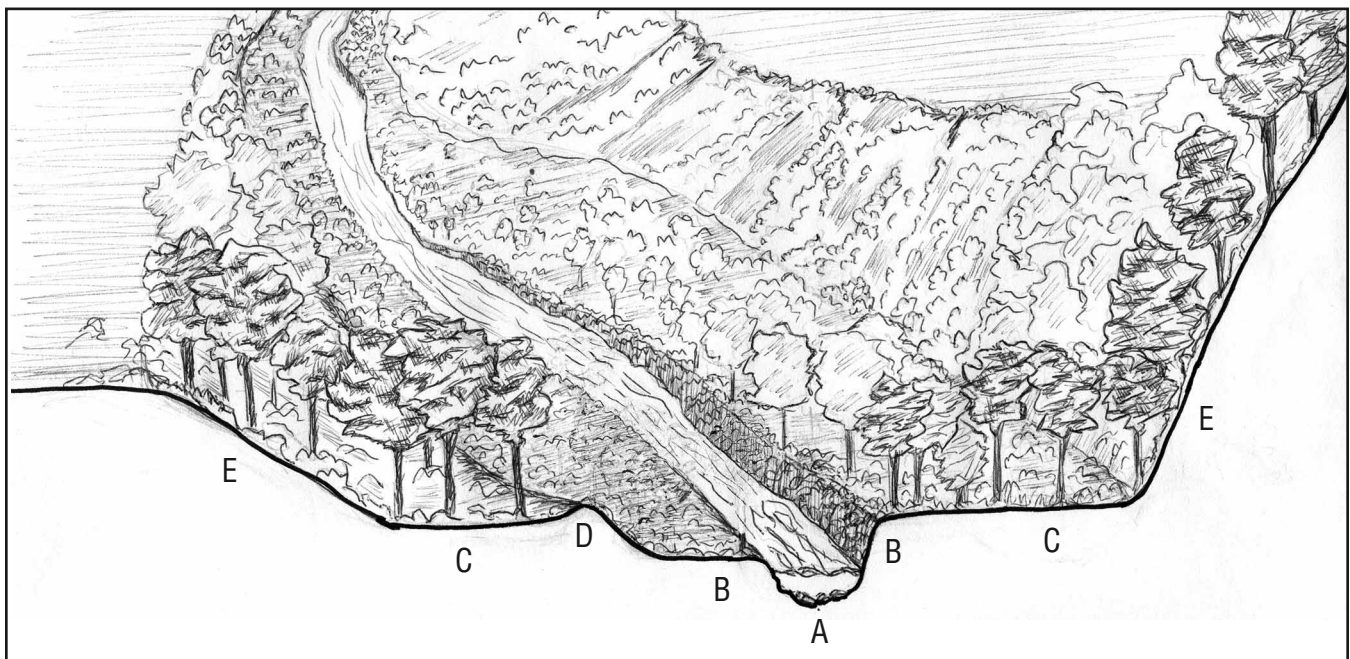
On streams which carry a large amount of suspended sediment, a ridge called a levee may be deposited along the edge of the bankfull channel during flooding. Levees afford some degree of natural flood protection. As a result, artificial levees have been constructed in many areas which lack a natural levee. The size of these stream channel features may differ greatly between streams, depending on watershed characteristics (Figure 5).

### Channel Type

In nature, water flow can never be perfectly uniform within a channel. Instead, the current swings from side to side, exerting unequal erosive forces against the banks. As a result, stream channels which flow through alluvial deposits are almost never straight.

### Sinuuous/Meandering

Some streams can develop a highly sinuous (S-shaped) curving pattern, termed meandering. Meandering typically occurs in broad, flat valleys with a low gradient. When the current flows through a bend in the channel, the portion of the current with highest velocity hugs the outside of the bend. Shear forces and turbulence erode the streambank there. The greatest erosion usually occurs just past the midpoint of the curve. As the main portion of the current then



**Figure 5:** Basic characteristics of a stream channel and valley. A—low flow channel, B—bankfull channel, C—floodplain, D—levee, E—upland.

## Section Two: Understanding Shorelines and Shoreline Erosion

current then swings out and crosses to the next bank, the current along the side of the river which was just eroded slows and sediment is deposited, usually just downstream from the midpoint of the next curve.

This ongoing pattern of erosion and deposition causes meanders to progress slowly downstream year by year. The meanders tend to be spaced at regular intervals—5 to 7 stream widths apart. **Figure 6** shows the pattern of erosion and deposition in meandering streams.

### Braided/Anastomosing

Strongly depositional streams with unstable beds may develop a "braided" pattern with many shifting channels and islands. Braided streams with islands which become stable and vegetated are called anastomosing. **Figure 7** shows the five basic types of stream channels.

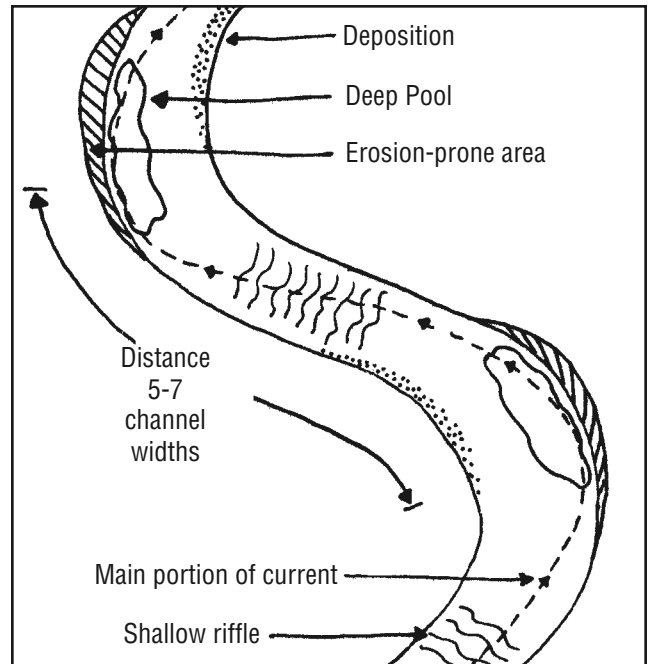
### Riffles and Pools

Some streams form a series of alternating shallow and deep areas along the streambed—a kind of vertical, underwater counterpart of meanders. The shallow areas are known as riffles and the deep areas as pools. Streams with moderate (10 to 30 feet per mile) gradients are most prone to developing alternating riffles and pools. Streams with high gradients (greater than 30 feet per mile) may develop a staircase pattern with abrupt drops over logs and boulders into areas of deep, still water.

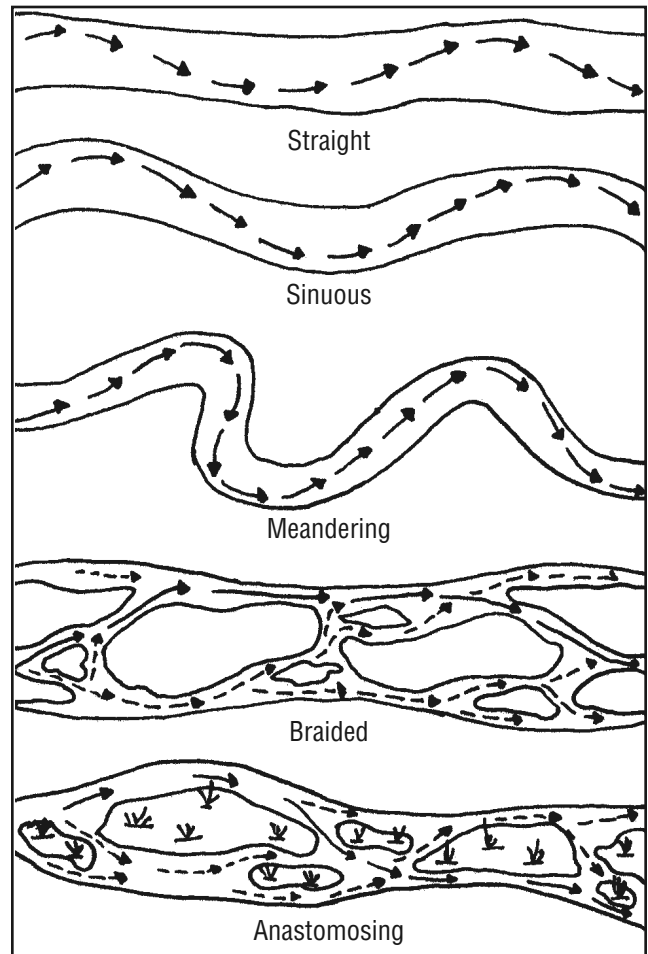
Although the reasons for their formation are not clearly understood, riffles often form where the main portion of the current crosses from one bend to another. In meandering streams, the riffle-pool locations correspond to meander locations and progress downstream with them (**Figure 6**). In streams with nearly straight channels, the riffle-pool sequence develops as the current swings from side to side. However, in nonmeandering streams the riffle-pool sequence does not normally migrate.

### Influence of Streambed Characteristics

When streambeds are composed of sand, the configuration of the bed may change rapidly in response to changes in flow. This can result in downstream



**Figure 6:** Meandering, erosion and deposition, and riffle-pool patterns in streams.



**Figure 7:** The five basic types of stream channels.

## Section Two: *Understanding Shorelines and Shoreline Erosion*

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movement, scouring, or buildup of sediment. Streams with sand beds tend to be wide and shallow. Riffle-pool development does not normally occur in sand bed streams. Streams with channels flowing through silt or clay deposits tend to be narrow and deep. Gravel beds are relatively immobile, and sediment transport usually occurs only during flood events. Riffle-pool sequences occur most commonly in gravel bottom streams.

### Lakeshores

A lake is a body of water isolated from the sea with an area of open, relatively deep water and a wave-swept shore. Lakes are differentiated from ponds, which are shallow (often having vegetation growth reaching the surface throughout) and are not large enough to develop waves larger than ripples.

#### CHANGING SHORELINES

From a human perspective, most natural lakeshores may appear unchanging from year to year, but lakes and lake basins are by no means static and permanent. Compared to rivers, lakes are much more temporary geologic features of the landscape. Most lakes can be expected to become completely filled in by geologic and biologic processes by the time they are several tens of thousands of years old.

Modifications of shore outline and lake depth are ongoing as the result of erosion and sedimentation occurring from both inside and outside the lake. This process is working toward an equilibrium in which the shoreline irregularities are smoothed—headlands washed away and bays filled in with sediments eroded from headlands. However, complete shoreline smoothing is rarely achieved because this process is slower than the overall basin filling process.

#### LAKE CHARACTERISTICS AND EROSION

The rate and extent of erosion are dependent on the size of the lake, the size and direction of waves, the strength and direction of currents, the characteristics of ice, the depth of the water near shore, and the shape and composition of the shoreline. Although these processes are best understood and observed in very large systems like the oceans and the Great Lakes, the same processes occur on inland lakes of all sizes, although on a smaller scale.

### Waves

Wind blowing over water sets the surface into motion and eventually creates waves. Waves can also be created by moving watercraft.

Waves, coupled with the subtle currents (at least compared to those in rivers) they generate, are the primary forces responsible for shaping and modifying lakeshores. In most lake basins, waves are constantly adjusting the shoreline, although the rate of change is usually slow and may not be apparent from year to year.

The physics of waves are quite elaborate. A great many variables influence their characteristics, and textbooks filled with complex equations have been written to describe waves in dozens of different circumstances. However, for the purposes of this guidebook, the discussion of the physical behavior of waves on lakes will be greatly simplified.

#### Wave Characteristics

Waves are typically described by measurements of wave height, wavelength, and wave period. Wave height is the vertical distance between trough (low point) and crest (high point). Wavelength is the distance between successive crests. Wave period is the time it takes two successive wave crests to pass a stationary point. Figure 8 shows the characteristics of waves.

#### Waves From Wind

On inland lakes, the size of waves created by wind depends primarily on two factors: wind speed and fetch (the over-water distance across which the wind blows). Wind duration and water depth also influence wave size, but are major factors only on the oceans and very large lakes. Wave energy is roughly proportional to the size of the wave (specifically to the square of the wave height).

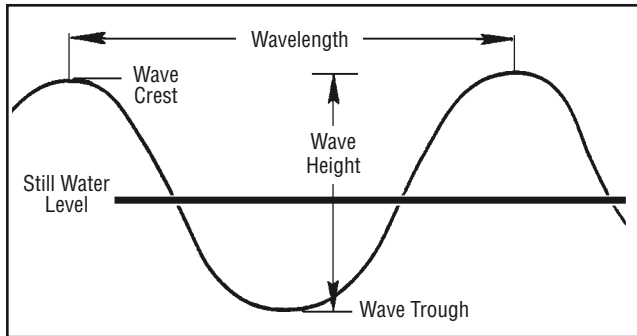
At any given time and location on a lake, waves of many different sizes are present. This is because not all waves start at the same point, but are being created continuously across the water surface. In addition, different waves move at different speeds. When one wave catches up to and becomes superimposed with another, a single wave of greater size than either of



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the original two is briefly created.

**Table 1** shows the average height of the highest one-third of the waves which are generated for different wind speed and fetch conditions in deep water. This is termed significant wave height. The calculation of significant wave height can be a complicated matter, and a number of different methods exist. The information in **Table 1** was derived from monographs presented in **Reference 8**.



**Figure 8:** *The characteristics of waves.*

### Waves From Boats

Much of the power expended in propelling a boat results in the creation of waves. A boat moving through the water is accompanied by at least three pressure disturbances on each side, resulting in several groupings of waves diverging outward from the direction of travel. The size of waves created by boats is a function of the volume of water displaced by the boat and the speed at which the boat is traveling. However, the wave size does not always increase with boat speed. Many boats are designed to skim across the water surface at high speeds (called planing), and therefore displace less water.

Boat-generated waves are of a different physical nature from wind-generated waves and contain more energy than a wind-generated wave of equal size. Wave heights of up to three feet have been reported from large boats operating on inland lakes. The operation of large, high-speed boats on small water bodies can create waves greatly exceeding the size and erosive energy of any occurring naturally. Although the wave train generated by the passage of a single boat is of short duration, intense boating activity can result in nearly constant wave action.

### Water Depth and Waves

As a wave moves through deep water, its basic characteristics do not diminish. However, when the water depth becomes shallower than half the wavelength, the wave motion begins to encounter friction from the bottom. The wave speed slows, with a corresponding decrease in wavelength and a slight increase in height, creating a steeper wave.

The depth at which this usually occurs is often indicated by the formation of ripple marks on the lake bottom (in areas with sandy sediments). When the water depth is less than 1.3 times the wave height, the wave can steepen no further, and it collapses (breaks) in a cascade of foam. Although much energy is lost in this near-shore “surf zone,” diminished waves continue to move shoreward.

As each remnant wave hits the shore, water surges up the face of the beach (termed run-up or swash) and the remaining energy is expended. Run-up distance depends on beach slope, the roughness of the beach surface, and wave size.

### Average Sustained Over-Water Wind Speed (MPH)

	10	20	35	50
1.0	0.30	0.60	1.05	1.50
2.0	0.40	0.85	1.45	2.15
5.0	0.70	1.35	2.35	3.30
10.0	0.90	1.90	3.30	4.75
15.0	1.20	2.35	4.10	5.80
20.0	1.35	2.70	4.70	6.75

**Table 1:** *Simplified chart to estimate significant wave heights for different conditions of wind speed and fetch.*

### Longshore Currents

Longshore currents are weak currents which often develop in the surf zone. They form when waves strike the beach at an angle and bend, pushing and holding water on the shore. As this water tries to seek its original level, a current develops which flows parallel to the shoreline in the general direction of the wave

## Section Two: *Understanding Shorelines and Shoreline Erosion*

movement. This is termed the downdrift direction. The power of the current is proportional to wave energy.

### *Waves, Currents, and Erosion*

The energy of waves breaking on or near the shore and the swash action may result in the erosion and transport of shore materials and the suspension of sediments in the surf and near-shore zones. Although longshore currents are relatively weak, they may be powerful enough to transport sediment stirred up by breaking waves. The movement of sediment by longshore currents is often referred to as longshore drift.

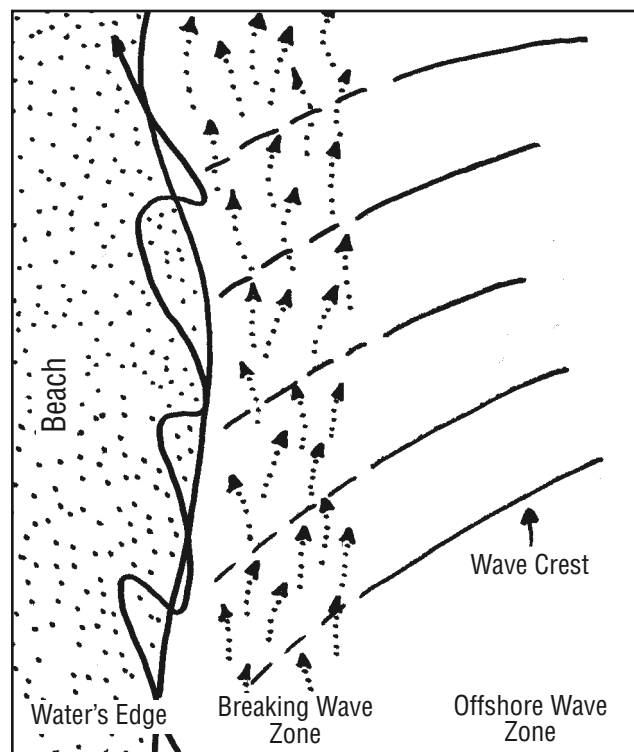
Unless waves strike the beach at a perfectly perpendicular angle, beach sand and gravel are carried up the beach slope at an angle by the in-rushing wave, and then straight down by suction created as the water slides back down the beach face. This process is repeated with each new wave, causing sand grains to move down the beach in a sawtooth pattern. Waves can also move sediments by forcing air into crannies and crevices (called quarrying), and “sandblasting” the shore with suspended sediments.

After wave turbulence suspends sand, the current may move it only a short distance before it settles out. However, subsequent waves then provide additional turbulence for additional movement. On the other hand, sediment particles which are smaller and lighter than sand may stay in suspension a long time and move great distances. **Figure 9** illustrates the pattern of sediment transport by waves and longshore currents.

Because of changes in wind and wave directions from day to day, the direction of longshore transport of sediment switches back and forth. However, the wind usually blows prevalently from one direction, resulting in a net sediment transport in one direction. Longshore currents may carry wave-stirred sediments to some point and then drop them, creating a spit. This usually occurs at an area of indentation or embayment. If a spit develops across the embayment, then it is called a bar.

When deep water is found near shore, larger waves with more erosive energy can reach the shore than in areas which are shallow near shore. Points, head-

lands, and promontories may be subject to particularly strong wave energy due to refraction, or bending, of the waves and exposure to winds from several directions.



**Figure 9:** Pattern of sediment transport by waves and longshore currents. Suspended sediment (dotted arrows) moves with the longshore current, and beach sand (solid arrow) moves down the beach in a sawtooth pattern.

### Lake Level

The greatest erosion usually occurs during highest lake levels, because larger waves may be able to break closer to the shore. If the lake level is high enough above normal, more easily erodible materials (not well-washed and sorted by previous waves or protected by a beach) may be exposed to wave action. Conversely, when lakes are at low levels, beaches are widest and are able to better absorb the energy of waves. In lakes with a gently sloping shore, a small change in water level may result in quite large horizontal changes in shoreline position.

### *Factors Determining Lake Level*

The level of a lake is determined by its surface storage capacity coupled with water inputs and losses. Cumulatively, this is referred to as a lake's

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water budget or water balance. Water sources for lakes are the same as for streams, although the delivery to the lake may be modified somewhat by the presence and variable nature of tributary streams. Water is removed from a lake system by the surface outflow of streams, the subsurface outflow of ground water, evaporation, and possibly by consumptive human use.

Lakes generally experience a much slower change in water level in response to precipitation in their watershed than do rivers. This is due to a greater lag time of water movement through the watershed. The range in water level variation is also much less, due to the large storage capacity on the lake surface.

### **Seasonal Variation**

The seasonal variation of most inland lakes follows a distinct pattern, most commonly with a low point in late winter, a rapid rise to a high peak in spring, and falling or fluctuating levels in between. However some lakes, such as those having no inlet or outlet (termed ground water seepage lakes) and reservoirs, may have drastically fluctuating water levels throughout the seasons or years. In natural lakes, seasonal variation is probably the result of long-term climate trends rather than recent events. The level of reservoirs may be primarily the result of human manipulation.

### **Wind Setup**

During times of high winds, short-term rises of lake level may occur on the shore toward which the wind is blowing. This is known as wind setup or storm surge. It is caused by winds piling up and holding water against the shore.

The amount of wind setup may be significant on some inland lakes, up to a foot or more. The amount of wind setup depends on wind speed, fetch, and average water depth. A diagram is presented in Figure 10 for determining wind setup on lakes.

### **Ice**

Ice can both protect against and cause shoreline erosion. In northern latitudes of the Great Lakes Basin, lakes may be frozen for five months of the year, preventing the formation of waves or longshore currents. Beach soils may freeze, giving added strength to the shore.

Ice expands and contracts as it warms and cools, causing small fractures to form. As water seeps into these fractures and freezes, the entire ice sheet expands during the course of a winter. This can result in the ice pushing into the shore with great force (up to 10-12 tons per square foot)—enough to push back the shoreline. In fact, most northern lakes have developed a permanent feature called an ice-shove ridge caused by millennia of ice expansion. Most ice expansion occurs in late winter, when wide temperature fluctuations occur and insulating snow cover is absent.

As the lake "breaks up" in the spring, large sheets of ice can be blown around by the wind. If a strong wind blows a large sheet of ice (many acres or even square miles in size) across a considerable distance of open water, its momentum can cause it to slide up onto the shore, scouring the beach.

Freeze-thaw cycles in unvegetated lakeshore soils can cause displacement of soil particles (called ice heaving). Ice can actually result in a small but permanent loss of beach sand each season when sand is "captured" in shorefast ice which then blows offshore and melts.

### **ANATOMY OF A LAKESHORE**

When erodible materials along shorelines are first exposed to waves (primarily at the time of lake formation), they are washed and sorted, with fine material (silt, clay, and organic matter) being carried away and the coarsest materials (coarse sand, gravel, and rocks) being left at the waterline. This erosional process results in the formation of a flat to gently sloping terrace on the periphery of the lake. The underwater portion of the terrace is called a littoral shelf. The lakeward end of the littoral shelf is a feature familiar to many bathers and is often known as "the drop-off."

The exposed portion of the terrace is called a beach. The beach typically terminates inland in a wave-cut ledge, which may range in size from a tall bluff to a small ridge cut into the beach sand (called a beach scarp). Lakeward of the wave-cut ledge the beach is generally unvegetated because it is routinely subjected to swash. This area is known as the foreshore. Inland from the crest of the beach scarp, the beach is usually vegetated along most inland lakeshores. This area is

## Section Two: Understanding Shorelines and Shoreline Erosion

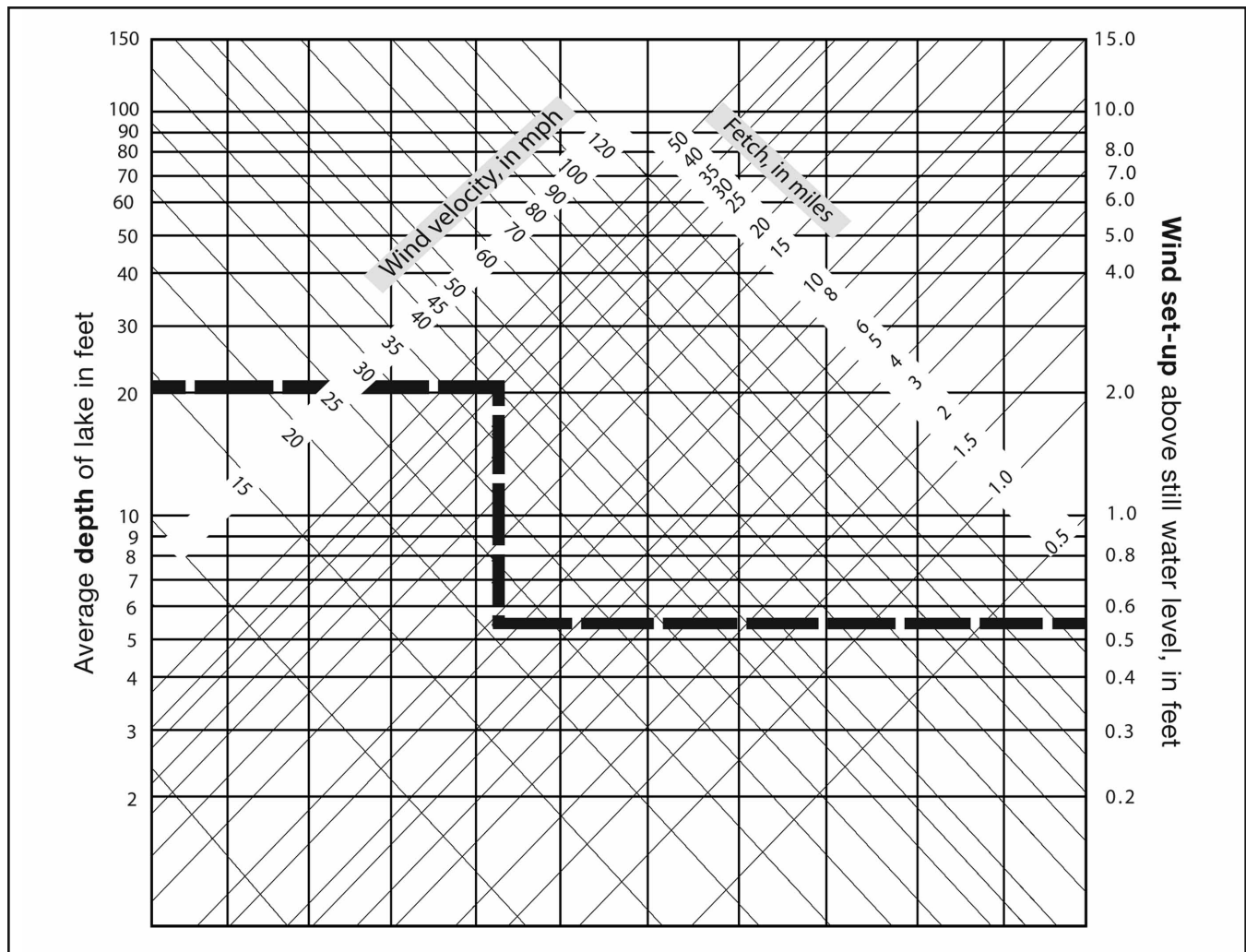
known as the backshore. The features of the backshore are variable. It may be very narrow or relatively wide. It may have a low, flattened profile, rise abruptly to an upland area, or be a low sand dune. In very large lakes, the backshore may be sparsely vegetated due to the surging of occasional large storm waves. **Figure 11** shows a typical profile of a lakeshore.

The coarsest sediment occurs in the surf zone. Progressively finer sediments are found both inland and lakeward of the surf zone. Beaches are generally narrower and steeper during and after storms due to the transport of fine sand offshore by wave and current energy. This transported sand may be deposited as offshore bars, which cause waves to

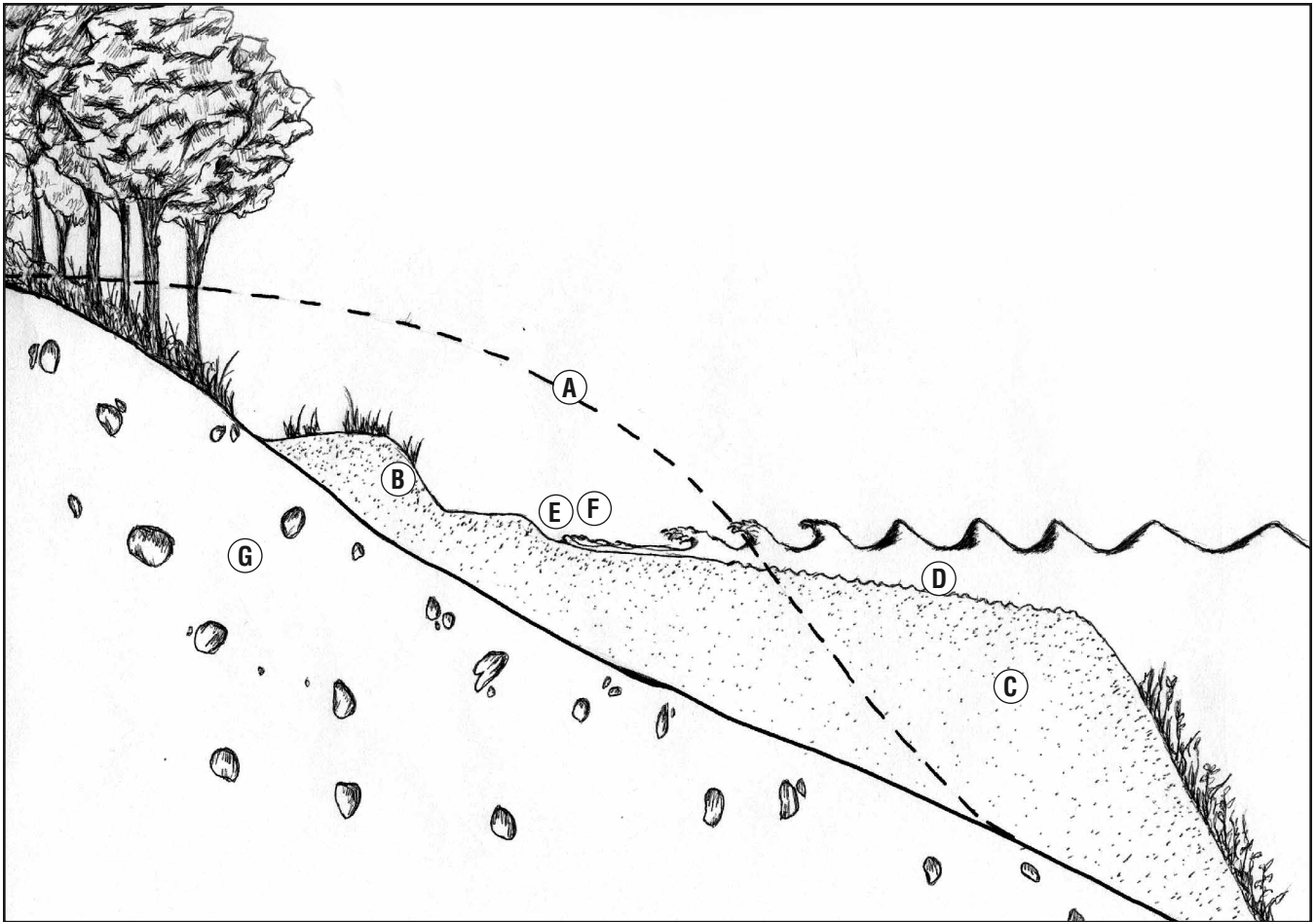
break further offshore. During fair weather, the sand bars may migrate landward and meld once again with the beach.

As explained previously, waves and currents keep littoral materials constantly moving downwind with a net transport usually in one direction. As long as transported material is replaced with equal quantities carried from upwind locations, the shoreline remains relatively stable -- a condition called dynamic equilibrium.

However, if significant amounts of upwind sediments are suddenly prevented from moving or the supply of new material is cut off from naturally eroding areas, the shoreline may retreat. Even coarse material may disappear from the beach in some lakeshore areas of high energy.



**Figure 10:** Diagram for determining wind setup on lakes. For example, (---) a wind of 40 mph blowing across a lake with an average depth of 20 ft. and a fetch of 10 mi. would result in a wind setup of about 0.6 ft.



**Figure 11:** Typical profile of a lakeshore. A—original shoreline, B—dune, C—littoral shelf, D—ripple marks on sand, E—beach scarp, F—foreshore, G—glacial till.

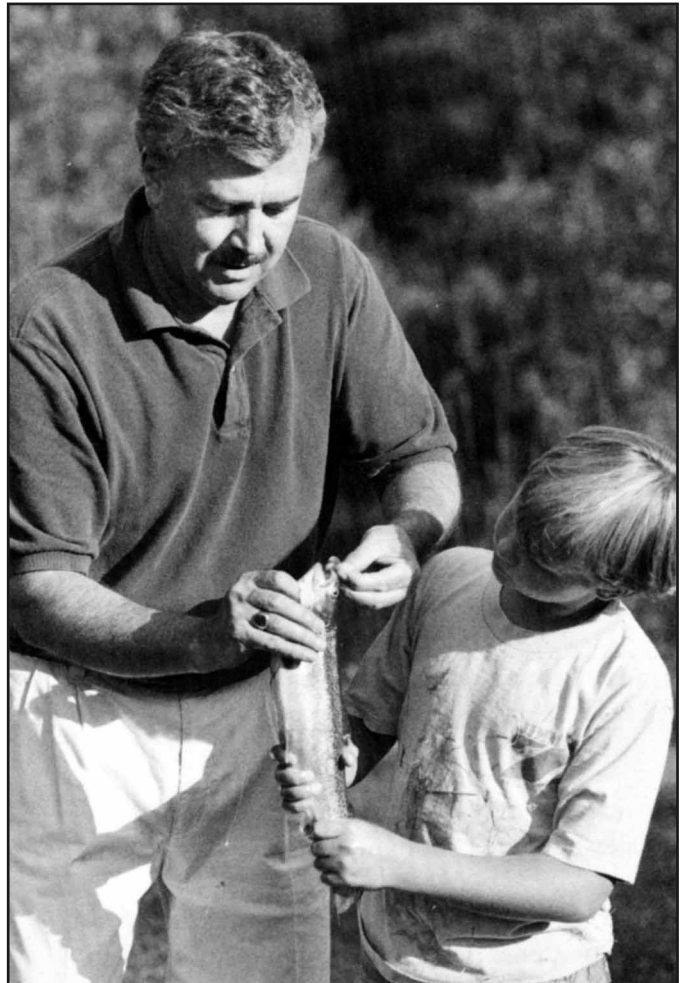
The creation of new reservoirs, or raising the level of an existing lake by damming, can result in rapid, extensive erosion of shorelines. This occurs as the lake shoreline readjusts by the formation of a new wave-cut ledge, beach, and underwater terrace. Many natural lakes in the Great Lakes Basin which had their outlets dammed early in the century are still in this rapid readjustment phase. Studies on Europe's Lake Geneva showed that average erosion rates increased from an immeasurable amount to about three inches per year after impoundment.

# Section Three

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## *Impacts of Shoreline Erosion*

It is estimated that over one billion tons of sediment pollute the waters of the United States each year.



*Sediment from shoreline erosion can impact fish populations and ultimately decrease fishing success.*

One of the most obvious impacts, and perhaps that of greatest concern to many shoreline property owners, is the loss of valuable waterfront property. Given the high value of shoreline property, recession of just one foot of shore along a 100-foot lot can represent a loss of more than \$9,000 on a cost-per-square-foot basis. This does not take into account the potential damage to, or loss of, near-shore buildings and other structures. Erosion and sedimentation in aquatic environments can also result in a number of other economic impacts, as well as serious water resource problems.

### **Sediment Pollution**

Sediment is considered a pollutant when excessive levels result from human activities. It is, by volume, the greatest water pollutant in the United States. It is estimated that over one billion tons of sediment pollute the waters of the United States each year. Although much of this comes from overland erosion (from rainfall and snowmelt runoff in inland areas), shoreline erosion contributes a significant share. A visible color plume in surface water, deposition in shallows, or shoal formation in lakes or streams can indicate that sedimentation is occurring.

### **Loss of Vegetation and Shoreline Habitats**

Shoreline erosion may result in the loss of shoreline vegetation, which provides aesthetic beauty and valuable habitat for wildlife. On streambanks, the loss of vegetation can expose formerly shaded waters to direct sunlight, resulting in excessive water warming (termed thermal pollution). If the vegetation loss is extensive enough, the erosion rate may increase, in turn causing more vegetation loss in a continuing and escalating cycle of degradation.

### **Thermal Pollution**

Thermal pollution can be particularly serious for cold-water stream ecosystems. For instance, trout cannot tolerate water warmer than 65 degrees Fahrenheit for extended periods of time. In a stream which has marginal water temperature conditions for supporting trout, erosion and sedimentation may cause enough warming to reduce trout productivity, or even cause the stream to completely lose its ability to support trout.

### **Interference with Light**

Suspended sediment particles diminish the amount of sunlight which penetrates into the water. The utilization of sunlight by plants is a key ingredient in photosynthesis and forms the basis of the food chain in most lakes and streams. If sunlight penetration is diminished, so is the productivity. This translates into fewer pounds of fish per acre. If there is enough suspended sediment, the water takes on a brown or muddy appearance. When this happens, more solar energy is absorbed compared to clearer water conditions, also resulting in increased thermal pollution.

### **Release of Nutrients**

Soil particles, especially the smallest sizes like silt and clay, may have chemically bonded nutrients attached. In some instances, depending on the source of the soil, heavy metals or other potential pollutants may also be bonded to the soil. When sediment is suspended in water, the chemical bond may be broken and substances associated with the soil may become dissolved in water and be available for uptake by both microscopic algae and rooted aquatic plants.

Nutrients liberated in this manner stimulate increased plant growth. Besides being a nuisance and unsightly, excessive weed and algae growth can eventually lead to oxygen depletion, mucky bottom deposits, and changes in the fish community. If toxic substances are present, they may be taken up by microscopic plants, travel throughout the food chain, and result in a human health hazard.

### **Stressed Fish and Wildlife Populations**

Many fish common to waters of the Great Lakes Basin (such as pike, bass, and trout) rely heavily on sight for successful feeding. Turbid water may hinder their ability to see, lowering feeding rates and slowing growth. This can eventually translate into poorer angler success and harm to the economy of areas and businesses dependent on the sport fishing industry. Turbid water may also negatively impact other fish-dependent wildlife such as loons, eagles, and otters.

## Section Three: *Impacts of Shoreline Erosion*

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### Oxygen Depletion

If the sediment levels become high enough, soil particles and associated substances from shoreline erosion may kill some sensitive organisms by depleting oxygen, interfering with gill function, or smothering eggs.

### Loss of Under-Water Habitat

The physical filling of the bottom by sediment degrades aquatic and near-shore terrestrial habitats, negatively impacting birds and animals which depend on aquatic habitats. A permanent loss of fish spawning habitat may result.

If sedimentation amounts are very high, or exist over an extended time period, a water body may actually fill in to a large extent. The original basins of some impoundments are now so filled with sediment that

dam operation and recreational use are impeded. These accumulated sediments can be especially problematic for dam removal/stream restoration projects. On many northern trout streams, excessive sand deposits from a century of erosion have filled in deep areas of the channel and even caused some streams to overflow their banks, flooding adjacent terrestrial areas.

In lakes, firm bottoms can become covered with soft sediments, diminishing their recreational attractiveness. Navigation channels and boat slips may become too shallow to accommodate boat traffic, necessitating costly and environmentally damaging dredging.



# Section Four

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## *Assessing Lakeshore and Streambank Erosion*



*Wind-driven ice comes ashore with great force on this northern lake, dislodging shoreline soils and structures.*

Erosion may be caused by a condition at the site, or by a systemic problem (from widespread factors throughout the watershed, generally beyond human means of control). Additionally, the forces causing erosion may be either natural or of human origin.

### Identifying the Causes

The most basic prerequisite to managing shoreline erosion is to identify the forces which are causing it. This is often difficult because the processes responsible are not directly observable and only their aftermath is evident.

Any change which occurs on the shoreline will affect the equilibrium of the entire lake or stream system. To understand what is causing erosion, it may be necessary to examine conditions up and down the shoreline in addition to those at the site. Researching events which occurred in the past and anticipating likely future events can help in understanding problems and designing solutions. It can be a waste of time and money to try site-specific fixes for problems which are widespread throughout the lake or stream system (called systemic problems).

#### Signs of Trouble

The best way to identify and assess erosion problems is to check shorelines regularly and be observant of changing conditions. Warning signs of accelerated erosion problems include:

- A large area of bare soil along the shore, especially on a steep, high shoreline bank;
- Large or small gullies caused by overland runoff along the shoreline;
- A noticeable recession of the shoreline over a period of time;
- Leaning or downed trees with exposed roots on the shoreline;
- Large patches of unusually cloudy (turbid) water near a lakeshore, or unusually high stream turbidity, especially during periods of high water;
- Excessive deposits of sand or other sediments on the streambed, or very wide, shallow areas of a stream.

However, there is no absolute criteria for separating "normal" erosion from "accelerated" erosion. Often-times, the presence of accelerated erosion can be

determined by comparing developed shorelines with adjacent undeveloped areas. It is important to remember that factors of both natural and human origin can result in shoreline instability. Examples of natural factors are a large tree uprooted during a windstorm, or a flood resulting from a torrential rainstorm. Human disturbances include the removal of natural vegetation along the shoreline, dredging, or construction activities.

Most erosion is likely to occur during periods of high water or high winds. Watching what happens on a shoreline during these times and comparing it to normal conditions or water levels can be insightful.

#### Erosion Rates

An assessment of erosion rates (number of feet per year) can provide valuable insight on the need for erosion control. However, the erosion rate is probably not constant, but rather occurs in a series of starts and stops over the years, usually corresponding to storm events. The highest priority for erosion control is at sites with rapid recession rates (more than 1 foot per year).

For example, a steep unvegetated bank which is the result of frequent landslides indicates a high erosion rate and should be considered for corrective action in the near future. However, a similar bank which has not receded in many years but which has not become revegetated for some other reason may not be in need of immediate attention. In areas with expansive lawns and low banks, the rate of recession may be rapid but inconspicuous because of the absence of reference benchmarks or large areas of bare soil.

Try to determine if the shore is actually eroding or if the condition is merely static. Over a period of time, measure the distance to the shore from a prominent, immovable object. Old photographs (either snapshots or aerial photos) can help determine where the shore was in the past. A simple (but accurate) map of the shore and adjacent features can help document conditions and bring them into perspective.

### Severity Indexes

Although assessing the severity of erosion is often somewhat arbitrary, some erosion severity indexes have been developed. Appendix 2 shows two examples of erosion severity indexes for lake and stream conditions.

### Characteristics of Erosion

Erosion may be caused by a condition at the site, or by a systemic problem (from widespread factors throughout the watershed, generally beyond human means of control). Additionally, the forces causing erosion may be either natural or of human origin. The following pages discuss the most common causes of shoreline erosion. Remember, there may be a number of causes at a single erosion site.

## Site Specific Causes

### Overland Runoff and Erosion

If rainfall (or snowmelt) is intense or of long duration, the water flows over the ground surface rather than soaking in. This is called runoff. Runoff picks up and carries soil particles. As runoff velocity and volume increase, rills (small channels) and deep gullies can be cut into the soil surface.

In shoreline areas where excessive runoff or bare soils are found, overland erosion may result. In this case, the toe of an eroding bank may be stable, with rills or gullies present on the upper bank. Both natural conditions (slope, soil type, drainage pattern) and human activities (impervious surfaces, vegetation removal, construction in progress) may increase the volume or velocity of overland runoff. Runoff may originate quite a distance away from a shoreline erosion site. Overland erosion is also started when raindrops fall on bare or sparsely vegetated ground and detach soil particles.

### Ground Water Seepage or Springs

Ground water seepage occurs where the water table intersects the land surface. It may appear as a wet spot or layer in a steep bank face, or as a definite flow of water. The discharge of ground water can loosen and transport soil particles. Saturated conditions can also weaken soils. Freeze and thaw cycles in natural soils

can cause the ground surface to heave and buckle, dislodging chunks of soil. If the bank is composed of layers of differing texture, one layer may slide over another, resulting in bank failure. Seepage is generally a natural condition.

### Stream Obstacles

Objects which fall, or are placed, in or across a stream channel can deflect or constrict streamflow. When a channel is constricted, the velocity increases, increasing sheer forces and the erosive power of the water. If the current is deflected from the main part of the channel toward the bank, erosion may result.

Stream deflection or constriction may result from either natural events or human activities. Examples include a large tree falling into the channel and deflecting the current into the bank or a road crossing culvert constricting the stream, increasing velocity and causing downstream erosion.

### Stream Channel Alteration

Dredging, straightening, removal of large woody debris, activities of beaver (as well as suppression of beaver activity), and clearing for recreational passage are all forms of stream channel alteration which upset the dynamic equilibrium of a stream. Many stream channels are "smoother" than they were historically due to clearing of obstructions, and so have higher velocity. Channel dredging may cause a streambed erosion condition which progresses steadily and continuously upstream from the point of dredging until equilibrium is restored (called headcutting). When streams become straightened, the channel gradient increases, thereby increasing the velocity and erosive power of the stream. Most problems associated with stream channel alteration are of human origin.

### Bank Failure

The sloughing-off of a large mass of soil from a bluff face is termed bank failure. Bank failure can be caused by a decrease in soil strength. Soil swelling (due to water absorption by clay), pressure from ground water, slow "creeping" of the soil, or an increase in sheer stress (due to changes in channel shape; increased weight, such as buildings, on top of the bank; or a rapid drawdown of water) are examples

## Section Four: *Assessing Lakeshore and Streambank Erosion*

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*These boaters are creating waves much larger than would naturally occur on this river, greatly increasing erosive forces on the shoreline. Years of such activity prompted the construction of bulkheads, which are now failing.*

of processes that decrease soil strength. Cracks on the face, or along the top, of a bank are indications of impending bank failure. Bank failure is caused by both human activities and natural conditions.

### **Removal of Vegetation**

The root systems of woody shoreline vegetation augment the strength of all types of soils. The conversion of shoreline vegetation from forest to lawn has occurred in many areas of development. Many shoreline erosion problems occur simply because too much natural woody vegetation has been removed, decreasing the strength of the shoreline soils.

Tree trunks, limbs, and other woody material, as well as emergent rushes and floating-leaved aquatic plants are often abundant in the water along natural shorelines. These materials take the brunt of wave and ice energy and bind and protect bottom sediments, helping to protect the shore. They also provide valuable aquatic wildlife habitat. However, they are often removed along developed shorelines, exposing the shore to more erosive energy.

Tree trunks and other plant stems in a floodplain add a “roughness factor,” which slows the velocity of flood waters due to friction. When trees are removed from a river’s floodplain, roughness decreases, resulting in greater velocity and stream power.

Bank trampling and soil compaction by cattle, humans, and vehicles is also an important cause of vegetation loss and shoreline erosion.

### **Powerboat Waves**

Boating activity has increased on most water bodies in recent years. The nature of boating has also changed, with larger and more powerful boats in use. Accelerated erosion is often associated with recreational boating, especially on smaller lakes, protected bays and channels, and many rivers.

### **Obstruction of Longshore Current and Sediment Transport**

A channel dredged perpendicular to the lakeshore can intercept and trap sediments transported by longshore currents. The placement of a permanent structure, such as a jetty, can deflect longshore currents out into the lake, causing sediments to be deposited in deep, offshore areas. The result in both instances is sediment starvation and erosion in downdrift areas.

### **Undercutting Toe of Steep Bank**

Undercut banks are a natural feature and provide an important habitat on streams. However, instances where they form rapidly or excessively may indicate a problem condition. Undercutting is often related to

vegetation loss or to systemic factors of both natural and human origin. If vegetation can persist at the waterline of an undercut streambank, the relative erosion severity is low.

### **Disturbance of Shoreline or Bottom Materials**

On many shorelines, rocks have been removed for use in rock gardens, stone masonry, landscaping, etc. In some other areas, sand has been removed for fill, channels have been dredged for boat navigation, or woody debris removed to enhance recreational use. The original shoreline developed a dynamic equilibrium in the presence of these materials, and their removal results in instability in the immediate vicinity and possibly far up and down the shoreline.

### **Dams**

Dams on streams act as traps, preventing the downstream flow of sediment. Downstream of the dam, sediment continues to be eroded off the streambed without being replaced. In this situation, the elevation of the bed may be lowered significantly (a process known as incision).

During subsequent floods, the velocity of the current is greater in the deeper, narrower channel. The stream banks become steeper and less stable and begin to erode, eventually causing the channel to be widened.

### **Sedimentation**

Widespread deforestation and associated logging activities early in the century caused massive sand sedimentation in some streams. In many areas with low gradient, more sand accumulated on the streambed than could be transported downstream. This sand bedload has caused extensive habitat degradation. In addition, in some instances, it has caused river beds to build up, water to spill over the bank, and braided channels to develop.

Contemporary sources of sediment include road-stream crossings, tilled cropland, many types of construction activities, as well as some types of logging practices. If sedimentation is widespread (although sometimes inconspicuous), it may also be considered a systemic cause.

## **Systemic Causes**

### **Powerful Currents**

Flowing water tugs at soil particles and may remove those at the surface of the streambed and move them along with the streamflow. Although currents may cause erosion almost anywhere, locations of high stream velocity; super critical flows; high shear forces; high specific stream power; and deep, narrow channels have the highest potential for erosion.

Stream currents are greatest at the outside of a stream bend, and erosion is most likely to occur there. The sharper the bend, the more erosive the current force.

On the other hand, the current is least at the inside of the bend, and deposition of sediments is likely to occur there. Currents are, of course, a natural condition but subject to human influences.

### **Powerful Wind-Generated Waves**

As waves expend their energy on the shore they can dislodge soil particles. Although even small waves may cause erosion under the right conditions, the larger the water body, the larger the potential wave, and the greater the erosion potential. If erosion is in an area of the lake subject to more wave forces than other areas of the lakeshore (points, areas with great fetch, or deep water near shore), then waves may be a primary cause of the erosion. Although wind generated waves are not greatly influenced by human activities, the extent to which they influence erosion can be (i.e., shoreline vegetation removal).

### **Ice**

On streams which freeze, spring breakup can cause ice-jams, or send large chunks of ice downstream at high speed. This can cause erosion from flooding or by impact and abrasion of the bank. On inland lakes, ice may subject shorelines and structures to crushing forces and abrasion. In some areas, this may require a different approach to erosion control techniques than in areas not subject to ice action. Ice is largely a natural condition, but the effects may be intensified on streams by obstructions.

## **Section Four: *Assessing Lakeshore and Streambank Erosion***

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### **Stream Meander**

On streams flowing through highly erodible sediments, erosion and deposition often results in pronounced meanders which migrate downstream over time. Streams with meandering channels are recognized by a prominent, repeating S-shaped pattern. Most efforts to control stream meandering have been unsuccessful, merely postponing the unstoppable forces of time and gravity. Whether or not a stream meanders is predisposed by watershed conditions.

### **Streambed Instability**

If a streambed is vertically unstable (either building up or cutting down), the dynamic equilibrium will be upset and streambank erosion will result. However, this condition is difficult to determine. It is usually done by comparing survey information over time, or surveying along the length of alluvial stream channels and looking for sharp elevation differences (called nick points).

Sometimes, extensive bedload indicates that the bed is rising. However, it is hard to know whether the bedload sediment is the cause of eroding streambanks or if eroding streambanks are the source of bedload sediment. In situations where the streambed is unstable, standard bank protection practices may be ineffective. Some water resource managers do not attempt to control streambank erosion without first addressing the cause of streambed instability.

### **Increased Lake Water Level**

The shorelines of new reservoirs undergo dramatic readjustment and severe erosion is usually widespread.

Even impounding natural lakes by as little as one or two feet causes the shoreline to undergo readjustment from the altered forces of waves and currents. Shoreline readjustment is still occurring after more than 100 years in some impoundments in the Great Lakes Basin.

If increased water level is expected to be a temporary condition (for instance, extraordinary rains may raise the water to a level which will occur only once a decade), then any resulting erosion will also likely be temporary and of relatively low severity.

Oftentimes, controlling the seasonal fluctuations of a natural lake is proposed as a solution to erosion problems. However, there are usually other environmental or socioeconomic implications associated with artificial lake level control which make doing so inadvisable or impractical. All proposals to control lake level must be well researched before implementing.

### **Increased Stream Discharge From Urbanization**

As urbanization in a watershed increases, there is much greater runoff due to the increase in impervious surfaces. In addition, the runoff is often delivered to streams much faster due to storm sewer systems. This can lead to higher, more frequent floods as well as an increased average annual stream discharge.

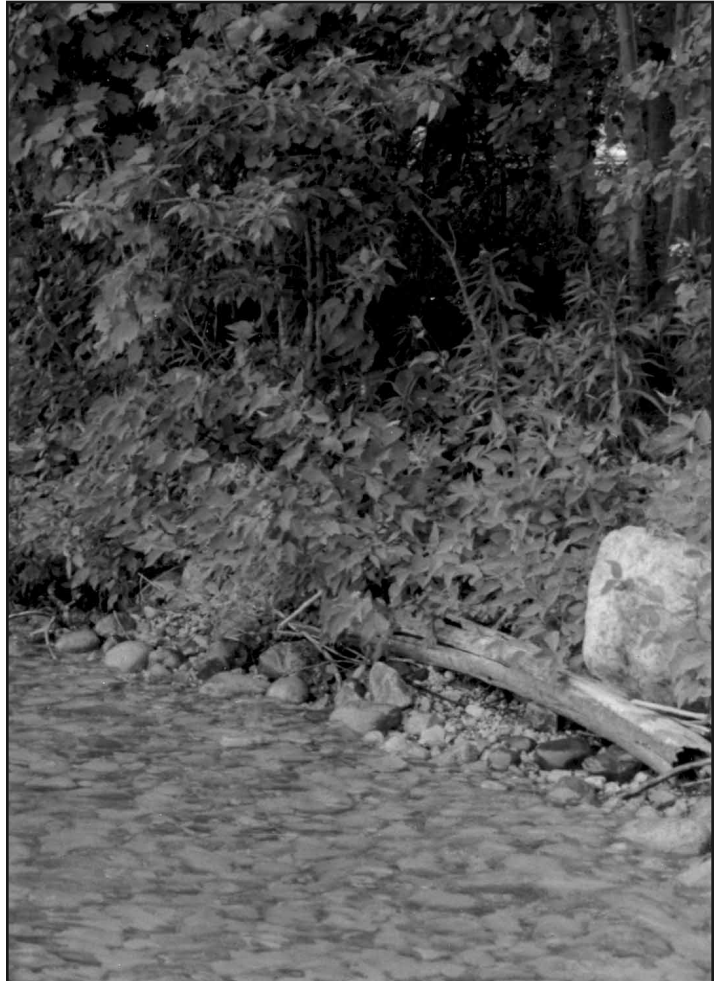
Streams with increased discharge must adjust their beds and banks to accommodate the extra water and establish a new dynamic equilibrium. In this case, it is unlikely that any erosion control practice will be completely successful until the stream channel has finished adjusting to major changes in its hydrology.

# Section Five

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## *Methods of Preventing Shoreline Erosion on Inland Lakes and Streams*

Protecting wetlands on private property and supporting strong local, state, and federal wetland protection programs are some of the best means to prevent erosion caused by flooding.



*Most undisturbed, well vegetated shorelines with rocky beaches are able to resist the erosive forces of waves, currents, and ice are relatively stable.*

## Section Five: *Methods of Preventing Shoreline Erosion*

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As previous sections have explained, some soils and shoreline types are more erosion-prone than others. In addition, certain activities or conditions can stress almost any shoreline area to the point where erosion increases. In these situations, special protective precautions can help prevent erosion. The popular saying that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is definitely true when it comes to shoreline erosion. The following section describes measures that can help prevent both natural and human caused erosion.

### **Access Control and Protection**

Intense foot traffic, especially on steep slopes or in sensitive cover types (such as wetlands or dunes), can kill vegetation and stress soils, leading to accelerated erosion. In these situations, installing access control structures or protecting the soil surface against the pounding of feet can help prevent erosion. These actions may also facilitate the safe use of a site. It should be recognized that some sites are not suitable for shoreline access but are more appropriately used for other activities, such as scenic viewing from a distance.

One type of access control structure is an exclusionary barricade, such as a fence or hedge. Exclusionary barricades can serve to keep people completely out of an area, or simply to direct them to the most appropriate areas. In some instances, thorny plants such as blackberry, black locust, or hawthorne have been used as an additional disincentive against entry. The importance of sand dunes as stabilizers of shorelines is widely recognized in Holland, and people there are actually excluded from some areas by barbed wire to ensure dune protection.

Construction of stairs on steep slopes which cannot be avoided is one way to protect the soil against the stress of foot traffic. There are two basic stairway designs: spanning the ground surface using posts and rails or creating a series of small terraces excavated into the hillside.

Designs which span the surface are generally considered to be easier and less disruptive than terraced construction, which can exacerbate erosion problems if not designed and constructed properly. However, depending on site conditions and project

goals and objectives, there may be situations where terraced steps are preferable. Boardwalks, seasonal docks, or even paved walkways in special instances are other means of protecting shoreline soils.

### **Rock Preservation**

Naturally occurring rocks serve an important erosion control function. Unfortunately, because shoreline rocks are highly visible and accessible they are frequently removed from shorelines for a variety of reasons. Significant removal or even disturbance of naturally occurring shoreline or nearshore rocks will upset the dynamic equilibrium of the surrounding area. As such, no more than a few rocks should ever be removed from any one spot in the beach or near shore area. Instead, rocks should be collected from upland, inland areas for rock gardens, masonry projects, as a source of rocks for an erosion control project, etc. Rocks are usually readily available from gravel pits or landscaping businesses. Sometimes, farmers are glad to have rocks which have been removed from, and piled alongside of, farm fields hauled away.

### **Ice-Shove Ridge Protection**

If a well-vegetated ice-shove ridge exists, it is probably a relatively stable feature after years of being subjected to ice forces. However, many property owners grade the ice-shove ridge away in order to achieve a flatter landscape. Altering this ridge (including removal of trees and shrubs) should be avoided because it may result in increased erosion as the ice seeks to establish a new dynamic equilibrium. The ridge also helps prevent excessive surface runoff and can serve as a source of material for beach nourishment.

### **Building Setback**

One reason that high bluffs are unstable is that the weight of the bluff itself causes the soils comprising it to be relatively unstable. Adding weight to the bluff from construction projects can add to the instability of the bluff. To avoid stressing soils with excessive weight and creating a potential erosion casualty, keep new construction as far back from the edge of the bluff as possible.



### Careful Watercraft Operation

Increased boat activity on many water bodies is resulting in shoreline erosion. Boats should be operated so as not to produce waves larger than those which naturally occur on that portion of the water body. On small water bodies, this generally means using small boats, or operating large boats at slow speeds. Special watercraft regulations in these areas, such as banning motors or restricting speeds to slow-no-wake, can be instituted with strong local support.

### Shoreline Vegetation Preservation and Management

The importance of preserving a strip of natural, diverse vegetation for preventing erosion cannot be over-emphasized. This is a voluntary measure that everyone can easily practice along their shoreline. In addition, local zoning ordinances can be adopted which require that a strip of natural vegetation remain in place along shorelines.

The recommended minimum width of a vegetated buffer strip (also known as a greenbelt) is 35 feet. However, a good rule of thumb is that the wider the buffer strip, the better. Vegetated buffer strips should contain a mixture of trees, shrubs, and herbaceous ground cover. Selective, limited trimming and removal of vegetation for access and view corridors can be incorporated into a buffer strip without jeopardizing its integrity.

On well-vegetated, undeveloped shorelines, intensively managing vegetation can help further strengthen a shoreline against erosion. Examples of intensive vegetation management include removal, trimming, or thinning of existing species; coupled with planting of selected additional native vegetation. The goal of such actions is to develop the healthiest, most extensive woody root systems, and the most durable woody stems to protect against ice scouring. Typically, a young successional stage seems to work best to accomplish this.

Oftentimes, a vegetated buffer strip is viewed as a good place to dump lawn clippings, leaf rakings, or woody yard debris. However, this can smother living vegetation which is functioning to hold the soil in

place. Avoid dumping of these materials in vegetated buffer strips, especially on steep slopes. Instead, dispose of such materials by scattering them widely in an inland area, or better, by composting them in a designated inland area.

Large trees (more than six inches in diameter) which lean out toward the water more than 30 degrees from vertical deserve special attention. In these situations, the force of gravity or the wind can more easily overcome the strength of their roots or the soil, and the trees may suddenly be uprooted. Sudden uprooting can subsequently lead to rapid soil loss and decreased bank stability. Leaning trees on high, steep bluffs have a greater potential for causing problems than trees on low bluffs, or flat to gently sloping shorelines. In some instances, cutting down large leaning trees on shorelines can help reduce the potential for erosion.

Of course, while these trees are alive and upright they are benefitting shoreline erosion control. In addition, large shoreline trees can be a treasured property amenity, and a decision to cut them is not always an easy one. When considering cutting, the property owner must weigh the ultimate erosion control benefits of cutting against other disadvantages, such as loss of aesthetics, wildlife habitat, etc.

A guideline for management of large leaning trees is to immediately cut only those which appear to be in imminent danger of uprooting. For others, monitor them closely over an extended period. If their degree of lean increases measurably and steadily, or if soils start to become exposed around the base, strongly consider cutting to prevent uprooting.

Even when a tree is cut, its root system remains and continues to function to strengthen soils for awhile. For special trees, pruning, supporting with cables, and other innovative methods may effectively prevent or delay uprooting. Consulting with an arborist (a specialist in the planting and maintenance of trees) is suggested for these types of actions.

By the time the roots of felled trees start to decompose, new woody vegetation will hopefully have been planted or begun to grow naturally to take its place. The root systems of many deciduous trees which are cut actually continue living and new shoots often sprout from the base of the stump.

## Section Five: *Methods of Preventing Shoreline Erosion*

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### Wetland Protection

One of the primary functions of wetlands is flood control. By some estimates, the Great Lakes Basin has lost two thirds of their original wetlands. Protecting wetlands on private property and supporting strong local, state, and federal wetland protection programs are some of the best means to prevent erosion caused by flooding.

Some wetland forests are especially susceptible to disturbance. This is because trees are shallow-rooted in soils with a high water table. Creating openings can expose remaining trees to more wind forces, and cause uprooting.

In the past, emergent wetland plants growing along shorelines have often been regarded as a hindrance to swimming and other water-based recreation, and have been eliminated. If reeds, rushes, or other wetland plants grow along the shore, they should be preserved to the greatest extent possible.

### Control Overland Runoff, Erosion, and Sedimentation

As more land becomes urbanized, runoff rates increase. However, there are techniques available to ensure that post-development runoff rates do not exceed pre-development rates. For example, keep impervious surfaces to a minimum and promote the infiltration of runoff rather than conveying it directly to the lake or stream via a drain pipe. Many local governments are beginning to adopt ordinances which require efforts to manage storm water properly.

Use proven techniques to prevent overland erosion which may be occurring due to construction activities, or from permanent conditions, such as roof discharge or long, sloping driveways. The five basic principles of overland erosion and sediment control are:

1. Plan the development to fit the topography, soils, drainageways, and natural vegetation of a construction site.
2. Expose the smallest practical area of land for the shortest practical time. This may mean completing large projects in stages.

3. Implement soil erosion control practices as a first line of defense. Good erosion control will reduce the amount of sediment which must be controlled later.

These techniques include:

- The use of special grading methods (roughen surfaces, flatten steep slopes, preserve vegetation),
- Temporary and permanent vegetation plantings, mulching, and maintenance,
- Diversion dikes and ditches coupled with proper discharge structures,
- Reduction of runoff volume and velocity,
- Use of retaining walls, and,
- Careful removal and stockpiling of topsoil for later use.

4. Apply sediment control practices to prevent off-site damage. These techniques include:
  - Diversion dikes and ditches coupled with proper discharge structures,
  - Sediment traps and filters,
  - Vegetative filters, and,
  - Sediment basins (these are the most effective sediment control).
5. Implement thorough inspection, evaluation, and maintenance of control structures.

In some areas, erosion control permits are needed for earth change activities near shorelines. Be sure to obtain the proper permits for all construction activity near the shoreline and take precautions to avoid overland erosion.

### Progressive Watershed Management

An important focus of local land use planning and zoning regulations should be environmental and watershed protection. Regulations can help keep development out of erosion-prone areas or restrict the type of development that could result in erosion problems. Make sure your local government officials know that you support watershed protection at the local level.

# Section Six

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## *Selected Methods of Controlling Shoreline Erosion on Inland Lakes and Streams*

Biotechnical erosion control enhances natural appearances and improves wildlife habitat along the shoreline.



*The shallow roots of these upright sedges (*Carex stricta*) are not enough to prevent the organic and silt soils of this streambank from eroding.*

## Section Six: *Methods of Controlling Shoreline Erosion*

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Although there have been numerous erosion control methods and materials developed over the years, many have proven ineffective or inappropriate for one reason or another. The following section contains a number of methods which the Watershed Council believes are environmentally appropriate and effective for certain situations on inland lakes and streams. In addition, several methods in common use, but which are not generally recommended for inland lakes and streams, are discussed.

### **BIOTECHNICAL EROSION CONTROL**

(Applicable to both lakes and streams)

#### **General Description**

Prior to development, diverse vegetation communities covered the shorelines of lakes and streams throughout the Great Lakes Basin. As discussed previously, vegetation protects against erosion in several ways. The removal of native vegetation has been a major factor in accelerating shoreline erosion in most instances.

Reestablishing a diverse vegetation community is one of the simplest and most effective techniques for controlling shoreline erosion. A modest investment in vegetation reestablishment can avoid a serious erosion problem in the future which may ultimately be very expensive to control.

Erosion control which primarily relies on the use of vegetation (both living and nonliving) is most commonly known as biotechnical erosion control (BEC). BEC brings together biological, ecological, and engineering concepts to produce a living, functioning system to prevent erosion. There are a number of variations of this term in use, including bioengineering, hydro-bioengineering, soil bioengineering, biotechnical slope control, and biogeotechnical erosion control.

Although BEC techniques have been used for at least 150 years, they have only recently gained widespread recognition by resource professionals and engineers for their effectiveness and come into common use. Unfortunately, BEC has yet to be widely accepted by shoreline property owners. Although studies have shown that most riparians prefer the look of a well-vegetated shoreline, on an individual basis they appear reluctant to give up shoreline lawns, 180-degree viewing vistas, and conventional structural erosion control methods such as bulkheads or rock revetments.

One reason seems to be the misconception that BEC will preclude beach access and eliminate scenic lake views. However, by using well-planned or innovative landscaping techniques, a well vegetated shoreline need not preclude acceptable levels of desired property uses.

BEC is suitable for a wide range of erosion problems. However, it is best suited to relatively low energy situations where a subtle shift in the balance between erosive energy and shoreline resistance can restore stability to the shoreline—exactly the situations most prevalent on streams and inland lakes. In relatively high energy situations, it may be necessary to couple vegetation with more extensive structural techniques.

BEC is a low-cost method achievable by most shoreline property owners. It is generally an easy method to install (even by do-it-yourselfers), although it can be a very labor-intensive technique and require a lot of attention immediately following installation. It enhances natural appearances and improves wildlife habitat along the shoreline.

In addition to erosion protection, living vegetation can also protect water quality by removing nutrients and reducing runoff. It is one of the best methods to use where the shore is subject to occasional ice scouring because the vegetation can rebound quickly on its own following disturbance. However, the band of vegetation needs to be wide enough so that it is not completely removed by ice action.

BEC is durable, self-renewing, and requires minimal maintenance once established. If BEC techniques fail, they will not intensify the erosion problem as other techniques might. Also, compared with other techniques, there are fewer requirements for heavy equipment.

On the other hand, BEC may not be appropriate for every problem situation. For instance, it usually has limited effectiveness for bluff slumping caused by seepage. Vegetation alone probably will not work on urban streams with “flashy” runoff hydrographs (see Figure 3). Its effectiveness may be limited by site characteristics such as steep slopes, poor soils with droughty conditions, and shorelines exposed to powerful wave and current energy. It is susceptible to damage where foot and vehicular traffic may be intense, and suitable plants are sometimes difficult to

obtain. BEC has a more limited construction season than some other methods, can be labor-intensive, and professional expertise on the subject is not widely available.

The use of plants alone has limitations and cannot be considered a suitable substitute for all structural methods. To overcome these limitations, vegetation is often used in conjunction with, or as a supplement to, other methods. For instance, in areas of high boat traffic, structural wave breaking techniques may also be needed. There is a wide variety of variations combining living and dead vegetation and structural components. The following section describes some of the basic techniques.

### Detailed Design Criteria—Living Vegetation

#### *Selecting Appropriate Species*

Environmental conditions are important factors to consider when selecting species for planting. The most important conditions to consider are soil wetness and texture, soil and water chemistry, light levels, general and micro climate conditions, and land use activities.

Some species of plants can tolerate a wide range of environmental conditions while others have a narrow tolerance. For instance, northern white cedar prefers an alkaline pH and will not tolerate full shade. Determine the conditions present on-site and prepare a list of common or available species in the region which are suited to the same conditions.

Native species growing nearby the project site are the best choice for vegetation reestablishment. Nonnative species or ornamental hybrids commonly used for urban landscaping are usually a poorer choice because they may spread uncontrollably and displace native vegetation, or they may not be as well adapted to life on the shoreline.

Quickly reestablishing good ground cover in areas where the soil has been disturbed is a first priority. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has developed general guidelines for species composition of seeding mixtures for ground-cover reestablishment (see Appendix 3). Appendix 4 lists some common plants of the Great Lakes Basin which are suitable for final landscaping in a variety of shoreline conditions.

#### Obtaining Plants

There are three methods for acquiring plants:

1) *Purchase*—Many suitable shoreline erosion control plants are available at local nurseries, lawn and garden stores, or farm co-ops. Soil and Water Conservation Districts throughout Michigan offer seedlings for sale in spring and fall at bargain prices (**Appendix 7**). If plants are not available locally, there are a number of mail order suppliers of native upland and wetland plants. A listing is given in **Appendix 5**. Most have catalogs and price lists available upon request. Suppliers closest to your region are most likely to have plants that are adapted to conditions in your location.

Advantages of purchasing plants include low requirements for labor and expertise in plant identification/collecting skills, and a better chance of availability when needed. Several companies now manufacture pre-planted vegetation rolls and pallets which can be moved to the job site. These are especially good in weak, non-cohesive sand soils.

2) *Collect wild plants*—Plant identification skills are needed if you plan to use this method. **Appendix 4** contains a list of plant identification/natural history guidebooks. Only common, abundant species should be collected. Even then, only a limited number should be carefully removed from a particular area in a way that will not cause erosion or other environmental damage. Before collecting, obtain a listing of protected plants and make sure that they are avoided. Collect from private property only with permission (or in the case of public land, only under permit from regulatory agencies).

Collecting can be a low-cost technique. The plants are more likely to be adapted to local conditions than purchased plants, and they will probably be subject to less stress if handled properly and planted quickly after collection. If not dormant, plants must be handled very carefully.

3) *Propagate and grow*—Plants can be grown from seeds, bulbs, cuttings, etc., either on-site or in specially prepared beds, ponds, or greenhouses. This may require more planning, but depending on the quantity needed, may also be low cost and avoid the potential environmental impacts of collecting.

## Section Six: *Methods of Controlling Shoreline Erosion*

### *Planting Techniques*

#### *Seeding or rooted planting*

These are methods which are probably familiar to everyone to some degree. The basics are no different from growing a garden or planting a tree purchased from a local nursery.

All types of vegetation may be established with this method, including wetland plants whose roots may grow in soil covered by up to two feet of water (reeds, rushes, sedges, cattails). Seeding is usually the best way to establish thick vegetative cover after soil disturbance (**Appendix 3**), although sod is an option where immediate results are needed.

Of course, it may be impractical to try to establish some types of plants from seeds. Trees and shrubs grow slowly, and erosion control needs may be too urgent to wait. Some seeds are difficult to obtain and germinate. In addition, some species spread primarily vegetatively rather than by seeds.

#### *Cuttings/live stakes*

In areas where seeding or rooted planting is impractical (such as large areas, sites where nurturing is not feasible, or where financial or human resources are limited), living vegetation can be established by other means. Some species of woody plants have the ability to root and grow from cuttings, willow being the best example. Live stakes can be incorporated into structures. They can even be installed through rock revetment, although special equipment is usually needed (**Figure 12**).

It is best to collect cuttings when dormant. The cuttings should be soaked fully to hydrate and to wash off naturally occurring substances secreted by many plants to inhibit adventitious rooting.

#### *Brush bundles*

These are bundles of long cuttings from living woody plants which are tied together (for both physical & biological reasons), placed in shallow trenches, and covered with soil (although the branch tips may be left exposed). The technique is also known as live fascines, brush layering, or wattling.

Brush bundles are primarily used on sparsely vegetated or barren high, steep, eroding slopes. They reinforce slopes several ways: the branches add to soil stability

(which increases as roots sprout and grow), protruding tips capture debris and slow runoff, and infiltration properties of the soil are improved. **Figure 13** shows an example of using brush bundles. **References 20 and 57** is a good source of more information about this technique.

### *General Planting Guidelines*

#### *Timing*

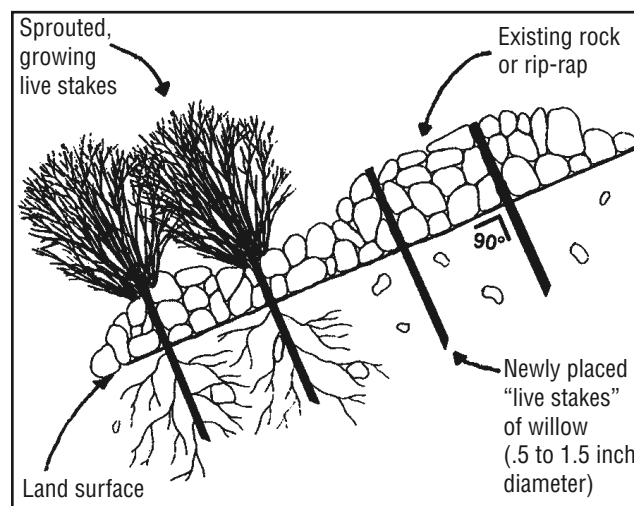
The best time for rooted plantings is during dormancy just before growth starts in the spring. **Appendix 3** provides guidelines for seeding dates.

#### *Site Preparation*

Topsoil is a precious resource and should be managed wisely during construction activities. Carefully remove and stockpile topsoil from areas to be disturbed and replace it afterward. Importing topsoil mined from another site should be done only in areas where the original topsoil has been lost and which are subject to conditions where vegetation would otherwise be difficult to establish. The soil should not be compacted or contain large stones or clods of roots.

It is difficult to establish vegetation on slopes steeper than 1:1.5 (vertical distance:horizontal distance). If slopes are steeper than that, evaluate the feasibility of slope flattening. **Figure 14** shows a simple slope measuring device constructed with a piece of wood, protractor, string, and weight.

Even if a few trees are present on the slope, it may be best in the longterm to remove them if it will facilitate slope flattening. New, and potentially



**Figure 12:** Live stakes installed through rock revetment.

healthier, trees will grow back, but soil lost to erosion on a chronically eroding slope is irreplaceable.

In addition to the aforementioned guidelines, it is necessary to prevent excessive surface runoff. Grassed swales, berms, detention basins, and drop structures are all methods which may be used to control surface runoff. Any existing erosion channels, either small rills or large gullies, should be smoothed.

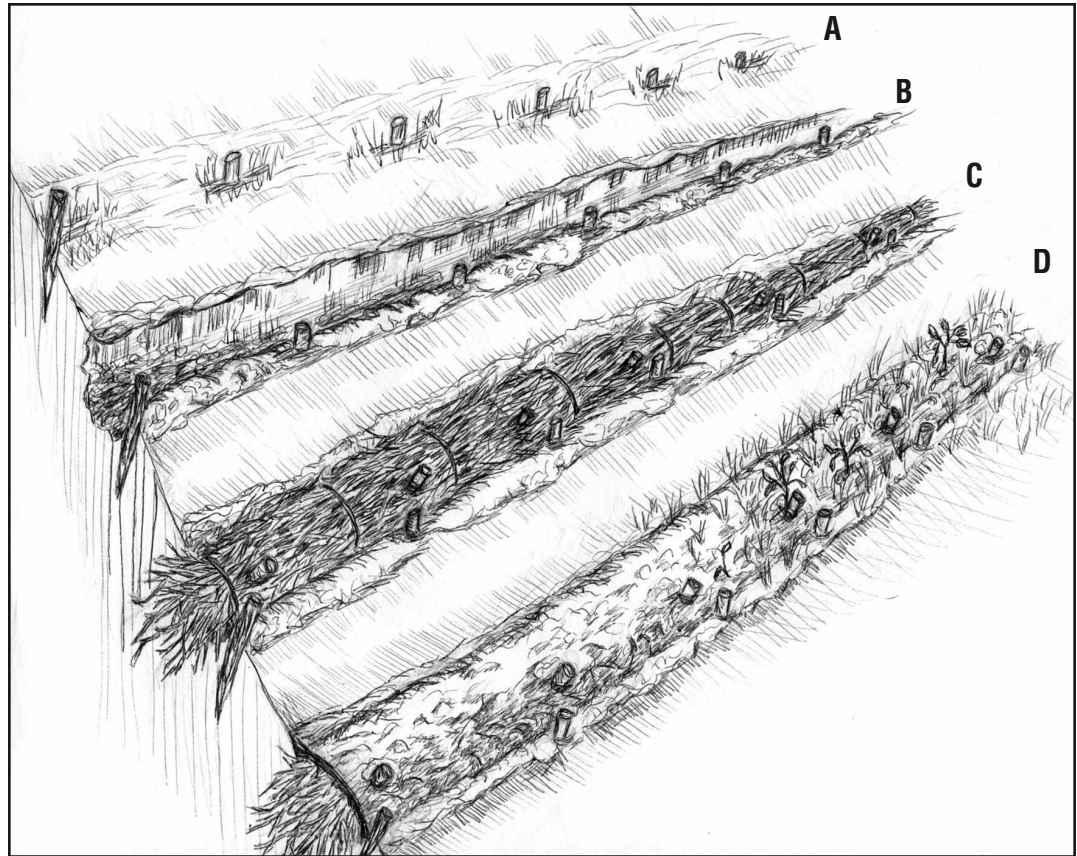
### *Planting Density/ Spacing*

Different species have different density/spacing requirements. Appendix 3 gives application rates for seeding mixtures. Approximate spacing for tree, shrub, and herbaceous seedlings should be 6' X 6', 3' X 3', and 6" X 6" respectively, with seedlings staggered in adjacent rows. Seeding and planting by hand is most practical on small sites and is usually the only alternative on steep slopes.

### *Fertilizing*

Apply lime & fertilizer appropriate for vegetation requirements and soil conditions. A soil test, available in the U.S. through the local Cooperative Extension Service office, can determine nutrient availability and needs.

Without a soil test, apply 10-0-10 (or similar low phosphorous fertilizer) at a rate of 12 pounds per 1,000 square feet for seedlings (the three numbers refer to the percent composition of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium.) For tree and shrub seedlings, apply about 1/8 pound of 10-10-10 per plant spread in a



**Figure 13:** Installation of brush bundles on a steep slope. A—elevation contour staked for trenching, B—excavate trench, C—install and stake brush, D—cover with soil.

band 8 to 10 inches from the plant. The fertilizer should be covered with soil or mulch to prevent runoff into the lake or stream.

### *Mulching*

Mulch is a protective layer placed on the ground to prevent erosion, drying, freezing, consumption by animals, or the growth of competing species. Most commonly it consists of straw, woven fiber blankets, or soil tackifiers (commonly called hydroseeding). It is most important to use mulch if there will be a large area of bare soil, and when planting on steep slopes.

### *Maintenance*

Follow-up maintenance includes watering during drought and on hot, dry sites; inspecting for overland erosion; replacing individual plants which die or reseeding large areas where needed; and protecting plantings from disease, insect pests, browsing by herbivores, and other destructive forces.

## Section Six: *Methods of Controlling Shoreline Erosion*



**Figure 14:** Determining the slope of a site targeted for erosion control. A 1:1 slope has an angle of  $45^\circ$ , 1:1.5= $33^\circ$ , 1:2= $27^\circ$ , and 1:3= $18^\circ$ .

### Detailed Design Criteria—Nonliving Vegetation

#### *Tree Revetments*

Anchoring dead, cut trees along an eroding streambank is an effective, inexpensive method which was developed for controlling streambank erosion in Missouri. Trees placed in this manner greatly slow the current along the eroding bank, decreasing erosive energy and possibly even resulting in the deposition of silt and sand. New tree growth and other vegetation may take root naturally under and behind the revetments, or vegetation can be planted in conjunction with tree placement.

The vegetation will provide additional, long-term shoreline stability. Hopefully, by the time the tree revetments degrade, the living vegetation alone will provide stable conditions. Tree revetments can also provide excellent fish and wildlife cover. The goal of tree revetments is to get living vegetation estab-

lished. If living trees are already present but falling in, then tree revetments may not help the situation in the long term.

Evergreen trees make the best revetments, because of their conical shape and the high number of limbs and fine branches. Freshly-cut trees are best for use as revetments, because they are more flexible and will last longer. Large trees are preferable because they cover more streambank per unit installation effort.

Placement of tree revetments should begin at the downstream end of the eroding streambank. The butt end should be pointed upstream and the pointy end downstream. The tree is placed tightly against the bank and anchored to the streambank at both ends with metal cables (3/16" steel aircraft cable is recommended) and cable clamps. The next tree is moved into place overlapping the butt of the first tree in a fishscale fashion.



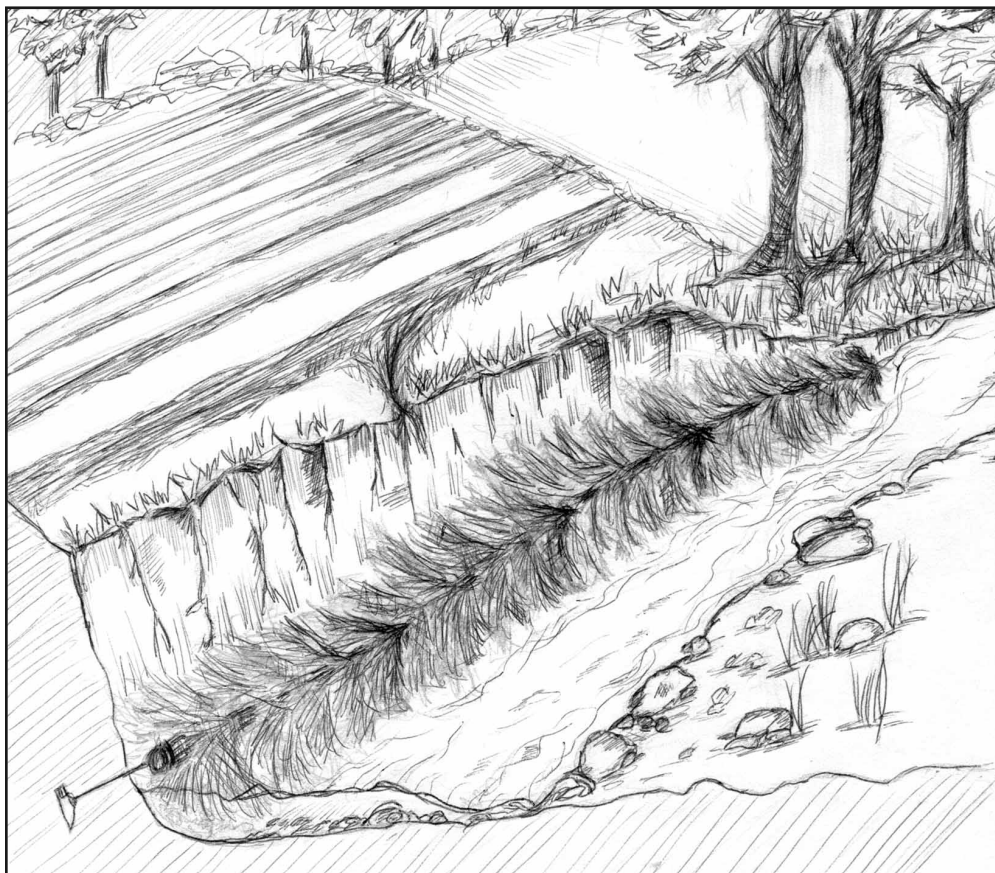
## Section Six: *Methods of Controlling Shoreline Erosion*

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The type of anchoring system will depend on the soil type and its inherent strength. Screw anchors, duckbill brand anchors, and metal T-posts have all been used successfully. Whatever system is used must be able to withstand the tremendous forces of the current against the trees. It is very important that the trees be attached firmly against the bank. If there is any slack, the trees may move violently in the current, either breaking free or allowing (or even aggravating) continuing erosion behind them.

The revetment must always begin and end at a point on the bank which is not eroding. The trees must be placed at the toe of the eroding bank. If the toe is more than 2.5 feet below the waterline during usual water levels, tree revetments may not be practical.

Tree revetments are most effective on bends of small to medium sized streams which have become unstable because the original cover of trees has been removed. They are not recommended for areas with bank heights greater than 12 feet. **Figure 15** illustrates the concept of tree revetments.



**Figure 15:** A revetment of trees anchored against the toe of an eroding streambank.

### **Brush Layer/Mattress**

This method is similar to tree revetments, but consists of a thick mattress-like layer of dead brush placed on streambanks or broad areas of slopes generally devoid of vegetation. However, brush should not be simply dumped into deep eroding gullies on slopes which are caused by concentrated volumes of overland runoff because erosion will simply continue beneath the brush. In this situation the runoff problem should be corrected.

The goal of brush mattressing is to capture debris and sediment, slow current velocities and runoff, promote infiltration, and give the surface a more hospitable micro-climate for revegetation. The covering layer should be anchored with stakes, wire, twine, etc.

Brush mattresses are best used in conjunction with establishment of living vegetation. On slopes, they consist of long branches alternated with layers of soil on terraces. On streambanks, layers of brush are placed in an overlapping pattern progressing upstream (similar to placing tree revetments).

### **Coconut Fiber (Coir) Bundle Revetment**

Coir is the term for the fibers from the outer husk of the coconut. It is rot resistant, has high strength, and provides nutrients for plant growth. Coir can be woven into a variety of forms, including the fuzzy brown doormats found at many homes. Recently, it has come into use for stabilizing shorelines and providing hospitable conditions for plant growth. It is compacted and bound into long bundles of varying diameters and placed in areas of high wave and current energy.

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Coir bundle revetments have proven effective, when used alone or in combination with other techniques, for both streams (current velocity up to 12 ft./sec.) and lakeshores (wave height up to 4 ft.). The coir bundle physically buffers the shore against wave and current energy. It is very flexible, thus very resistant to damage and failure. It provides a better growing medium than dead brush bundles, and is more durable, providing stability up to decades.

Roots of vegetation planted in and adjacent to the coir bundle eventually replace coconut fibers and form a living, self-renewing form of revetment. Sediment is often trapped and deposited behind the coir bundle.

Coir bundles are usually placed along an existing shore or, in some circumstances, in a location to redefine a new bank. They are secured in place with 2-inch diameter stakes driven 3 feet deep at twelve-to-eighteen-inch intervals along both sides of the bundle.

Coir is light and buoyant at first (which facilitates handling and positioning), but quickly becomes waterlogged and sinks. Hand tools are needed to make cut and fill adjustments beneath the bundle

so that it lies evenly at the correct elevation. The upper surface should protrude above the normal water level several inches.

Butted ends can be laced together using 1/8-inch diameter rope for extra security. The terminal ends should be buried several feet laterally into the bank.

The coir can be seeded, or planted with small rooted plants. Rooted plantings in the coir should be spaced at about six-inch intervals. On lakes, rock toe protection is often used to prevent scouring at the toe of the coir bundle. Figure 16 shows a coir bundle revetment in place on a shoreline.

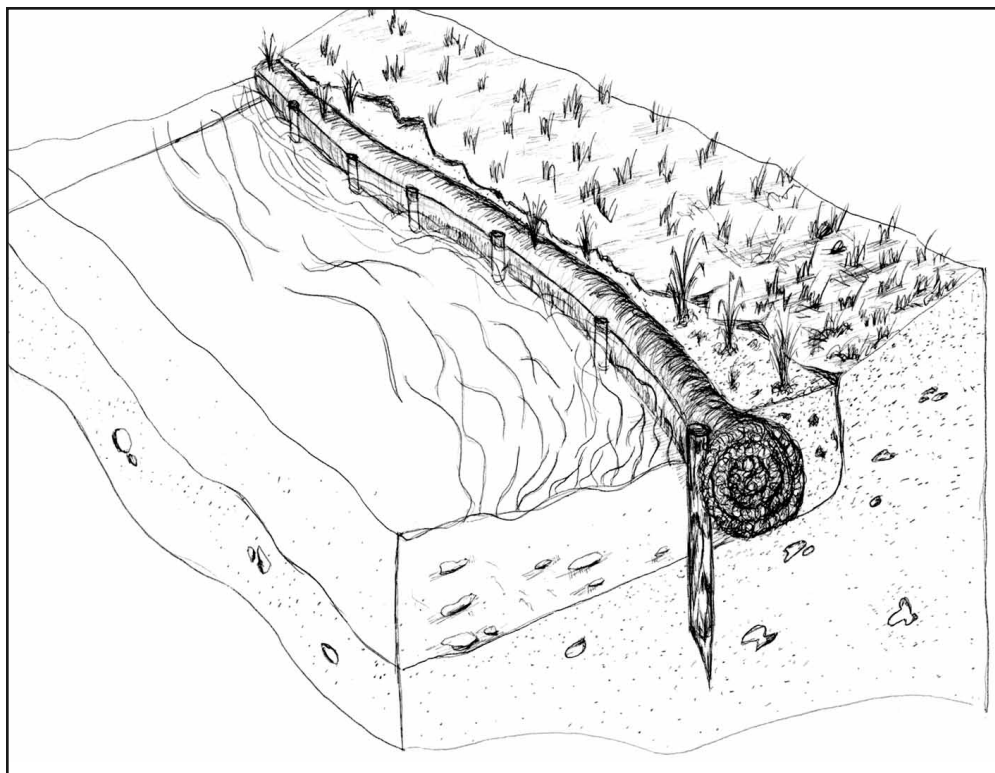
### ROCK REVETMENTS

(Applicable to both lakes and streams)

#### General Description

A rock revetment (also called riprap) is an armor facing on a slope to protect it and the adjacent land from scouring by waves and currents. The concept for an engineered rock revetment came from observations of natural shoreline areas where rock and gravel deposits on gently sloping shorelines result in the most stable shorelines.

Revetments are comprised of three components: the armor layer, base apron, and filter layer. The armor layer must be stable against the wave or current energy expected at the site. Either angular quarried rock or the rounded stones found in glacial deposits (field-stone) may be used. The base apron keeps the revetment from sliding or being undermined. The filter layer keeps the original soil in place beneath the revetment. **Figure 17** shows a typical cross section of rock revetment.



**Figure 16:** Coir bundle revetment.

## Section Six: *Methods of Controlling Shoreline Erosion*

The terminal ends of the rock revetment must be well tied in to the shore and blend in with the adjoining shore at a gradual angle. Failure to pay attention to this detail may result in an ineffective structure, disruption of longshore currents and sediment movement, and possibly even accelerated erosion on neighboring properties.

Other types of armoring materials are sometimes used in revetments. They include gabions (rock-filled wire baskets), cement filled bags or other containers, and reinforced concrete slabs. While these materials may all be appropriate for some situations where halting erosion is imperative, such as urban areas, emergencies (especially where structures are immediately threatened), high-energy situations, or limited working space, they are generally inappropriate for small projects on private property for one or more of the following reasons:

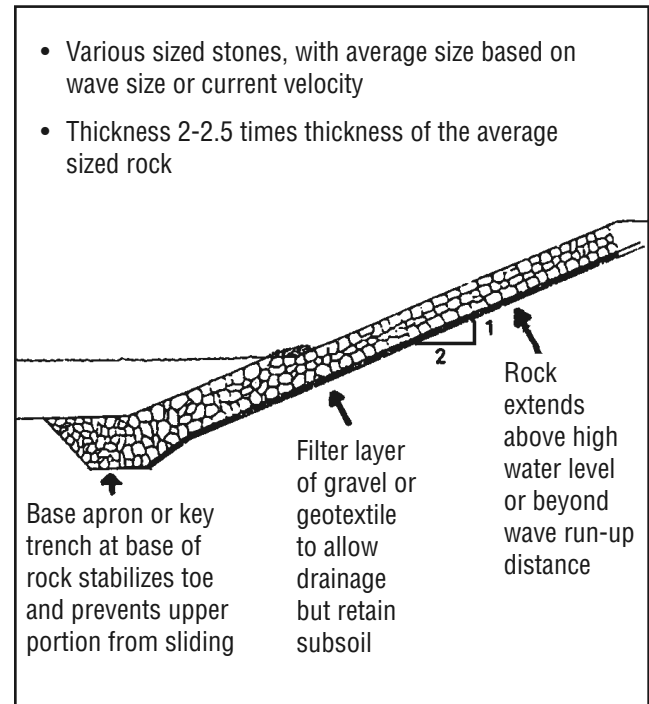
- there is usually no way to incorporate vegetation,
- they are less flexible or inflexible,
- they are less durable than rock,
- they are more costly,
- they need more sophisticated engineering,
- they are less effective,
- they can degrade water quality, and
- they are less aesthetically appealing.

Materials such as concrete blocks, broken chunks of concrete from street or sidewalk demolition (especially that which contains exposed steel reinforcing rod), tires, and crushed auto bodies should not be used in revetments. Therefore, rock is the only nonvegetative revetment material recommended and described in detail in this guidebook.

Rock revetments are time tested, highly durable, and often the most economical method where stone is available (as it is in most areas of the Great Lakes Basin). They are somewhat flexible, and so do not become ineffective if shoreline settling or slight structural damage occurs. If damaged, spot repairs are easily made.

Construction is simple, although it is important to follow basic design criteria in most instances. Because of its rough surface, rock revetment experiences less wave run-up (and therefore does not have to be as tall) as smooth-faced structures. The rock size needed

on inland waters can usually be placed by hand without heavy equipment. Rock revetments are useful for protecting bluffs which are unstable due to erosion at the toe. However, if bluff instability has some other cause, they are ineffective. Rock revetment can provide habitat for aquatic organisms.

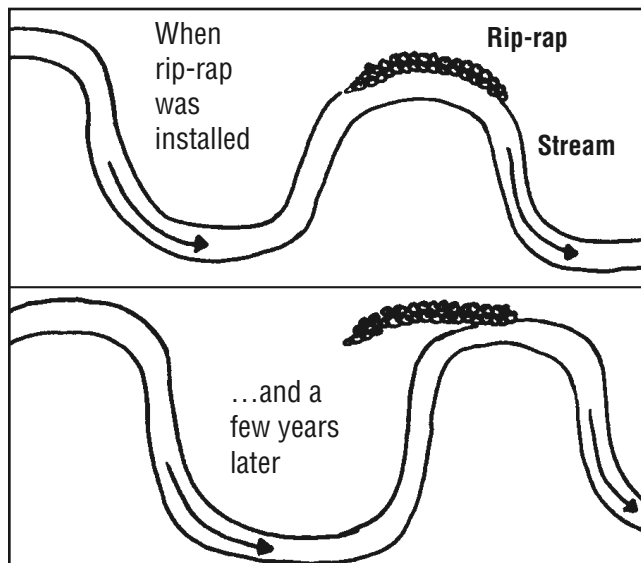


**Figure 17:** Typical cross section of rock revetment (riprap).

As with all techniques, rock revetment has some drawbacks and is not appropriate in all situations. The rocks used in a revetment can be out of character with the natural shoreline, resulting in adverse aesthetic impacts. Rock revetments have steep, uneven surfaces and can limit recreational accessibility. Without proper design and construction, the shore may be subject to continuing or intensified erosion at the terminal ends of the revetment. Rock revetments may accelerate erosion in specific areas by reflection of energy, although the potential is less than with bulkheads (see section on bulkheads for a more detailed description of this). It may be counterproductive in high-energy streams, or when overuse results in total armoring of both banks, because erosion problems are simply transferred downstream. It may actually limit a stream's ability to create trout habitat by undercutting banks.

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Avoid using rock revetments on streams with high power, steep gradients, flashy hydrographs, or within the flood plain of meandering streams (because the meander will eventually move through the revetment, see **Figure 18**). However, rock revetments have been used with excellent results on streams with low total stream power, flat gradients, stable flows, or where stream meanders occur outside the flood plain. Streams of this nature are found throughout much of the Great Lakes Basin.



**Figure 18:** Fate of rock revetment on the bank of a meandering stream.

The following design criteria were adapted from information developed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). For more detailed information on designing rock revetment structures, please refer to **References 6, 8, 16, and 57** in **Appendix 1**.

### Standard Design Criteria for Lakes

When designing a rock revetment for lakes, design criteria which need to be addressed include median, maximum, and minimum rock size (weight or diameter), slope, location of upper and lower limits, thickness, and type of filter or bedding.

### Rock Size

Rock size is determined based on wave size. The larger the expected waves, the larger the rocks must be so they are not moved about by breaking waves.

Table 1 is a simplified chart to estimate significant wave heights for different conditions of wind speed and fetch. Please refer back to the discussion of wave characteristics in Section 2 for more information on this topic.

Table 2 shows median rock sizes (in both weight and diameter) recommended by engineers to withstand the forces of various significant wave heights. Median rock size means that about half the rocks are larger and half are smaller, which is somewhat different than average rock size. Some engineering manuals recommend that rock size for revetments be based on significant wave heights generated by an “average sustained” wind speed of 50 miles per hour (MPH).

	Rock Weight (Pounds)	Rock Diameter (Inches)
0.5	1	2.0
1.0	10	4.5
1.5	20	6.5
2.0	50	9.0
2.5	100	11.0
3.0	160	13.0
4.0	390	18.0
5.0	750	26.0
7.0	2,100	48.0

**Table 2:** Recommended median rock sizes for various significant wave heights.

However, practical experience and observations seem to indicate that using this criteria overestimates the needed rock size, resulting in revetments with uncharacteristically large rocks in contrast to surrounding shoreline areas. This may be because sustained wind velocities of 50 MPH are rare in most areas of the Great Lakes Basin.

In fact, terms such as “average sustained,” “maximum sustained,” or “continual overwater” wind speed seem to be poorly defined. No such data is available from National Weather Service (NWS) or Federal Aviation Administration weather stations. Instead,

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wind speed data is most frequently obtained from a 2- to 5-minute period of observation approximately 10 minutes before the hour.

Wind speed is reported as mean speed, fastest (average) speed over the period of observation, and peak gust in the Normals, Means, and Extremes Table in the Local Climatic Data Summary (tables of data developed at each “first order” weather station see **References 8 and 16**). Climate data is available from the National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, North Carolina (704) 271-4800.

Studies have shown that the fastest wind speed observations typically result from short-duration events, such as squall lines or thunderstorms. Although the fastest average speed measurements from weather station data tables or summaries best represent “maximum sustained” wind speeds, they probably overestimate the wind velocity upon which rock size should be based in that area. Alternatively, some engineering manuals present a rather complicated method of calculating duration-averaged wind speed from weather station data tables.

An examination of data tables and summaries from several weather stations in Michigan seems to verify that sustained wind velocities of 50 MPH are rare. At the NWS office in Traverse City, Michigan over a 6-year period with 48,005 wind observations, winds greater than 32 MPH occurred only 0.8% of the time and the peak recorded wind speed was 40 MPH. The NWS office in Alpena, Michigan reports that although the peak observed gust for a period of observation of more than 35 years was 60 MPH (in 1988), the fastest observed 2 minute wind speed was only 37 MPH.

For the Great Lakes Basin, rock size determinations based on significant wave heights generated by a 35 MPH “average sustained” wind seem more realistic. It is the recommendation of this guidebook that a 35 MPH wind be used as the standard design criteria for rock revetments in this region.

Another factor to consider when determining rock size is that the size of waves in the near-shore region may be less than the significant wave heights offshore. This is especially true in areas with gently sloping beaches. Another simple method is available to estimate the size of the wave likely to actually hit the beach.

1. Measure the water depth 50 feet from the lakeshore;
2. To this depth, add the distance between the present lake level and the normal yearly maximum lake level (the maximum level may be determined by official records, or, if none exist, by reliable personal observation);
3. Finally, multiply this total depth by 0.8 to find the maximum design breaking wave height.

We recommend calculating wave height using both methods, and then choosing the smaller of the two calculations to use for significant wave height when designing rock revetments.

The rock used in a revetment should be of varying sizes, instead of all the rock being close to the recommended median size. To calculate size range, multiply the recommended median size by 1.5 to determine maximum, and 0.5 to determine minimum. For example, at a shoreline site with a 5-mile fetch, the significant deep water wave height with a 35 MPH wind speed would be 2.35 feet. Based on this, the median rock size should be about 11 inches in diameter, with a size range of 5.5 to 16.5 inches.

The various sizes should be evenly distributed throughout the revetment, and placed so that gaps between the individual rocks are minimized. In the case of large median rock sizes (greater than 9 inches), adding additional rock smaller than the recommended minimum will help fill gaps. This will result in maximum stability and minimize the movement of wave energy through the revetment.

Rocks used in revetments should be squarish or rounded in shape. Avoid using flat, platelike rocks which are more easily moved by the waves. Angular quarry stone is reported to be most stable because of its interlocking characteristics. However, fieldstone may be more readily available, cheaper, and blend into the surrounding environment better. If care is used in size selection and placement of the rock, the use of fieldstone will be adequate on inland lakes.

### **Slope**

Rock revetments depend on the soil beneath them for support, and should therefore be built only on

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stable slopes. The revetment should be absolutely no steeper than 1:1.5 (vertical distance:horizontal distance), although a 1:2 or flatter slope is a better goal. If the original land contour is too steep, it can be flattened by grading. If this is not a practical option because of nearby structures or great bluff height, then enough rock should be placed so it results in a suitably flat slope. The final slope of the revetment face must be determined before determining its upper and lower limits.

### *Upper and Lower Limits*

The upper limit of the structure (vertical height above ordinary high water mark) must be greater than the height of the wave run-up. The flatter the slope, the less vertical wave run-up. If the significant wave height is known, **Table 3** can be used to estimate wave run-up heights for different construction techniques and slopes. Some water bodies have the potential for significant wind setup, which should be considered in addition to run-up. Refer to **Figure 8**, and add the wind setup height to the calculated vertical wave run-up height.

The lower limit (toe) of the revetment should extend 1 to 1.5 times the significant wave height below the ordinary high water level, if possible, to prevent undercutting. However, this may be both impractical and undesirable in some shallow, slightly sloped beaches. Excavating a base apron (a slight trench-shaped depression at the base of the rock) before rock placement will also help prevent undercutting and sliding of the rock.

### *Thickness*

Recommended thickness of the rock throughout the length and width of the revetment is about two times the median rock diameter.

### *Filter Layer or Bedding*

The interface between the soil and the revetment is probably one of the most important design details, but is one of the most neglected and is responsible for many project failures. In most shoreline areas, ground water flows from the land to the lake. No matter how carefully the rock is placed, water from breaking waves seeps into the soil and then flows back to the lake. In addition, high velocity jets of water from

waves also penetrate the spaces and stir up underlying sediments. When rocks are placed on a slope without an underlying filter layer or bedding, water exiting the soil behind the rocks carries small soil particles with it. Since the spaces between the rocks are so much larger than the largest soil particles, they pass practically unhindered through the rock. In this way the bank can erode from behind the rocks (although probably at a somewhat slower rate than before).

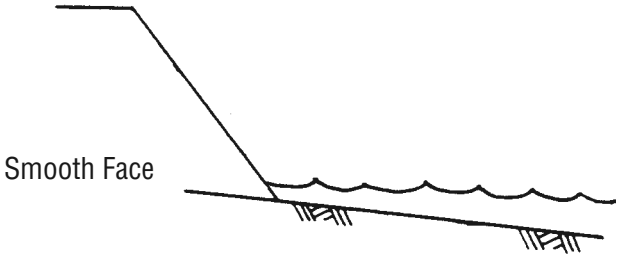
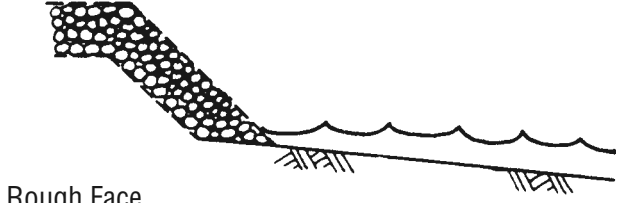
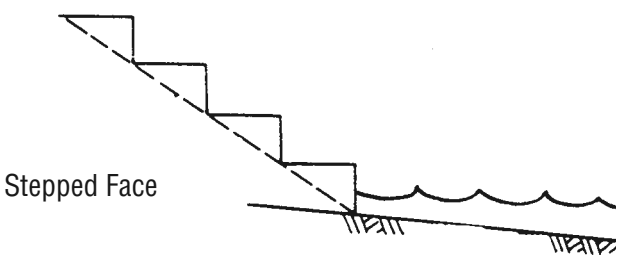
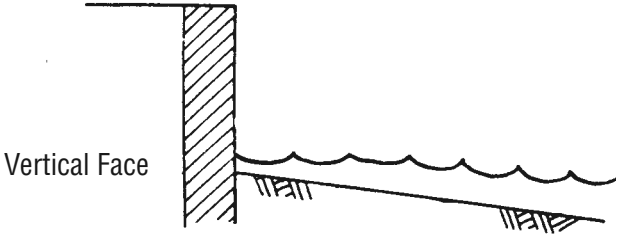
However, with a properly designed filter layer of woven or nonwoven synthetic or natural cloth (often termed "geotextile") or gravel, soil particles are prevented from washing out. This happens because at least some soil particles are larger than the pores in the overlying filter. As water flow passes out of the soil and through the filter layer, coarse soil particles block the pores in the filter preventing continued washout of soil. Although water continues to pass through the filter layer (in both directions), the soil particles cannot. Additional benefits of the underlying filter layer are to support the armor against settlement and allow ground water drainage through the structure.

Woven geotextiles tend to be stronger and, because of uniform mesh sizes, generally function better than nonwoven geotextiles. Synthetic geotextiles hinder the growth of plants through the revetment. Where plant growth is desired, gravel or biodegradable jute geotextiles may be more suitable. Biodegradable geotextiles are not as durable as synthetic, but they function long enough to allow vegetation to become established and act as a living filter layer.

There are many different types of filter layer products from which to choose. Sources are included in the list of manufacturers and suppliers of shoreline erosion control products in **Appendix 6**.

Geotextiles are generally available in one hundred-foot-long rolls, 12 to 18 feet wide. Pores in geotextiles should be sized to match the size of the soil particles to be retained. If not properly installed, geotextiles can work partially loose. The ends should be securely buried within the rock revetment or the underlying soil to avoid visual impacts, debris hazard, and wildlife entanglement. It is important to cover the geotextiles thoroughly, because they can degrade in the presence of sunlight. Overlap should be 8 to 12 inches with pinning at 2- to 3-foot intervals using staples or stakes of steel, wood, or other materials.

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	Shoreline Slope	Wave Run-up Factor
 <p>Smooth Face</p>	1.5:1 2.5:1 4.0:1	2.25 1.75 1.50
 <p>Rough Face</p>	1.5:1 2.5:1 4.0:1	1.25 1.00 .75
 <p>Stepped Face</p>	1.5:1	2.00
 <p>Vertical Face</p>	—	2.00

**Table 3:** Chart for estimating wave run-up. (Multiply the significant wave height by the wave run-up factor.)

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The recommended minimum thickness of gravel bedding material is 6 to 9 inches. Even when using geotextiles, it is best to use an intermediate layer of small stone over the fabric to help evenly distribute the load and to prevent rupture of the geotextile from sharp rock edges.

### “Light” Rock Revetment Design Criteria for Lakes

In some areas of accelerated erosion, the erosive forces overcome the resistance of the shoreline by only a very small margin. In these circumstances, the installation of a rock revetment according to the aforementioned standard design criteria may be a more extreme measure than is needed to restore the stability of the shoreline. Although the identification of these circumstances is not clear cut, they are likely to occur when one or more of the following conditions are present:

- The significant wave height is less than 2 feet.
- The recession rate is three inches per year or less.
- There is some reason to believe that removal of the original shoreline rocks (the natural rock revetment) has occurred in the past.
- There is not room for placing a standard revetment structure. For example, the mouth area of a small stream, where the slope required for standard design criteria would nearly fill in the stream mouth without extensive bank reshaping.
- The shoreline is generally stable, but only small “spot treatments” are needed.
- The shoreline's offshore slope is very slight.

In essence, light armoring attempts to restore the original shoreline and, when coupled with BEC methods, may be enough to solve the erosion problem. In addition, it can be very inexpensive and blend in perfectly with the natural shoreline. After installation, if careful monitoring shows that this method is not adequate to control erosion, then a more sophisticated structure can be installed at a later date with few unacceptable consequences. Where reconstruction of the natural stone armoring seems appropriate, the following guidelines are suggested (some of which are the same as for standard design criteria):

- Collect fieldstones from an inland, upland site, not from other areas of the lakeshore. The stones

should be of various sizes, with maximum size about 8 inches or similar to that found in adjacent undisturbed areas of shoreline. Round or squarish rocks should be used rather than flat, thin shapes.

- First place a gravel “filter layer” under the area where the fieldstones are to be placed. The gravel should be shoved up under any undercut banks. Although synthetic filter fabric may also be appropriate, its use may unnecessarily complicate the light revetment option.
- Place stones one to two layers thick, extending from at least several feet offshore to what appears to be the normal extent of the wave run-up. The stones should be hand-placed so that they fit together well and do not contain large voids.
- Examine other natural shoreline areas for guidance on how densely the rocks should be placed to remain in character for the shoreline. Try to duplicate the conditions found in adjacent areas, where the shoreline is relatively erosion free.
- If ice moves the stones (usually by impacting them into the bank) it will probably be futile to move them back into their original position because the ice will likely move them again in subsequent years. Rather, let the virtually unstoppable forces of the ice move them about until a more or less stable position is achieved. If more armoring is needed along the waterline (both to protect soils and achieve an appropriately flat slope), add more stones as needed. Although “touch up” maintenance may be necessary on an ongoing basis, eventually the rock armoring and shoreline vegetation will reach a more or less stable equilibrium with the ice forces.

### Standard Design Criteria for Streams

Rock revetment retards the natural erosion process on streams and attempts to lock the stream into a preferred course. Many of the basic design concepts for rock revetment are the same as those described above for lakeshores. However, on most streambanks currents are the main erosive force rather than waves, and the criteria for determining median rock size is based on overcoming the powerful pulling forces of the current.



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The energy developed by currents and flow patterns is more complex than that developed by lake waves. A number of complicated formulas have been developed which relate rock size to discharge, and channel slope and size. **Figure 19** shows a relatively simple method designed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service for determining median stone sizes based on current velocity and side slopes.

Other references recommend much more general rock sizing criteria. One ACOE publication recommends that a well distributed mix of stones weighing from 20 to 200 pounds will be suitable for all applications where the maximum stream velocity is less than 10 feet per second. Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) guidelines indicate that a standard rock size for streams should be 8 to 18 inches (or about 40 to 400 pounds).

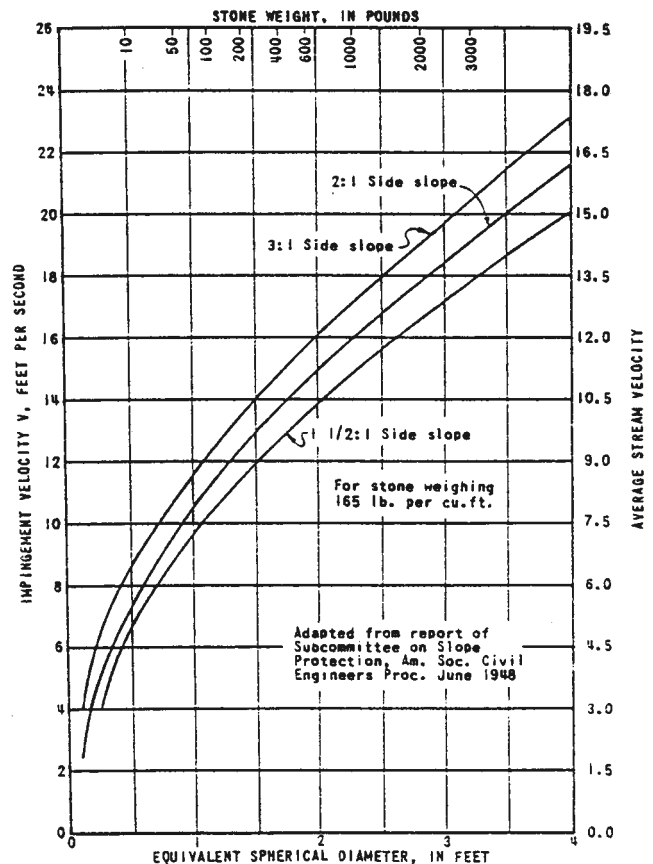
Accurately determining stream velocity at the proposed rock revetment site is another complex matter, one which should be obtained by measurements using a current meter at both horizontal and vertical intervals. However, a rough estimate of stream velocity can be obtained with the following technique using common household materials.

Using a tape measure, measure 50 feet or so along the stream bank at the site of the proposed rock revetment. Toss a slightly buoyant object (such as an apple, orange, or block of wood) into the main portion of the current at the head of the measured stretch and record how many seconds it takes to travel the measured distance. Do this several times and calculate the average time. Divide the distance traveled by the average travel time to calculate stream velocity in feet per second. Velocity is best determined during periods of high water.

Excavating for a base apron (a.k.a. key trench) may be more difficult and environmentally disruptive in flowing waters than in lakes. Often, a good alternative is to place extra-heavy rocks at the base of the rock revetment. Their weight will serve the same function as a base apron, and scouring by the current may

cause them to settle into place in much the same way as would an excavated trench. It is most crucial to establish a good base apron on streams with unstable bottoms (silt) or one which appears to be subject to strong scouring forces.

As with lakeshores, hand placement of rock is best because it ensures that the rock interlocks well. However, swift currents and steep drop-offs may make work of this nature difficult in some streams. Simply dumping the rock over the bank is another option for placement. However, this is only feasible where there is adequate bank access for vehicles. If rock must be dumped, care should be taken to ensure stable, well-vegetated portions of the bank are not damaged, and that sorting does not occur during dumping, but that the different sized rocks remain well mixed.



**Figure 19:** Determination of stone size based on current velocity and slope.

A method sometimes used on medium to large rivers is to pile rock on the bank. As it erodes, the rocks fall in, armoring the slope. If possible, hand place at least the crucial surface layer.

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A filter layer may be placed beneath rock revetment along streams, but it is not as crucial as in lakeshores because of the different nature of the erosive forces (pulling shear forces, rather than impact or suction). Some erosion control specialists prefer to use gravel rather than geotextiles because it is more conducive to vegetation growth.

The revetment should extend from the base of the slope to bankfull level (see Figure 5), or up to the level of healthy vegetation growth, whichever is less. Existing obstructions such as logs or brush, may need to be removed before placing rocks so the integrity of the armor blanket is not breached. However, if living trees and shrubs within the revetment can be preserved, they will enhance its strength.

### **BULKHEADS**

(Applicable to both lakes and streams)

#### **General Description**

A bulkhead is a wall whose purpose is to hold or prevent the sliding of soil. They are also called retaining walls. Bulkheads are also often constructed to provide some protection from wave action. There are three basic types of bulkheads: thin structures penetrating deep into the ground (i.e., sheet piling), deeply driven posts supporting a primarily above-ground wall, or massive structures resting on the ground surface (i.e., concrete wall).

The term bulkhead is often used interchangeably with seawall or breakwall. However, seawall is the term more correctly applied to massive structures constructed in the water at the shore or offshore to protect shorelines from wave action (see section on breakwaters). Massive seawalls are not normally appropriate on inland waters, especially in private property situations.

Bulkheads are only suitable for areas where there is, or needs to be, an abrupt rise to an elevated surface feature. The most appropriate uses for bulkheads are for toe protection of eroding bluffs, where deep water along shore is needed for docking structures, and where bottomland filling is deemed essential.

Bulkheads have numerous disadvantages. When placed in the water or at the water's edge, the vertical faces of bulkheads can reflect and transfer wave

energy, causing increased bottom scouring in front of the structure and accelerated shoreline erosion beyond its end. The loss of a sand beach is often the result. Bulkheads are aesthetically unattractive and degrade shoreline habitat. They are rigid structures and cannot adapt to minor landscape movements. This means that they are usually doomed to eventual massive failure from the enduring forces of nature. They create access problems unless stairs are provided. They require heavy equipment and open accessibility at the site, and the installation can be noisy and disruptive.

The popular action of attaching a cosmetic facing of treated lumber to a sheet piling bulkhead has water quality implications because toxins can leach out of treated lumber in direct contact with water. Although the use of modern treated lumber in such situations is acceptable to the MDEQ, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency does not allow its use in drinking water reservoirs. It is best to avoid using treated lumber in direct contact with water whenever possible.

Bulkheads are most environmentally acceptable on inland lakes and streams when used to protect the toe of an unstable bluff which is normally inland somewhat from the high water level, but which may be subject to erosive forces during periods of extremely high water. The use of bulkheads which permanently stand in the water should be avoided, especially on water bodies which have high water quality and support valuable or unique fisheries, or in areas which contain habitats which have not been previously degraded. Bulkheads have relatively high initial costs, although they have very little maintenance after installation (at least until massive failure begins). **Figure 20** shows general design details for bulkheads.

#### **Detailed Design Criteria**

Post and plank bulkhead construction is accomplished by driving a series of support posts backed by wood planking to form a retaining wall. The posts are typically either thick (4.0 inches minimum) wood posts or steel pilings driven in at least two times the above-ground height and sometimes anchored from behind.

Anchoring devices usually consist of a timber or concrete "deadman," or duckbill or screw-type earth anchors. If anchors are used they should be

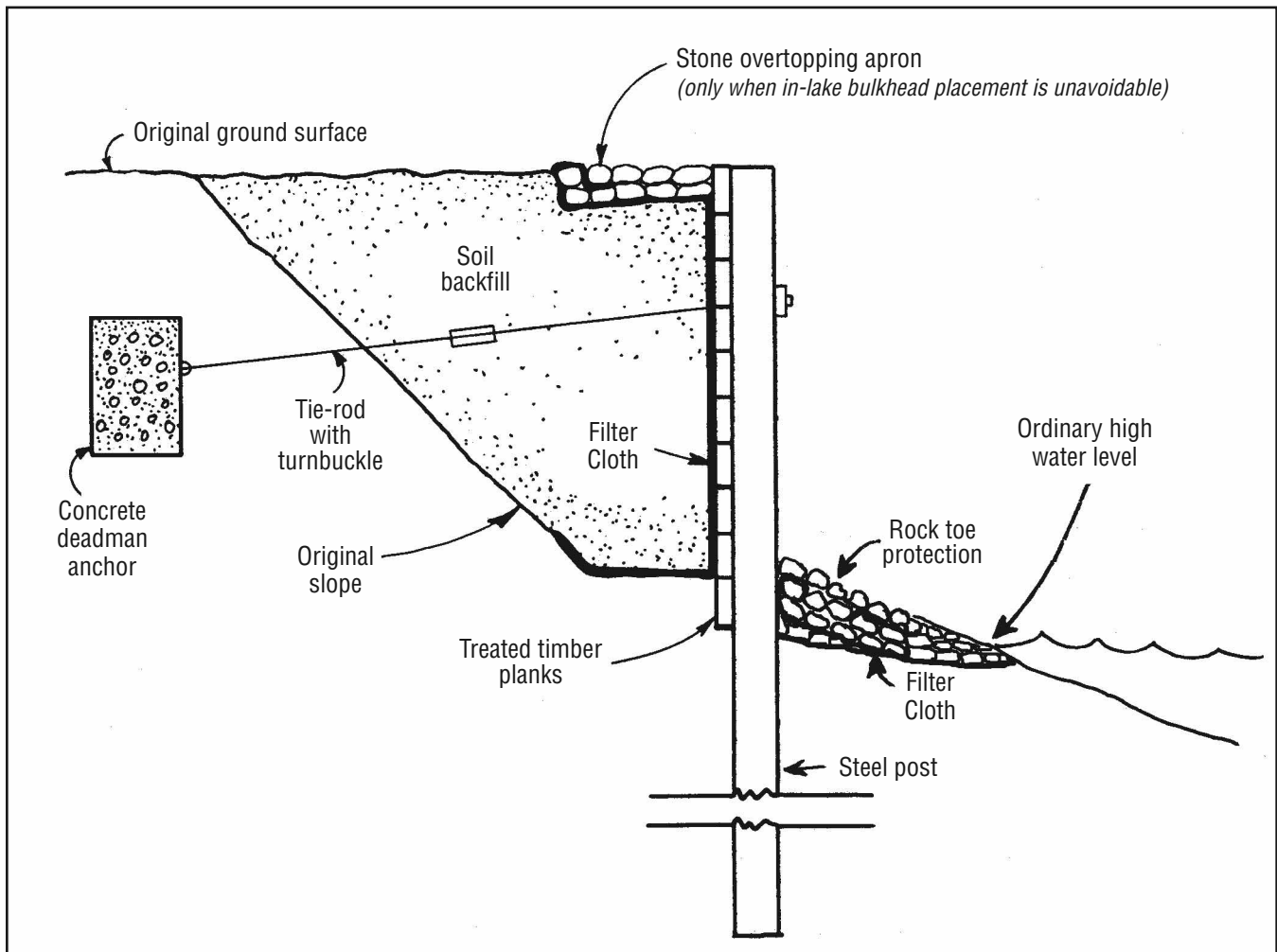
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connected to the outside of the pilings. Connecting hardware, cables, etc. should have better corrosion protection features than plain carbon steel (i.e., galvanized or wrought iron). Post and plank bulkheads are more susceptible to toe scouring and undermining, and rock toe protection should always be used.

Although some types of wood (such as northern white cedar and black locust) are rot resistant, structures built with untreated wood will generally be more susceptible to rotting than those built using lumber treated with preservatives. However, as explained earlier, treated lumber placed in direct contact with water can leach toxins. Therefore, post and pile bulkheads should only be used in locations inland somewhat from the high water level, but which may be subject to erosive forces during periods of extremely high water.

Sheet pile bulkheads are supported primarily by ground penetration (called cantilevered construction), but may be supported additionally by anchors or braces. Sheet piling should be driven to a depth of 2 to 3 times the vertical height above ground. If anchors are used, they should be connected to horizontal beams on the outside of the sheet pile near the top to evenly distribute loads and help ensure straight alignment.

Steel sheet pile can be driven into soft and hard soils, as well as some types of soft rock. Aluminum and timber sheet pile is suitable only for softer soils (sand, silt). Suggested minimum thicknesses for sheet piling are: 0.109 inches for metal, 2.0 inches for wood planks. Since there are concerns with using treated wood in contact with water, wood sheet pile bulkheads are not recommended for bulkheads standing in water.



**Figure 20:** Bulkhead design features.

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Steel and aluminum piling are interlocking and form a tight fit. Joints between wood planks should be as tightly fitted as possible. Of the three basic bulkhead types, sheet pile bulkheads probably function best in areas subject to continual wave action.

Massive above-ground construction is usually only advisable when a shoreline bluff rests on bedrock, making the installation of deeply driven structures impractical. Otherwise, this technique is much more subject to failure by settling and/or undercutting than other types of bulkheads. No design details are provided here. It is best to consult with an engineer in special cases where massive above ground structures are suitable.

All types of bulkheads must be high enough to avoid overtopping by the waves. The same technique described for rock revetment may be used to determine wave run-up height (Table 3).

A geotextile filter layer should be used behind all bulkhead structures. Coarse granular material should be used for backfill. Supplemental drain holes through the face of the bulkhead are recommended to ensure that the structure does not retain excessive amounts of water in the soil behind it.

It is likely that wave and current energy will be intensified at the ends of bulkheads, increasing the erosion potential. The terminal ends of the bulkhead should blend into adjacent shorelines at a gradual angle to prevent erosion from progressing beyond, or starting behind, the end of the structure (termed flanking).

Placement of rock revetment or installation of bio- technical erosion control can help protect against flanking. Bulkheads should not protrude out beyond the normal shoreline because disruption of longshore transport of sediment can result. Bulkhead flanks should be monitored to detect accelerated erosion at an early stage.

### GROINS

(Applicable to lakes only)

#### General Description

Groins are structures constructed perpendicular to the shore and extending out into the water. Their

purpose is to trap sand or retard its longshore movement both for erosion protection and beach enhancement. Groin structures themselves do not inherently protect the shoreline. Instead they work to diminish longshore transport of sediment by changing alignment of the beach. Sand accumulates on the upcurrent side of the groin. Once sand fills the area in front of the groin, it moves around the end of the structure and once again begins moving downdrift, although at a slower overall rate. Figure 21 shows the effect of a groin.

The functional behavior of groins is complex and difficult to predict. Groins are only effective where there is a high net transport rate of sand in one direction. If substantial longshore drift of sand is not occurring, sand accumulation will not occur and groins will neither protect a shoreline from erosion or build a beach. If there is a high amount of transport, if the movement is equal in both directions, groins will do little.

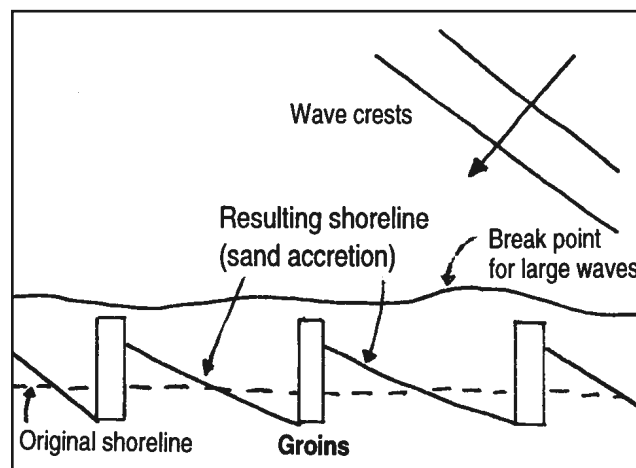


Figure 21: Effects of groin construction.

Even where conditions are suitable for groins to function, a problem is often created whereby the retarded movement of sand accelerates erosion and diminishes beach size on the downdrift side. Another drawback to groins is that they can hinder foot travel along the beach.

Groins are suitable on inland lakes only in a few circumstances where restricting sand movement will have no affect on neighboring properties and where erosion is actively impacting the upper beach zone. In Michigan, groins are only rarely permitted in inland lakes by regulatory agencies because there are not enough available sediments for their successful

function. Generally, they are only applicable to the Great Lakes or sea coasts, and even then the problems often outweigh the benefits.

### **General Design Criteria**

In the past, groins were commonly constructed on inland lakes by creating a long pile of cobble- and boulder-sized rocks collected from the beach. This practice upsets dynamic equilibrium in two ways (interrupts longshore drift and disturbs lake bottom) and is not recommended.

Groins are more properly constructed of imported fieldstone or quarrystone, timber-rock cribs, or sheet piling. If groins are to be constructed, filling behind them initially with sand, pea stone, or gravel from an off-site source can help minimize sediment starvation problems downslope. Groins must be massive and strong enough to resist displacement by waves, currents, ice action, etc.

Groins must never be built offshore to the extent that sand which moves around the end is forced into such deep water that it cannot be returned to the downdrift beach. This has often been the case when long piers constructed of permanent fill (which function somewhat as groins) have been constructed on lakeshores.

There are other important design considerations necessary for groins to function as intended, such as height, length, and spacing. However, since groins have such limited applications in inland lakes, detailed design criteria are not presented here.

### **BEACH FILLS**

(Applicable primarily to lakes)

#### **General Description**

Beach fills are attempted for two basic reasons. Fill is often placed in an attempt to provide a buffer zone against erosion. It is also commonly used to create or enhance a recreational swimming beach. However, filling is often a futile, environmentally destructive action and should only be pursued after careful study and planning.

If a site is conducive to the long-term existence of sandy material, it would likely be there naturally. If it

is not there, it is because the energy is either too great to allow it to remain in place, or not great enough to wash away the finer materials. In either case, sand fills on the littoral shelf of lakes often disappear in a relatively short time, either by washing away or simply sinking out of sight in a few years into the softer underlying sediments.

Sand dumped on a property in an attempt to restore a former beach will likely have the effect of eventually replenishing the beach of the neighbor on the downdrift side and burying valuable aquatic habitat.

Although a natural sand beach functions well at erosion control and is desirable to walk on, it is the least productive type of sediment from a biological aspect. The introduction of sand fill can bury otherwise productive aquatic habitats, such as gravel, rocks, weed beds, and organic deposits.

In a few cases on inland lakes, sand fill may be justified. These include restoring beach materials which were excavated in the past, sites where natural sediment sources have been cut off, and sites where sand will have a large public benefit coupled with minor environmental impacts and acceptable longevity.

#### **General Design Criteria**

Sand used in beach fill projects should be well sorted. If fine sediment (silt or clay) is present, the fill may result in excessive turbidity and nutrient enrichment. Fill should originate from an inland, upland source and its excavation should not result in other unacceptable environmental impacts (local sources of suitable sand are not always available).

Generally, if beach fill is coarser than native material, it erodes more slowly; if finer, it erodes more quickly. Placement of a special geotextile under the sand fill will help prevent the sand from sinking into soft underlying bottom sediments. From an environmental standpoint, the best way to enhance or establish a sand beach is to fill only above the wave run-up zone, possibly coupled with a narrow sand fill only large enough to facilitate access to water deep enough for swimming.

## Section Six: *Methods of Controlling Shoreline Erosion*

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### INFILTRATION AND DRAINAGE CONTROLS

(Applicable to both lakes and streams)

#### General Description

Structures to control overland runoff, soil moisture, and ground water seepage can help improve bluff stability and prevent massive erosion. These include horizontal drains, vertical wells, drainage trenches, and runoff diversions.

A horizontal drain system generally consists of a small diameter perforated pipe, or series of pipes. Holes are drilled horizontally into the face of the bluff and the pipe is placed into the holes. The perforated drains collect seepage before it surfaces on the bluff face. The seepage is conveyed to a controlled outlet in a suitable location.

Drainage trenches (also called French drains), are similar to horizontal drains, except that they are installed near the surface by excavation rather than drilling. They are intended to intercept and divert shallow seepage moving toward the bluff face.

Both horizontal drains and drainage trenches operate similar to a septic system drainfield except in reverse (water is taken out of, rather than placed into, the soil).

A vertical well works much the same as a private residential well. If drilled into a soil layer in the bluff containing ground water which is causing a problem, it may be possible to pump away enough ground water to alleviate the problem.

Runoff diversion structures include ditches or dikes to intercept surface runoff before it travels either over the edge of the bluff or to an infiltration area which recharges problem ground water. The runoff is conveyed to a catchment basin and discharged in a controlled manner in a suitable location.

#### Design Considerations

Designing and constructing water control systems may be complex, difficult, and very expensive. Careful studies should be conducted to determine that the feasibility and benefits of water control will outweigh undesirable consequences before deciding

on this as a course of action. A professional engineer with expertise in geologic applications is recommended for designing drainage systems.

### SLOPE FLATTENING

(Applicable to lakes and streams.)

#### General Description

Reworking the face of a bluff can lessen the slope to a more stable angle and remove some of the overlying weight that contributes to instability. The use of heavy equipment is usually necessary. There are three basic slope flattening techniques: cutting, cut and fill, and terracing (**Figure 22**).

Cutting is the excavation of unwanted or excess soil. The excavated soil is discharged in another location not on site. Cutting is the most common form of slope flattening.

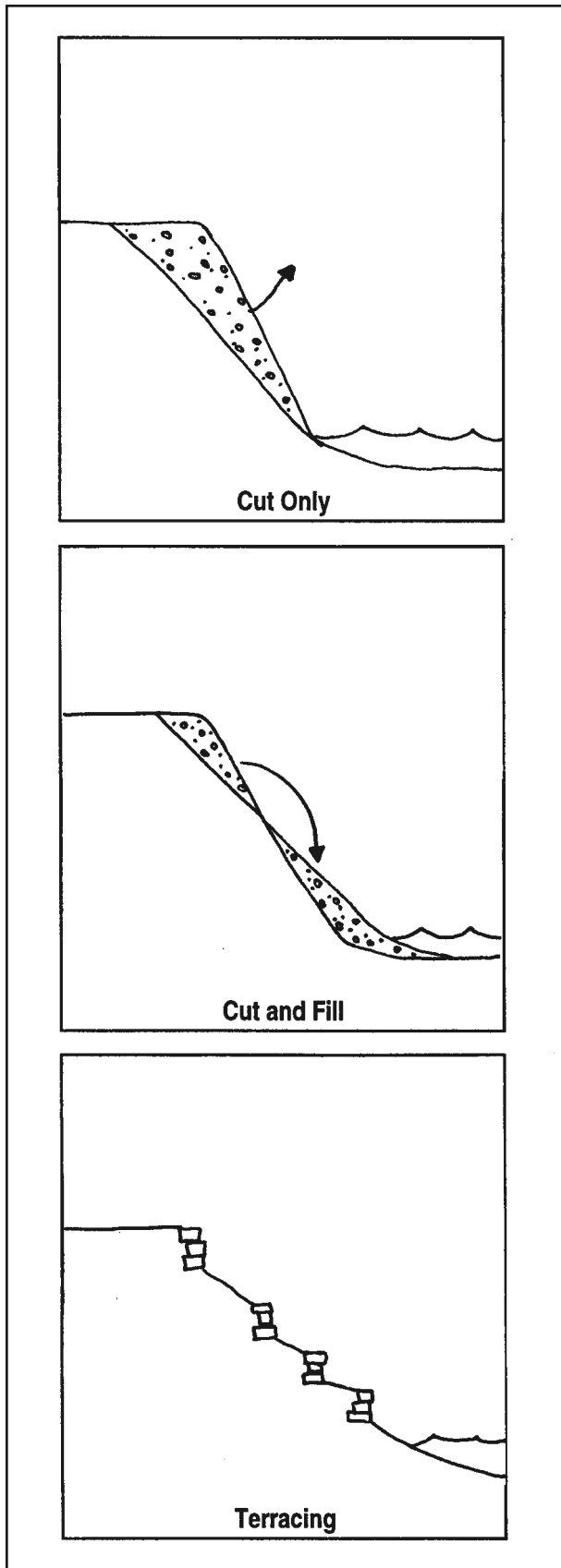
Terracing involves the construction of a level bulkhead (or a series of bulkheads) across the face of an eroding slope. This results in a flatter, more stable slope adjacent to the bulkhead. This technique may reduce the amount of excavated material which needs to be disposed, but incurs extra expense and long-term maintenance in the form of bulkheads.

Cut and fill techniques have been used to reduce bluff angle. However, this is not recommended along shorelines because discharge of fill into surface waters reduces bottomland area and may result in negative water quality impacts. It should only be considered under special circumstances.

#### General Design Criteria

A slope of 1:1.5 (vertical:horizontal) should be the maximum steepness of the final grade, even less if conditions allow. Excavated soils should be disposed of properly in an upland location. The freshly excavated slope should be replanted quickly to prevent erosion from surface runoff.

It may be necessary to couple slope flattening with toe protection to completely protect against erosion. If subsurface water is contributing to a bluff stability problem, drainage controls can be installed at the time of slope flattening.



**Figure 22:** Bluff flattening techniques.

Slope flattening is usually only feasible when adequate room exists at the top and it does not interfere with existing desirable land uses (such as homes). It is probably most applicable to bluffs less than 20 feet high. However, slope flattening should not be used on stable ice shove ridges along lakeshores.

If the bluff is forested on top, the consequences of forest destruction may outweigh the benefits of recontouring. Bluff flattening reduces the amount of level land along the shoreline. Revegetation techniques discussed in the section on BEC should be used whenever bluff flattening is performed.

### **BREAKWATERS**

(Applicable to lakes only)

#### **General Description**

Almost everyone has seen massive concrete or rubble breakwaters protecting harbors and marinas on the Great Lakes or the oceans. They are structures placed out in the water, rather than directly on shore, to intercept the energy of approaching waves and form a shadow zone of low-energy on their landward side. Although their purpose is usually to create a safe mooring area, they also reduce the ability of waves to erode and transport sediment.

While large breakwaters such as this are not appropriate for private property situations on inland lakes due to environmental impacts and safety concerns associated with navigation, in some situations small structures submerged just offshore may be useful for breaking waves and diminishing their energy before reaching the shore.

In addition to diminishing wave energy, small offshore structures can trap or hold sand. The preceding section on groins discusses the pros and cons of sand trapping. A submerged barrier which breaks the waves may result in a wider zone of emergent plant growth.

Natural materials such as boulders and waterlogged tree trunks act as breakwaters. Shorelines naturally reached a dynamic equilibrium in their presence. In many locations, these objects have been removed as shoreline property became developed, upsetting the dynamic equilibrium and causing accelerated erosion. After careful assessment of the situation, placing (or replacing) similar objects could help protect shorelines. They also may have an added benefit of aquatic habitat enhancement.

## Section Six: *Methods of Controlling Shoreline Erosion*

A temporary offshore breakwater berm can provide valuable time for establishment of vegetation as part of a BEC project. This could be as simple as a mound of gravel, rock, or bundles of branches which will break apart after a season or two. Even though these materials are natural and may be biodegradable, this technique should be used only after careful consideration because of the filling it involves. Figure 23 shows several types of small temporary near-shore breakwaters.

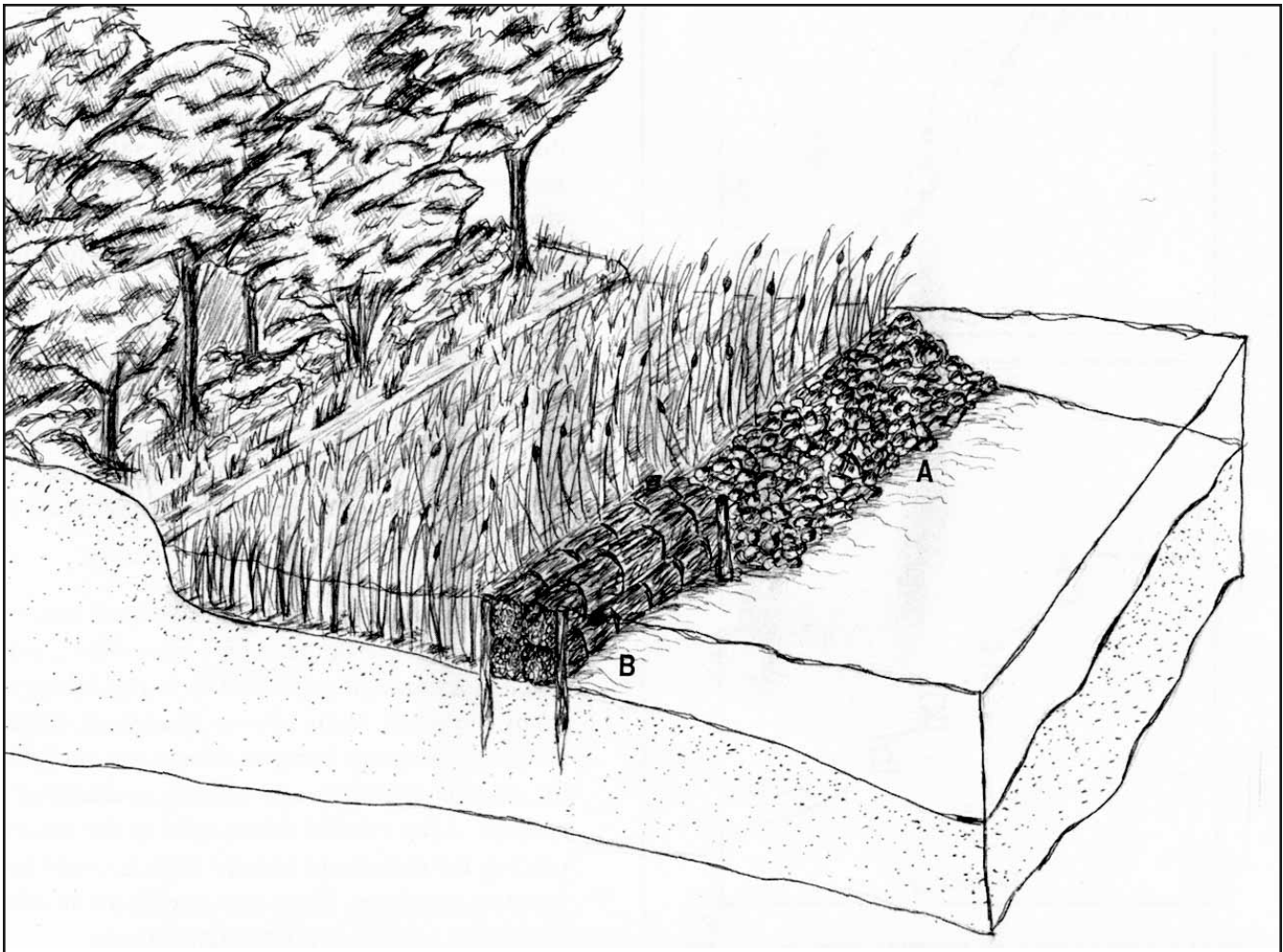
A more permanent low impact technique is to stagger and partially bury large fieldstones (2' to 3' in diameter) near shore. The large boulders break incoming waves yet are not obtrusive or an impediment to navigation. The staggered configuration allows easy passage for bathers. Because most of the mass of the boulders are buried, they resist the forces of waves and ice and are quite stable.

### NO ACTION

(Applicable to both lakes and streams)

Although this method may seem like a contradiction in terms, in some cases it is preferable to any other action when all aspects of the problem are considered. The option of taking no action is at least worth considering when trying to evaluate long-term erosion trends and their consequences.

If the erosion seems to be the result of natural shoreline processes without exacerbation by human activities, if water resources impacts are not severe, if the recession rate is not great, if no property structures are threatened, or if the erosion is caused by temporary factors, then no action may be the best course of action.



**Figure 23:** Examples of temporary near-shore breakwaters. A—stone berm, B—branch bundles..



## **Section Six: *Methods of Controlling Shoreline Erosion***

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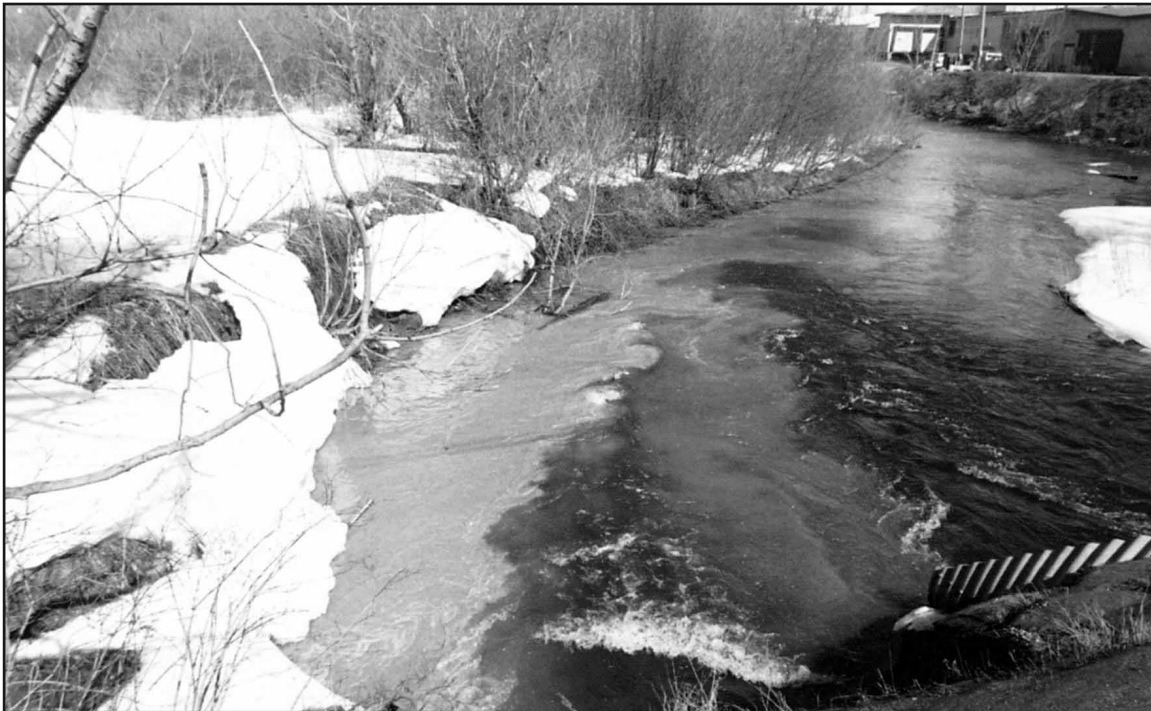
If saving threatened property is the only goal of erosion control, it may in some cases, be more cost effective to relocate threatened structures than to stabilize the shoreline. However, with the no action alternative human use of the shoreline is not enhanced and erosion, even if naturally occurring, may continue to the detriment of the environment.

The no action alternative may best help to preserve or reestablish the dynamic equilibrium in many cases. Many shoreline erosion problems will heal themselves eventually when dynamic equilibrium becomes reestablished.

# Section Seven

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## *Eight Basic Steps to Planning and Implementing an Erosion Control Project*



*High water during spring runoff is eroding a clay bank just upstream, as evidenced by the plume of muddy water along the left bank.*

The best erosion control method is a proactive one. Primary actions should be to prevent situations where erosion must be controlled...

## Section Seven: *Planning and Implementing an Erosion Control Project*

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Adequate planning is important to almost any serious endeavor, and shoreline erosion control is no exception. There are eight basic steps to planning and implementing a shoreline erosion control project.

1. Determine the nature of the erosion problem,
2. Decide if the problem is serious enough to warrant corrective action,
3. Identify project goals and select a control method,
4. Inventory available human, financial, technical, and material resources,
5. Develop a project work plan,
6. Obtain necessary permits,
7. Construct the project, and
8. Monitor and maintain the project.

Although some of these actions might seem troublesome or unnecessary, experience has shown that they are all important. Proper planning and implementation may mean the difference between success and failure. Each of the steps to a successful erosion control project is described in more detail below.

### **1. Determine the nature of the erosion problem.**

The first step in considering corrective actions for an accelerated erosion problem is to try to understand the cause of the problem and characteristics of the shoreline. Otherwise, any effort at corrective actions may be a waste of time and money.

Using **Section 4** as a guide, try to determine why the problem is occurring. Assess whether the conditions contributing to the problem are site-specific or systemic, and whether they are related to human activities or natural processes. If unsure about the cause of the erosion, seek technical assistance. **Appendix 7** lists potential sources of technical assistance throughout Michigan.

### **2. Decide if the problem is serious enough to warrant corrective action.**

There are two basic reasons for controlling erosion—to protect property and to protect the environment. If a shoreline erosion problem becomes serious enough, corrective measures may be needed to prevent both environmental degradation and excessive property loss.

Ascertain the likely environmental impacts of the erosion. If the erosion is largely the result of natural

processes but which do not threaten the environment, determine the nature of the threats to property. What is the erosion rate? How soon will structures be threatened? How much investment in erosion control is it worth to protect property?

### **3. Identify project goals and select a control method.**

If it is determined that the erosion can be controlled and that the problem is serious enough to warrant action, review the information in **Section 6** and identify methods which are appropriate for the type of problem. If you have an idea for a solution not described in this guidebook, you should seek technical advice first to avoid unforeseen problems.

Evaluate all project alternatives under consideration for both beneficial and detrimental environmental impacts. Think through the likely response of the lake or stream to the management practice, both at the site-specific and watershed-wide levels. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the various options. Choose a method which is achievable, will successfully protect property, and will not have unacceptable environmental consequences.

Both tangible and intangible considerations (such as legal and political consequences) should be weighed. Success depends on working in conjunction with, rather than in opposition to, the natural forces of the site and the ability to be adaptable and flexible.

The best erosion control method is a proactive one. Primary actions should be to prevent situations where erosion must be controlled, such as avoiding building structures in close proximity to the shore. Do not disturb near-shore vegetation or bottom substrates, and let natural forces prevail.

If existing erosion is slight to moderate and is causing an environmental or socioeconomic problem, the next level of action is micro-management to “tweak” nature slightly to minimize erosive forces. Due to the process of dynamic equilibrium, there is a tendency for erosion problems to correct themselves. This should be recognized and accounted for in erosion control schemes. Avoid spending a lot of time and money on sites that are naturally healing or unchanging. Look at adjacent stable areas, determine why they are that way, and try to duplicate those conditions on your shoreline.

## Section Seven: *Planning and Implementing an Erosion Control Project*

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Finally, if the rate and consequences of erosion are clearly intolerable, consider more drastic action. However, always keep disturbance to a minimum and actions as harmonious with the environment as possible. Previously disturbed sites generally require the most human intervention and elaborate methods to overcome problems.

Keep in mind that erosion control is simply one management technique which should be used in combination with more holistic water resource management. Any change which occurs on the shoreline will affect the equilibrium of the entire lake or stream system. Erosion control techniques should be planned carefully so that an erosion problem is not transferred to some other area.

### **4. Inventory available human, financial, technical, and material resources.**

Although it may be possible to install an erosion control structure by yourself, it is best to consult with a resource professional familiar with erosion control engineering and environmental protection when planning the installation of an erosion control structure.

Use caution when consulting with an individual or business that stands to profit from erosion control projects on your property—there is always the risk that they may advise an expensive solution that is unnecessary or environmentally damaging.

Occasionally, programs are available which offer financial assistance. The sources of technical assistance listed in **Appendix 7** should be able to inform you of the current status of any financial assistance programs.

A realistic level of the assistance you can expect to receive is possibly some free technical advice with the responsibility for arranging and paying for labor, equipment, permits, and materials being left up to the individual landowner. Because erosion problems seldom end at property lines, cooperative efforts between several landowners which pool resources may benefit everyone.

### **5. Develop a project work plan.**

Prepare detailed drawings showing top, front, and cross-sectional views of existing shoreline conditions

and proposed actions. This is often done by a paid consultant or the work contractor. It is best to have plans, especially those which are designed by a lay person, reviewed by an impartial expert (see **Appendix 7**).

Determine if the project can be built using only hand or portable power tools, or if heavy equipment is also necessary. Work can usually be done by hand only in cases where structural components are minimal. If accessibility to the site is limited, then the use of heavy equipment may not be possible.

Plan the construction sequence (beginning to completion) to coincide with material availability and best weather and environmental conditions (i.e., lower water). Locate sources of materials and determine their availability. If hiring a contractor, choose one based on experience and reputation as well as on cost estimates.

### **6. Obtain necessary permits.**

Permits from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and a local soil erosion control permit will be needed at a minimum for shoreline erosion control projects. The MDEQ's "Joint Permit Application" is available online, or from MDEQ district offices. The local erosion control permit is administered differently in each county, typically by the county building inspection department or the county soil and water conservation district. In addition, permits may be needed from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (for Great Lakes shoreline projects, and other waters deemed federally navigable) or from the local unit of government depending on zoning or building code requirements.

The permit process may take several months, so it is wise to begin the permit application process early in the project planning stage.

### **7. Construct the project.**

It is good to install the project as quickly as possible, to minimize the length of time the shoreline is disturbed. If a contractor is performing the work, inspect the work to be sure that the design is being followed and environmental precautions taken.

## Section Seven: *Planning and Implementing an Erosion Control Project*

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### 8. Inspect and maintain the project.

Early detection of any problem is a key component of a successful project. Determine if the project is adequately resisting the erosive forces which caused the problem. Observe whether any new forces are acting on the shoreline which may create additional problems or undermine the effectiveness of the recently installed project.

As in the site assessment, observing the area during times of high waves or high water levels as well as during normal conditions is recommended. Spot treatments or even extensive remedial actions may be necessary if the project is not functioning as intended or if unforeseen problems arise.

Since erosion typically progresses slowly, the effectiveness or shortcomings of a project may not become apparent for some time, possibly even a period of years. Photographs, drawings, and detailed notes can all be used to document conditions for future reference. Table Four shows an example of a formal monitoring log for a shoreline erosion control project.

Projects relying primarily on vegetation will need a period of intensive maintenance immediately after installation to ensure that the plants survive. If significant mortality occurs, replacement plantings may be needed.

Although other types of projects may need less intensive maintenance, some maintenance will likely be necessary to achieve maximum effectiveness. For instance, subtle readjustment of a few key rocks in a revetment may result in better stability.

Overland erosion control practices associated with the shoreline erosion control will need to be maintained until all disturbed land surfaces are again stabilized. This includes properly installing, inspecting, and maintaining silt fencing, sediment basins, and diversion structures. When these structures are of a temporary nature, they should remain in place until vegetation is established and be removed when the soil surface is fully stabilized.

# Section Eight

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## *Case Study*

*A Project on Crooked Lake,  
Emmet County, Michigan*



*Accelerated erosion plagues many lakeshore homes where lawns have replaced native shoreline vegetation.*

"This property had been in our family for more than 70 years. One day, we realized that our shore used to extend much further out, and that we had better do something to prevent further loss. Although we were unfamiliar with biotechnical erosion control methods, we agreed to participate in a demonstration project using this technique. We are very pleased with the results and appearance of our shoreline, and believe that it has solved our problem."

—Lewis Hopkins  
Crooked Lake Property Owner

**Background**

One component of the grant the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council received from the Great Lakes Commission (which also funded for the creation of this guidebook) was the construction of a shoreline erosion control demonstration project. The project was constructed in summer, 1995, on two adjoining private property parcels along nearly 180 feet of shoreline on Crooked Lake in Emmet County, Michigan. The demonstration project was constructed using biotechnical erosion control (BEC) techniques.



**Figure 24:** Condition of the shoreline prior to the erosion control project.

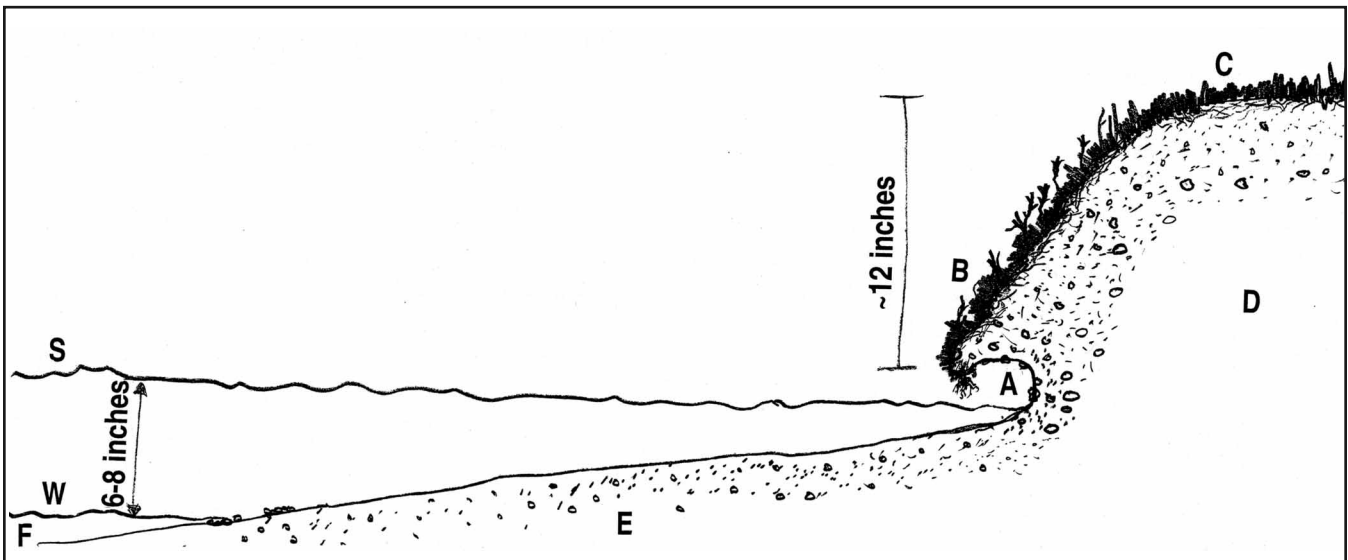
Significant shoreline erosion had occurred on these properties over past decades. Although serious erosion was not obvious to the casual observer, property owners had documented many feet of recession since the 1920's, when their cottages were built. They sensed

that erosion rates had increased in recent years, possibly averaging as much as six inches per year. The erosion was characterized by slumping undercut sod banks along the shoreline. Use of a probe revealed that the undercut extended up to four feet back under the land surface. **Figure 24** shows the condition of the shoreline prior to the project, and **Figure 25** shows a cross-sectional view of shoreline characteristics.

**Assessing the Problem**

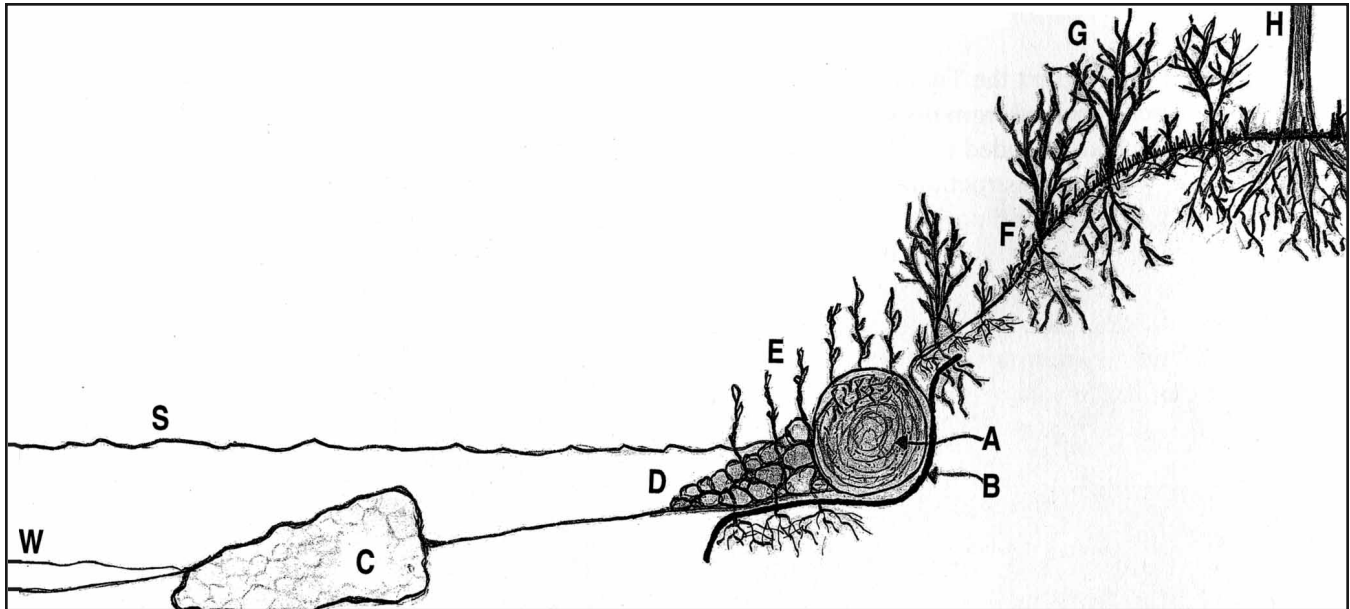
After observing conditions in the vicinity of the site, the erosion was thought to be due to the following combination of factors:

1. The removal of the native vegetation (both woody terrestrial vegetation and emergent aquatic vegetation) which was present before shoreline development and establishment of a monoculture of turfgrass. Although a few scattered, mature trees remained along the shoreline, and their roots strengthened the shoreline soils somewhat, they were too few and far between to achieve maximum or even adequate strengthening.
2. The presence of highly erodible shoreline soils. This site was originally a wetland which was filled long ago for cottage development. Soils at this site consist of sandy fill over the original muck soils.
3. Destabilization of the lake bottom by dredging to create a navigational channel. This site is on



**Figure 25:** Cross-sectional drawing of pre-project shoreline characteristics. A—undercut bank, B—slumping sod, C—mowed lawn, D—sandy soils, E—sand beach (fall), F—lake bottom, S—summer water level, W—winter water level.

## Section Eight: Case Study



**Figure 26:** Cross-sectional view of the biotechnical erosion control project. A—coir fabric roll, B—synthetic or jute fabric to hold soil in place (gap between coir roll and fabric layer exaggerated for illustration), C—submerged, partially buried boulder to break waves and deflect ice, D—rock toe protection (D50=6", 2:1 slope), E—rushes, F—herbaceous plant mixture, G—shrubs, H—tree, S—summer water level, W—winter water level.

Northern Michigan's Inland Waterway, a 45-mile long, navigable chain of lakes and rivers. The dredging was done by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the late 1950's, and created a channel running parallel to the shore, about 150 feet offshore.

4. Boating patterns have changed in recent years, and increasing numbers of large, high-speed powerboats generate large wakes in this area.
5. Natural shoreline processes—waves generated over a three mile fetch, longshore currents, and periodic ice action.

### Choosing an Erosion Control Method

Property owners felt that the rate of erosion was unacceptable. Several large trees were being threatened, and on one of the properties the shoreline had advanced to within about 30 feet of the dwelling. The following alternatives were considered to address the erosion problem:

- no action,
- rock revetment only,
- bulkhead, and
- biotechnical erosion control.

The no action, rock revetment, and bulkhead

alternatives were rejected in favor of a biotechnical erosion control project. Since the factors causing the erosion still existed, the yearly recession rate would likely have continued without some type of action. This would result in further water quality degradation (primarily due to sedimentation by organic soils), loss of land surface, and increased threats to structures and other property amenities.

The use of a bulkhead would have the highest cost of any of the methods considered. In addition, it would cause further loss of shoreline habitat, be the least aesthetically attractive, least conducive to recreational use (including safety concerns), and have the greatest chance for impacting neighboring properties and massive structural failure. Additionally, there was no need for deep water conditions near shore, which is one of the major advantages of a bulkhead.

Although a standard rock revetment design would likely effectively control the erosion and would probably be the cheapest action, it was judged to be less aesthetically pleasing than a BEC method and would result in more fill on the lake bottom. A BEC method using both living vegetation and a coir bundle coupled with light rock armoring of the shore was chosen. Reasons for choosing this method included enhancement of shoreline wildlife habitat,



aesthetic appeal, relatively low cost, proven effectiveness in similar situations, and least prone to massive failure.

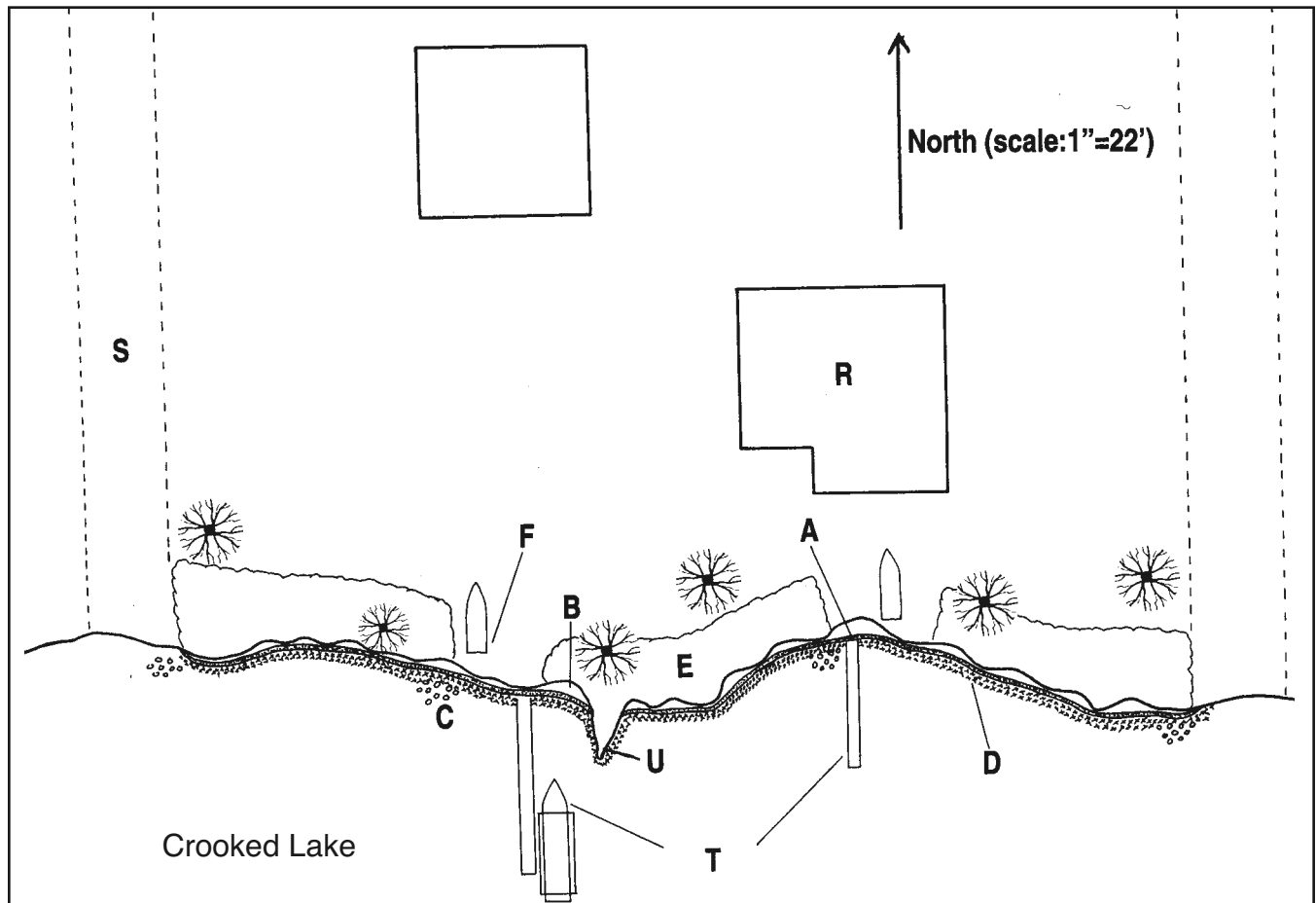
**Project Design, Permitting, and Construction**

The project was designed to stabilize the shoreline using the following practices:

1. placing several types (for comparison purposes) of filter fabric over the substrate,
2. installing 12-inch-diameter, 20-foot-long bundles of coir fabric end-to-end along the bank,
3. backfilling the coir with sand and topsoil,
4. reestablishing a 10 to 15-foot-wide strip of trees and shrubs (except in designated access areas),
5. placing appropriately sized fieldstone along the toe of the coir rolls, and
6. positioning large boulders just offshore in small selected areas to protect from wave and ice scour in locations where recreational access limits other options.

Figures 26 and 27 show cross-sectional and plan (overhead) views of the features and characteristics of the designed BEC project.

Two state/local permits and one federal permit were needed for a shoreline erosion control project in this area. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires a permit for the placement of fill below the ordinary high water mark of "navigable waters of the United States." Section 404 permits are administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Similarly, Part 301 of Act 451 of 1994 (formerly known as Michigan's Inland Lake and Stream Act) requires a permit for the placement of fill below the ordinary high water mark of a lake or stream. This permit process is administered by the Land and Water Management Division of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Additionally, Part 91 of Act 451 of 1994 (formerly known as Michigan's Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act) requires a permit for earth change activities within 500 feet of a lake



**Figure 27:** Plan view of the biotechnical erosion control project. A—12" diameter coir roll, B—sand fill, C—submerged, partially buried 2'-3' diameter boulders, D—rock toe protection (D50=6", 2:1 slope), E—vegetative buffer strip, F—small craft landing area, R—residence, S—road easement, T—seasonal docks (pre-existing), U—existing rock groin.

## Section Eight: Case Study

or stream. This permit is administered locally by the Emmet County Building Department in Emmet County. Permit applications for all three were submitted in mid-May, 1995, and the last one was approved in early July, 1995.

The project began by placing nine coir bundles end-to-end along the original shoreline and securing them with hardwood stakes driven both along the inside and outside edges at approximately 18-inch intervals. Coir (fibers from the outer husk of the coconut) is flexible, strong, and rot-resistant. It provided immediate protection against erosive energy and eventually provided a good growing medium for both woody and herbaceous vegetation. Although the coir itself functions as a filter fabric, several types of conventional filter fabric (both synthetic and natural fibers) were placed under portions of the coir to further help keep the underlying soil in place.

After the coir was positioned, areas of undercut, slumping sod were excavated using hand tools to allow the undercut cavities to be filled. Sod and topsoil which were excavated were stockpiled for later reuse. Sand fill (10 cubic yards) and topsoil (1 cubic yard) were used in back of the coir to fill cavities and reestablish a level grade. **Figure 28** shows the coir in place, with sod excavation and stockpiling and sand backfilling in progress.

In most areas, stockpiled sod was replaced to immediately create a stable ground cover. However, in one area where the shoreline was deeply indented, there was not enough sod available. There, imported topsoil was seeded with a "rapid start" grass mixture and covered with a biodegradable woven mulch blanket to protect against raindrop impact and overland erosion.

Woody root systems increase the strength and erosion resistance of all soils. Probably the key component of this project was the establishment of a 10- to 15-foot-wide buffer area containing a diversity of woody vegetation to provide long-term, self-renewing soil strengthening. Although buffer areas like this can be reestablished simply by ceasing mowing, we planted a multitude of trees and shrubs to speed the process. Some of the plants did not survive the first winter, however most survived and became well established. The buffer was delineated with marked wooden

stakes to help minimize disturbance by foot traffic or accidental mowing.

Native species were primarily used because they are best adapted to environmental conditions and do not pose the threat of introducing an invasive species. However, several nonnative species were used here

### Trees

1. 35 northern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*)
2. 3 colorado blue spruce (*Picea pungens*)
3. 3 norway maples (*Acer platanoides*)
4. 3 white birch (*Betula papyrifera*)

### Shrubs

1. 50 silky dogwood (*Cornus obliqua*)
2. 2 swamp rose (*Rosa palustris*)
3. 20 pussy willow (*Salix discolor*)
4. 20 streamco willow (*Salix purpurea*)
5. 25 highbush cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*)
6. 25 nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*)
7. 25 red osier dogwood cuttings (*Cornus stolonifera*)
8. 25 willow cuttings (species unknown, *Salix* sp.)

### Herbaceous Plants

1. 5 garden phlox (*Phlox paniculata*)
2. 10 blue flag iris (*Iris vesicolor*)
3. 15 yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*)
4. 50 sweet flag (*Acorus calamus*)
5. 100 softstem bulrush (*Scirpus validus*)
6. 100 common three square (*Scirpus americanus*)
7. 15 royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*)
8. 10 day lily (*Hemerocallis fulva*)
9. 10 turks cap lily (*Lilium michiganense*)
10. 25 false dragon head (*Physotegia virginiana*)

### Seed

1. 1 lb. reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*)
2. 2 lb. "wildflower restoration erosion mix" (contains 11 species)
3. 6 lb. of "fast start" grass seed mixture (mostly rye grass and red fescue)

**Table 5:** Species used for vegetative buffer strip establishment.

because they were the preference of the landowners. This buffer consists mostly of shrubs which either remain low or can be kept low through trimming in order to maintain views of the lake. In addition to controlling erosion, the buffer will reestablish near-shore wildlife habitat and the aesthetically pleasing appearance of a northern lakeshore. A list of the species planted for this project can be found in **Table 5**. Plants were obtained by mail order from commercial suppliers, from local nurseries, the local conservation district tree and shrub sale, and by cuttings (of willow and dogwood) obtained locally with permission.

To dissipate wave energy and provide additional shoreline protection, a low, gently sloping layer of small to medium sized rocks was placed along the coir's base. The longest fetch at this site is 3.0 miles, and the significant wave height during a 35 MPH



**Figure 28:** Coir staked in place, with sod excavation and stockpiling, and sand backfilling in progress.



**Figure 29:** Hand adjustment of fieldstone along toe of coir.

wind would be 1.75 feet. According to design guidelines, recommended median rock size is 7.75 inches, with minimum and maximum sizes being about 3.9 and 11.6 inches. However, there is a wide, shallow, very gently sloping littoral shelf along this shoreline. Fifty feet from shore, the water depth is only 2 feet (taking into account the normal yearly maximum). Therefore, even though significant wave height based on fetch is 1.75 feet, actual design wave height is somewhat smaller (1.5 feet), with a recommended median, minimum, and maximum rock sizes of 6.5, 3.25, and 9.75 inches respectively.

Although in reality it is difficult to obtain rocks with exact median, minimum, and maximum specifications, from a local commercial vendor the rocks we obtained appear to have a median diameter of about 6 inches and varied in size from 2 inches to 12 inches. Prior to their placement, a 6-inch-thick layer of 0.25 to 1-inch-diameter gravel (a mixture of what is commonly called pea-gravel and drainstone) was placed along the base of the coir. This served as a filter layer, especially in places where no filter fabric was used. Next, the larger rocks were dumped and then adjusted by hand to form a reasonably well-fitting layer several stones thick. Finally, another layer of 1" gravel was placed over the top to fill the voids between the rocks as completely as possible. Ten cubic yards of fieldstone and five cubic yards of drainstone were used. **Figure 29** shows the careful adjustment of the fieldstone.

A small point (labeled U) can be seen in the plan view drawing and some of the photos. This point is actually the result of a wide rock groin placed many years ago. Although piling rocks in this manner can cause increased erosion and is not recommended (see **Section 6**, Groins), this feature was not removed but was incorporated into the shoreline erosion control project because it was stable and well vegetated and it was felt that more disruption would result from removing it than letting it remain.

Openings in the buffer were created to allow adequate recreational access to the shoreline. On these properties, the openings are being utilized for beaching small craft and placing seasonal docks. Even though there is no woody vegetation in this area, it was felt that the coir and rock armoring would be adequate to protect the shoreline throughout these narrow openings in the buffer.

## Section Eight: Case Study

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**Figure 30:** View of the site eight years after project completion.

Staggered groupings of 2- to 3-foot-diameter boulders were placed in some areas to function as an offshore wave barrier. They cause the waves to break before they hit the beach, lessening the amount of erosive energy. They were placed in groups of 6 or 7 in 4 critical locations: at the terminal ends of the project and at the west ends of the recreational access openings in the buffer (due to prevailing westerly winds). Within a few weeks of placement, deposits of sand began accumulating in the “wave shadow” of the boulders, showing that the wave barriers were working as intended.

The materials (vegetation, topsoil, rock, gravel, various fabrics, permits, etc.) for this project along nearly 200 feet of shoreline cost about \$3,500. About 130 person hours were required for design and construction. As of 2004, the total cost for this project would probably be about \$65 per shoreline foot. Although each BEC project will be unique, this provides a rough idea of cost of a similar project.



### Monitoring the Results

After one year, the project proved to be very successful with no measurable erosion along these properties. After some initial apprehension about how the reestablishment of a vegetative buffer strip would impact their use of the shore, the property owners were very pleased with the project and concluded that it did not diminish their use and enjoyment of the property. Vegetation growth and weathering of materials have given the shoreline a “natural” appearance. **Figure 30** shows a view of the shoreline one year after installation.

# Appendices

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- ☼ **One:** Inland Lake and Stream Erosion Reference Guide
- ☼ **Two:** Examples of Shoreline Erosion Evaluation Worksheets and Severity Indexes
- ☼ **Three:** Critical Area Planting Guidelines
- ☼ **Four:** Shoreline Erosion Control Plants
- ☼ **Five:** Commercial Sources of Plants
- ☼ **Six:** Sources of Shoreline Erosion Products
- ☼ **Seven:** Sources of Potential Technical Assistance For Shoreline Erosion Control
- ☼ **Eight:** Glossary



*This green bulrush (*Scirpus atrovirens*) is helping to protect the shore against erosion with its roots (anchoring bottom sediments) and stems (dampening wave action).*

## Appendix One: *Inland Lake and Stream Erosion Reference Guide*

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The following annotated list of references on shoreline erosion processes, environmental impacts, problem assessment methodology, and management practices was developed in compiling this guidebook. They were selected as recommended references for those wishing to learn more about this subject. This list is not meant to be a comprehensive literature review on this topic. Although many of the references deal with the Great Lakes and seacoasts, many of the general concepts are applicable to inland waters as well.

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## **Appendix Two: Examples of Shoreline Erosion Evaluation Worksheets & Severity Indexes**

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### **STREAMBANK EROSION SEVERITY INDEX**

Developed for Northwest Michigan Streambank Erosion Inventory in 1968 by the USDA-NRCS

1. Condition of Bank
  - 1 pt - Toe is stable;  
upper bank is eroding
  - 3 pts - Toe is undercutting
  - 5 pts - Toe and upper bank  
are both eroding
2. Condition Trend
  - 1 pt - Stable
  - 1 pt - Decreasing
  - 5 pts - Increasing
3. Amount of Vegetative Cover on Bank Slope
  - 1 pt - 50-100%
  - 3 pts - 10-50%
  - 5 pts - 1-10%
4. Apparent Cause of Bank Erosion
  - 1 pt - Obstruction in river
  - 2 pts - Bend in river
  - 1 pt - Bank seepage
  - 1 pt - Gullyng of bank from  
side channels
  - 1 pt - Foot traffic
5. Depth of River
  - 1 pt - 0-2 ft
  - 2 pts - 3 ft or greater
6. Current
  - 1 pt - Slow
  - 2 pts - Fast
7. Length of Eroded Bank
  - 1 pt - 0-20 ft
  - 3 pts - 21-50 ft
  - 5 pts - 51 ft or greater
8. Height of Eroded Bank
  - 1 pt - 0-5 ft
  - 3 pts - 5-10 ft
  - 5 pts - 10-20 ft
  - 7 pts - 20 ft or greater
9. Slope of Eroded Bank
  - 1 pt - 4:1 or greater
  - 2 pts - 2:1 or 3:1
  - 5 pts - Vertical or 1:1
10. Soil Texture of Bank
  - 1 pt - Clay
  - 1 pt - Loam
  - 2 pts - Gravel
  - 2 pts - Stratified
  - 3 pts - Sand

The total assigned points determine the erosion severity as follows:

- Minor erosion - less than 30 pts
- Moderate erosion - 30-36 pts
- Severe erosion - more than 36 pts

**Appendix Two: Examples of Shoreline Erosion Evaluation Worksheets & Severity Indexes**

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LAKESHORE EROSION EVALUATION DATASHEET

Date:

Evaluator:

---

**Site Information**

Property Owner:

Water Body:

Address

Phone:

County, Township, Range, and Section Number:

---

**Site Conditions**

1. Shoreline type:       Cliff       Bluff       Plain/Beach       Wetland       Dune

2. Shoreline materials:

Terrestrial -       Till       Cliff       Silt       Sand       Gravel       Rock       Boulder

Aquatic -       Clay       Silt       Sand       Gravel       Rock       Boulder

3. Bank Condition -  Upper bank is eroded       Toe is eroded       Toe & upper bank both eroded

4. Length of eroded bank:

5. Height of eroded bank:

6. Slope of eroded bank:

7. Rate of recession:

8. Amount of vegetative cover on bank slope:       1-10%       10-50%       50-100%

Type of vegetative cover:

9. Shoreline geometry:       Cove       Irregular shoreline       Straight shoreline       Point

10. Water depth 50 feet from shore:

**Appendix Two: Examples of Shoreline Erosion Evaluation Worksheets & Severity Indexes**

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LAKESHORE EROSION EVALUATION DATASHEET  
(page 2)

11. Wave and Wind Factors

QUADRANT	ESTIMATED FETCH LENGTH
Northeast	
Southeast	
Northwest	
Southwest	

12. Current Speed/Condition:

13. Cause of Erosion:

- Runoff       Ground water seepage       Bank failure       Ice
- Dams       Wind-generated waves       Boat waves       Currents
- Obstruction of longshore drift and currents       Alteration of lake or stream channel
- Disturbance of shoreline or bottom materials       Sedimentation
- Increased lake water level

Streams only:

- Stream obstacles       Stream meander
- Streambed instability       Increased stream discharge

14. Condition Trend:       Stable       Increasing       Decreasing

15. Condition of Adjacent Properties:

## **Appendix Two: Examples of Shoreline Erosion Evaluation Worksheets & Severity Indexes**

### SHORELINE EROSION EVALUATION

#### **QUESTIONS FOR PROPERTY OWNERS**

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How long has erosion at your site been occurring?

How much shoreline has been lost? Over what time period?

What changes have taken place at adjacent shoreline properties? In the water body?  
(i.e. changing water level, dredging, filling, obstructions)

Do you think the erosion is from natural or human-caused factors?

What, if anything, have you tried to control erosion at your site?

What do you use your shoreline for?

What do you want your shoreline to look like?

How much money/time are you willing to spend on an erosion control project?

#### **PHOTOGRAPHS:**

IN WATER: From property edges and center

FROM LAND: From property edges and center

Adjacent properties' shoreline

From house to water



## Appendix Two: Examples of Shoreline Erosion Evaluation Worksheets & Severity Indexes

### RIVER AND STREAMBANK EROSION EVALUATION DATASHEET

Site Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Recorder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_ Film Roll: \_\_\_\_\_ Photo Number: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Location

Township Name: \_\_\_\_\_ T. \_\_\_\_\_ R. \_\_\_\_\_ Sec. \_\_\_\_\_ GPS waypoint \_\_\_\_\_

Owner:  Federal  State  Twp  Cnty  Private  Unknown, \_\_\_\_\_

Other landmarks/Info Regarding Location: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Site Information

Bank-as designated while looking downstream:  Right  Left Aspect: N E S W

Is the site accessible by road for material and equipment?  Yes  No

If NO, Distance from the nearest road (estimate): \_\_\_\_\_

#### Condition of the Bank:

Toe is undercutting  Toe is stable, upper bank eroding  Toe and upper bank eroding

Percent of vegetative cover on the bank is:  0-10%  10-50%  50-100%

Other (describe): \_\_\_\_\_

Is Natural revegetation occurring?  Yes  No If YES, What Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Problem trend:  Increasing  Decreasing  Stable  Not Known

#### Apparent Cause of Bank Erosion

Obstruction in River  Bend in River  Bank Seepage

Gully of bank from side channels  Foot Traffic (type): \_\_\_\_\_

Vegetation Removal: Human or Beaver  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Amount of Erosion and Slope Ratio

Slopebank: Vertical  1:1  2:1  3:1  4:1 or flatter

Length of Eroded Bank (feet): \_\_\_\_\_ Average Height of Eroded Bank (feet): \_\_\_\_\_

#### River Conditions

Approximate width of river where erosion occurs: \_\_\_\_\_ ft

Approximate depth of river: \_\_\_\_\_ ft at \_\_\_\_\_ ft from the bank

Current:  Fast  Moderate  Slow

Soil Texture:  Gravel  Sand  Clay  Loam  Muck  Stratified (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Type of Treatment recommended

Rock Riprap  Log Jam Structure  Obstruction Removal  Bank Sloping  Fencing

Stairway(s)  Vegetative Treatments  Brush Placement  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Status of Previous Treatment (Complete this section only if site has been treated)

Structure Stabilization Type:  Rock Riprap  Tree Revetment  Log Jam Lunker Structures

Biologs  Bioengineering  Stairway(s)  Terracing  Stoplogs  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Structural Stabilization Features?

None Present  Present and Functional  Needs Repairs: Type \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_ lin. ft.

Present and Functional  Needs Repairs: Type \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_ lin. ft.

Vegetative Stabilization:  Grasses  Herbaceous Plants  Coniferous Trees  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Is Natural revegetation occurring?  Yes  No If YES, what type: \_\_\_\_\_

Is more vegetation needed to stop erosion?  Yes  No If YES, what type: \_\_\_\_\_



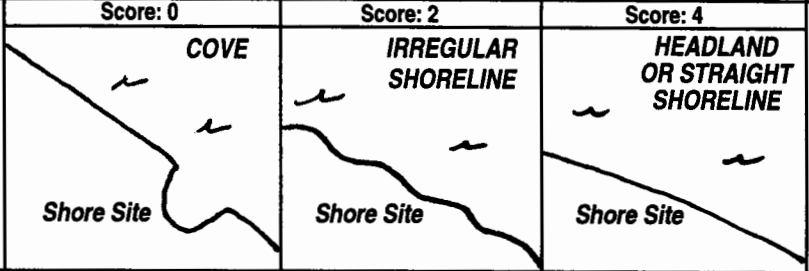
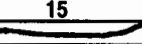
Is foot traffic causing problems?  Yes  No If YES, what type: \_\_\_\_\_

Misc. Comments on Site: \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix Three: Critical Planting Guidelines

## GUIDELINES FOR MARSH PLANT ESTABLISHMENT

Developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (1980)

SHORE VARIABLES	DESCRIPTIVE CATEGORIES						RECORD SCORE HERE
<b>FETCH - AVERAGE</b> Average distance of open water, measured perpendicular to the shore and 45° to either side of perpendicular. 	Score: 0 <b>LESS THAN 3.0 Km. (1.8 Mi.)</b>	Score: 2 <b>3.1 Km. (1.9 Mi.) TO 6.0 Km. (3.7 Mi.)</b>	Score: 4 <b>6.1 Km. (3.8 Mi.) TO 9.0 Km. (5.6 Mi.)</b>	Score: 6 <b>9.1 Km. (5.7 Mi.) TO 12.0 Km. (7.5 Mi.)</b>	Score: 8 <b>12.1 Km. (7.6 Mi.) TO 15.0 Km. (9.4 Mi.)</b>	Score: 10 <b>GREATER THAN 15.0 Km. (9.4 Mi.)</b>	
<b>FETCH - LONGEST</b> Longest distance of open water measured perpendicular to the shore or 45° to either side of perpendicular. 	Score: 0 <b>LESS THAN 4.0 Km. (2.5 Mi.)</b>	Score: 2 <b>4.1 Km. (2.6 Mi.) TO 8.0 Km. (5.0 Mi.)</b>	Score: 4 <b>8.1 Km. (5.1 Mi.) TO 12.0 Km. (7.5 Mi.)</b>	Score: 6 <b>12.1 Km. (7.6 Mi.) TO 16.0 Km. (10.0 Mi.)</b>	Score: 8 <b>16.1 Km. (10.1 Mi.) TO 20.0 Km. (12.6 Mi.)</b>	Score: 10 <b>GREATER THAN 20.0 Km. (12.6 Mi.)</b>	
<b>SHORELINE GEOMETRY</b> General shape of the shoreline within 200 meters (680 feet) on either side of the site. 	Score: 0		Score: 2		Score: 4		
<b>SHORELINE SLOPE</b> Slope of the planting area (vertical to horizontal). 	Score: 0 <b>GRADUAL 1 TO 15 OR LESS</b>			Score: 4 <b>STEEP MORE THAN 1 TO 15</b>			
<b>SEDIMENT</b> Grain size of sediments.	Score: 0 <b>SILT &amp; CLAY</b>	Score: 2 <b>FINE SILT</b>	Score: 4 <b>MEDIUM SAND</b>	Score: 6 <b>COARSE SAND</b>	Score: 8 <b>GRAVEL</b>		
<b>BOAT TRAFFIC</b> Proximity of site to navigation channels for large vessels or small recreational craft.	Score: 0 <b>NO NAVIGATION CHANNEL WITHIN 1 KILOMETER (0.6 MILES)</b>		Score: 8 <b>NAVIGATION CHANNEL WITHIN 1 KILOMETER (0.6 MILES)</b>		Score: 16 <b>NAVIGATION CHANNEL WITHIN 100 METERS (330 FT)</b>		
<b>WIND</b> The orientation of the site in relation to local winds.	Score: 0 <b>SHELTERED FROM WIND</b>		Score: 4 <b>DOES NOT FACE INTO THE PREVAILING WINDS OR FREQUENT STORM WINDS</b>		Score: 8 <b>FACES INTO THE PREVAILING WINDS OR FREQUENT STORM WINDS</b>		
<b>CUMULATIVE WAVE CLIMATE SCORE (Total of row scores):</b>							
<b>SCORE = 1 to 10:</b> Use sprigs at 3-foot spacings in 10-foot (minimum) zones. <b>= 11 to 20:</b> Use sprigs or 15-week seedlings at 1.5-foot spacings in 10-foot (minimum) zones. <b>= 21 to 30:</b> Use 5-7 month seedlings or plugs at 1.5-foot spacings in 20-foot (minimum) zones. <b>= above 30:</b> Do not plant.							<b>Erosion Potential Increasing</b>

**TABLE A  
RECOMMENDED SEEDING DATES IN MICHIGAN**

<u>Zones</u>	<u>With Irrigation and/or Mulch</u>	<u>Without Irrigation or Mulch</u>
Lower Peninsula, South of US 10	April 20 to October 1 or November to freeze-up**	April 20 to May 20 or August 10 to October 1
Lower Peninsula, North of US 10	May 1 to September 20 or October 25 to freeze-up**	May 1 to June 10 or August 1 to September 20
Upper Peninsula	May 1 to September 10 or October 20 to freeze-up**	May 1 to June 15 or August 1 to September 20

\*\* A “dormant seeding” may be made in late fall, with germination anticipated in spring. Dormant seedings must be mulched. Do not seed when ground is frozen or snow-covered. Do not use a dormant seeding on grassed waterways.

Erosive sites readied for seeding during periods not suitable for seeding should be protected by mulching or mechanical means. Seeding may be made later through the mulch.

**TABLE B**  
**GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING SEEDING MIXTURE BASED ON SOIL CONDITION AND LAND USE**  
 (Refer to Tables C and D for Species and Application Rates)

Soil Characteristics	Site Characteristics				
	Rough Areas	Steep Areas Ditch Banks Cut Fills	Utility Right-of-way	Pond Edges b/	Grassed Waterways Diversions Filter Strips b/
Well & moderately well drained sand & loamy sand (coarse textured soils)	sunny 1, shady 2, 4	4, 6	15	4	4
Well & moderately well drained, moderately coarse to moderately fine textured soils (sandy loam & clay loam)	sunny 1, shady 2, 5	4, 7, 8, 9, 19	15	11, 14	11, 13, 17, 20
Well & moderately well drained clay & silty clay (fine textured soils)	sunny 1, shady 2, 5	7, 8, 9, 13, 19	15	11, 12, 14	11, 13, 17, 20
Somewhat poorly drained or poorly drained soils without artificial drainage a/	3, 5	8, 10, 13, 16	15	12, 13	17, 18
Organic soils a/	3	10, 16, 18	16	11, 12	-

- a. With artificial drainage, use the appropriate site condition in the well-drained groups above.
- b. Mixtures 1 and 2 can be used on grassed waterways that are to be given care and management as a lawn.

TABLE C  
APPLICATION RATES OF SEEDING MIXTURES  
(Pounds Per Acre)

		Seed Mixtures from Table B*																			
Seeds Per Pound	Species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
515000	Creeping red fescue**	20	30	10	40		25		20						20	20					
227000	Perennial ryegrass	a	a	a	a	a	5	a	a	a	a	5	5	a	a	5	a	5	5	a	a
2177000	Kentucky bluegrass	20	10	25					5						15						
4990000	Redtop**								1							1	1	2	2		
533000	Reed canary grass**									10							10				
8700000	Highland or Seaside bentgrass										1	1	1	1	1						
136000	Smooth bromegrass**										30			15		10		25			20
227000	Tall fescue					50	20		20	10			40	15		15			30	15	20
1230000	Timothy**								3	2							4				
375000	Birdsfoot trefoil b **								10	10		c		c				c	c	10	c
110000	Crownvetch b **									15											
	<b>Total Pounds</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>40</b>

- a. 5 pounds of ryegrass may be added to this mixture on erodible sites or other areas where quick cover is essential.
- b. Inoculate all legume seeds with correct inoculant.
- c. 6 pounds of birdsfoot trefoil may be included in grassed waterway mixes.

\* Seeding rates have been rounded off.  
 \*\* Indicates species best suited for wildlife cover.

**TABLE D**  
**APPLICATION RATES OF SEEDING MIXTURES**  
 (Pounds Per 1000 Square Feet)

Under the seed mixture number selected in Table B, use all species shown in that column. For example: for Table B seeding No. 6, the correct seeding mixture is .6 lbs. of creeping red fescue plus .2 lbs. of perennial ryegrass and .5 lbs. of tall fescue. These are minimum rates for ideal conditions. Use judgment to increase rates for less than ideal conditions.

Species	Seed Mixtures from Table B*																			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Creeping red fescue**	.5	.7	.3	1		.6		.5						.75	.75					
Perennial ryegrass	a	a	a	a	a	.2	a	a	a	a	.2	.2	a	a	.2	a	.2	.2	a	a
Kentucky bluegrass	.5	.3	.6				.2							.4						
Redtop**							.03								.03	.03	.03	.03		
Reed canary grass**										.3						.3				
Highland or Seaside bentgrass											.03	.03	.03	.03						
Smooth bromegrass**											.7		.4		.3				.6	.5
Tall fescue					1.2	.5		.5	.3			1	.4		.4			.7	.4	.5
Timothy**							.1	.05								.1				
Birdsfoot trefoil b **							.3	.3			c		c					c	c	.3
Crownvetch b **								.4												c
Total Pounds	1.15	1.15	1.05	1.15	1.35	1.30	0.55	2.13	0.45	0.45	1.13	1.23	1.18	1.33	1.68	0.58	1.03	1.13	1.85	1.35

- a. 0.15 pounds of ryegrass may be added to this mixture on erodible sites or other areas where quick cover is essential.
- b. Inoculate all legume seeds with correct inoculant.
- c. 0.2 pounds of birdsfoot trefoil may be included in grassed waterway mixes.

\* Seeding rates have been rounded off.  
 \*\* Indicates species best suited for wildlife cover.

## Appendix Four: *Shoreline Erosion Control Plants*

<b>NATIVE MICHIGAN HERBACEOUS WETLAND PLANTS FOR SHORELINE LANDSCAPING</b>			
<b>COMMON NAME</b>	<b>SCIENTIFIC NAME</b>	<b>HABITAT<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>FLOWER COLOR</b>
Sweet Flag	<i>Acorus calamus</i>	SW, WS	yellow-green
Water Plantain	<i>Alisma plantago-aquatica</i>	SW, WS	white
Canada anemone	<i>Anemone canadensis</i>	WS	white
Angelica	<i>Angelica atropurpurea</i>	SW, WS	green
Jack-in-the-Pulpit	<i>Arisaema triphyllum</i>	WS	green/brown
Swamp Milkweed	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	WS	pink
New England Aster	<i>Aster novae-angliae</i>	WS	white/violet
Boltonia	<i>Boltonia asteroides</i>	WS	white
Watershield	<i>Brasenia schreberi</i>	SW, SW	purple/red
Wild calla	<i>Calla palustris</i>	SW	white
Marsh Marigold	<i>Caltha palustris</i>	WS	yellow
Marsh bellflower	<i>Campanula aparinoides</i>	WS	blue
Lake Sedge	<i>Carex lacustris</i>	SW, WS	green/brown
Turtlehead	<i>Chelone glabra</i>	WS	white
Water hemlock	<i>Cicuta maculata</i>	SW, WS	white
Fireweed	<i>Epilobium angustifolium</i>	WS	pink
Joe-Pye Weed	<i>Eupatorium maculatum</i>	WS	pink
Boneset	<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>	WS	white
Bottle gentian	<i>Gentiana andrewsii</i>	WS	blue
Stiff gentian	<i>Gentianella quinquefolia</i>	WS	blue
Sweet grass	<i>Hierochloe odorata</i>	WS	green/brown
Sneezeweed	<i>Helenium autumnale)</i>	WS	yellow
Giant sunflower	<i>Helianthus grosseserratus</i>	WS	yellow
Cow Parsnip	<i>Heracleum lanatum)</i>	WS	white

<sup>1</sup> DW = deep water (> 14"), SW = shallow water (<14"), WS = wet but un-ponded soils

## Appendix Four: Shoreline Erosion Control Plants

NATIVE MICHIGAN HERBACEOUS WETLAND PLANTS FOR SHORELINE LANDSCAPING			
Great St. John's-wart	<i>Hypericum pyramidum</i>	WS	yellow
Jewelweed	<i>Impatiens capensis</i>	WS	orange
Blue Flag Iris	<i>Iris versicolor</i>	SW, WS	blue/violet
Marsh-vetchling	<i>Lathyrus palustris</i>	SW, WS	purple
Meadow blazing star	<i>Liatris ligulistylis</i>	WS	purple
Prairie blazing star	<i>Liatris pycnostachya</i>	WS	purple
Michigan lily	<i>Lilium michiganense</i>	WS	orange
Wood lily	<i>Lilium philadelphicum</i>	WS	orange
Cardinal Flower	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	WS	red
Great blue lobelia	<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>	WS	blue
Water horehound	<i>Lycopus americanus</i>	WS	white
Fringed loosestrife	<i>Lysimachia ciliata</i>	WS	yellow
Prairie loosestrife	<i>Lysimachia quadrifolia</i>	WS	yellow
Swamp candles	<i>Lysimachia terrestris</i>	SW, WS	yellow
Tufted losestrife	<i>Lysimachia thyrsoflora</i>	SW	yellow
Ostrich Fern	<i>Matteuccia struthiopteris</i>	WS	none
Wild mint	<i>Mentha arvensis</i>	WS	pink
Buck bean	<i>Menyanthes trifoliata</i>	SW	white
Virginia bluebells	<i>Mertensia virginica</i>	WS	pink/blue
Monkeyflower	<i>Mimulus ringens</i>	SW, WS	blue
Yellow pond lily	<i>Nuphar luteum</i>	DW, SW	yellow
White water lily	<i>Nymphaea tuberosa</i>	DW	white
Sensitive fern	<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	WS	none
Cinnamon Fern	<i>Osmunda cinnamomea</i>	WS	none
Interrupted fern	<i>Osmunda claytoniana</i>	WS	none
Royal Fern	<i>Osmunda regalis</i>	WS	white
Obediant plant	<i>Physotegia virginiana</i>	WS	pink



## Appendix Four: *Shoreline Erosion Control Plants*

<b>NATIVE MICHIGAN HERBACEOUS WETLAND PLANTS FOR SHORELINE LANDSCAPING</b>			
Smartweed	<i>Polygonum sp.</i>	SW, WS	pink
Pickerel weed	<i>Pontederia cordata</i>	SW	violet
Green-headed coneflower	<i>Rudbeckia laciniata</i>	WS	yellow
Arrowhead	<i>Sagittaria sp.</i>	WS	white
Swamp saxifrage	<i>Saxifraga pensylvanica</i>	WS	green/white
Hardstem bulrush	<i>Scirpus acutus</i>	DW, SW	green/brown
Dark Green Bulrush	<i>Scirpus atrovirens</i>	WS	green/brown
Woolgrass	<i>Scirpus cyperinus</i>	SW, WS	green/brown
Three-square bulrush	<i>Scirpus pungens</i>	SW, WS	green/brown
Softstem bulrush	<i>Scirpus validus</i>	SW	green/brown
Marsh skullcap	<i>Scutellaria galericulata</i>	WS	blue
Mad-dog skullcap	<i>Scutellaria lateriflora</i>	WS	blue
Cup-plant	<i>Silphium perfoliatum</i>	WS	yellow
Water parsnip	<i>Sium suave</i>	SW, WS	white
Late or Giant goldenrod	<i>Solidago gigantea</i>	WS	yellow
Bur-reed	<i>Sparganium sp.</i>	SW, WS	white
Hedge nettle	<i>Stachys palustris</i>	WS	purple
Skunk cabbage	<i>Symlocarpus foetidus</i>	WS	purple/green
Germander	<i>Teucrium canadense</i>	WS	violet
Tall meadow rue	<i>Thalictrum dasycarpum</i>	WS	whitish
Marsh fern	<i>Thelypteris palustris</i>	WS	none
Broad-leaf Cattail	<i>Typha latifolia</i>	DW, SW	green/brown
Blue vervain	<i>Verbena hastata</i>	WS	blue
Ironweed	<i>Veronia fasciculata</i>	WS	pink
Culver's root	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	WS	white
Northern white violet	<i>Viola macloskeyi</i>	WS	white
Woolly blue violet	<i>Viola sororia</i>	WS	blue
Golden alexanders	<i>Zizia aurea</i>	WS	yellow
Wild rice	<i>Zizania aquatica</i>	DW, SW	yellow/red

**Appendix Four: Shoreline Erosion Control Plants**

<b>COMMON NATIVE NORTHERN MICHIGAN WOODY SHRUBS OR VINES FOR SHORELINE LANDSCAPING</b>						
<b>COMMON NAME</b>	<b>SCIENTIFIC NAME</b>	<b>WETLAND TOLERANCE<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>HEIGHT (FEET)</b>	<b>FLOWER DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>FRUIT DESCRIPTION</b>	
Mountain Maple	<i>Acer spicatum</i>	FACU	6 - 12	greenish-yellow	bright red winged seed	
Alder, green or mountain	<i>Alnus crispa</i>	FAC	15 - 30	greenish catkin	brown, scaled, woody, cone	
Alder, Speckled or Tag	<i>Alnus rugosa</i>	OBL	15 - 30	greenish catkin	brown, scaled, woody, cone	
Serviceberry <sup>2</sup>	<i>Amelanchier sp.</i>	UPL-OBL	20 - 30	white	red-purple berry	
Bog Rosemary	<i>Andromeda glaucophylla</i>	OBL	1 - 1.5	Pinkish white	green capsule	
Bearberry <sup>2</sup>	<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	UPL	<1	pinkish-white	red berry	
Black Chokeberry	<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>	FACW	3 - 6	white	black berry	
Birch, low or swamp	<i>Betula pumila</i>	OBL	6	greenish catkin	brown catkin	
New Jersey Tea	<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>	UPL	2 - 3	white	orange-red capsule	
Bittersweet, American or Climbing	<i>Celastrus scandens</i>	FACU	vine (20+)	greenish-yellow	scarlet berry with orange husk	
Buttonbush	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	OBL	6 - 12	white globe	small, brown, dry seed pods	
Leatherleaf	<i>Chamaedaphne calyculata</i>	OBL	1 - 4	white	papery brown capsule	
Prince's Pine, Pipsissewa	<i>Chimaphila umbellata</i>	UPL	<1	pinkish white	greenish capsule	
Virgin's Bower, Virginia <sup>2</sup>	<i>Clematis virginiana</i>	FAC	vine	white	showy greenish-white plumes	
Sweet Fern	<i>Comptonia peregrina</i>	UPL	1.5 - 2	small catkin	bur-like, brown	
Alternate-leaved Dogwood	<i>Cornus alternifolia</i>	UPL	12 - 20	white	deep blue berry on reddish stalk	

COMMON NATIVE NORTHERN MICHIGAN WOODY SHRUBS OR VINES FOR SHORELINE LANDSCAPING							
Silky Dogwood	Cornus amomum	FACW	6 - 12	creamy white	dull pale blue berry		
Bunchberry <sup>2</sup>	Cornus canadensis	FAC	<1	white	red berry		
Grey Dogwood	Cornus foemina	FACW	6 - 15	creamy white	white berry on bright red stalks		
Round-Leaved dogwood <sup>2</sup>	Cornus rugosa	UPL	15	white	pale blue berry		
Red-osier Dogwood <sup>2</sup>	Cornus stolonifera	FACW	6 - 12	white	white berry		
Hazelnut, American	Corylus americana	FACU	8 - 15	green catkin	brown nut enclosed in leafy structure		
Hazelnut, Beaked <sup>2</sup>	Corylus cornuta	UPL	1 - 8	green catkin	brown nut encased in elongated bristly green tube		
Hawthorn	Crataegus sp.	MOSTLY UPL	15	mostly white	red berry		
Swamp Loosestrife	Decodon verticillatus	OBL		showy purple	papery brown capsule		
Bush Honeysuckle <sup>2</sup>	Diervilla lonicera	UPL	1 - 4	lt. Yellow turning reddish	slender pointed pod		
Leatherwood	Dirca palustris	FAC	1.5 - 7	light yellow	red berry		
Trailing Arbutus	Epigaea repens	UPL	<1	white	green capsule		
Burning Bush, Wahoo	Euonymus atropurpureus	FAC	up to 13	dark purple	pink/scarlet capsule		
Wintergreen <sup>2</sup>	Gaultheria procumbens	FACU	<1	white	red berry		
Witch-Hazel	Hamamelis virginiana	FACU	3 - 15	bright yellow	woody capsule		
Shrubby St John's Wort	Hypericum prolificum	FACU	1 - 3	brilliant yellow	papery brown capsule		

**Appendix Four: Shoreline Erosion Control Plants**

COMMON NATIVE NORTHERN MICHIGAN WOODY SHRUBS OR VINES FOR SHORELINE LANDSCAPING							
Winterberry	<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	FACW+	3 - 12	small, inconspicuous	bright red berry		
Juniper, Common or Prostrate	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	FACU	1.5 - 6	small, inconspicuous	aromatic bluish berry		
Juniper, Creeping	<i>Juniperus horizontalis</i>	FAC	1	small, inconspicuous	dark fleshy berry		
Swamp Laurel	<i>Kalmia polifolia</i>	OBL	0.5 - 2	purplish	green-brown capsule		
Laborador tea	<i>Ledum groenlandicum</i>	OBL	1 - 4	white	many-seeded capsule		
Spice Bush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	FACW	3 - 9	small honey yellow clusters	bright red berry		
American fly honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera canadensis</i>	FACU	3 - 4.5	greenish-yellow	reddish berry		
Sweet Gale	<i>Myrica gale</i>	OBL	3 - 6	small catkin	small waxy cone-like structure		
Mountain Holly	<i>Nemopanthus mucronata</i>	OBL	3 - 12	small, inconspicuous	crimson red berry		
Virginia Creeper	<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	FAC	vine (20 +)	small, greenish	blue-black berry		
Common Ninebark	<i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i>	FACW	8	white	small brown pods		
Shrubby Cinquefoil <sup>2</sup>	<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>	FACW	2 - 3	mostly yellow	dry brown capsule		
Wild Plum	<i>Prunus americana</i>	UPL	10 - 15	white	small red or yellow plum		
Sand Cherry <sup>2</sup>	<i>Prunus pumila</i>	UPL	1-2	white	small dark red to nearly black cherry		
Chokecherry <sup>2</sup>	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	FAC	8 - 30	white elongated cluster	hanging clusters of small, dark red cherries		
Dwarf Alder	<i>Rhamnus alnifolia</i>	OBL	1 - 3	green	black berry		

COMMON NATIVE NORTHERN MICHIGAN WOODY SHRUBS OR VINES FOR SHORELINE LANDSCAPING						
Smooth Sumac <sup>2</sup>	Rhus glabra	UPL	9 - 20	yellowish-green upright cluster	upright clusters of tiny hairy, dry, crimson red berries	
Staghorn Sumac	Rhus typhina	UPL	5 - 30	yellowish-green upright cluster	upright clusters of tiny hairy, dry, crimson red berries	
Wild Black Currant <sup>2</sup>	Ribes americanum	FACW	4	yellow and whitish	black berry	
Swamp Rose <sup>2</sup>	Rosa palustris	OBL	1 - 7	bright pink	scarlet "hip"	
Wild Rose	Rosa sp.		2 - 5	pink or white	reddish "hip"	
Blackberry, Common	Rubus allegheniensis	FACU	1.5 - 7	white	black berry	
Raspberry, Black	Rubus occidentalis	UPL	1.5 - 7	white	black berry	
Blackberry, Dwarf	Rubus pubescens	FACW	1 - 2	white	red-purple berry	
Raspberry, Wild Red	Rubus strigosus	FACW	1.5 - 6	white	red berry	
Pussy Willow	Salix discolor	FACW	5 - 20	catkin	small capsule	
Sandbar Willow	Salix exigua	OBL	4.5 - 9	catkin	small capsule	
Willow shrubs	Salix sp.	FAC-OBL	up to 20	catkin	small capsule	
Elderberry	Sambucus canadensis	FACW	3 - 12	white	black berry	
Red-Berried Elder <sup>2</sup>	Sambucus racemosa	FACU	6 - 10	yellowish-white	clusters of small bright red berries	
Buffaloberry, Soapberry <sup>2</sup>	Shepherdia canadensis	UPL	3 - 9	yellowish	reddish-yellow berry	
Greenbrier, Common	Smilax rotundifolia	FAC	vine	small greenish yellow	blue-black berry	
Meadowsweet	Spiraea alba	FACW	2 - 5	white upright cluster	dry brown seed pods	

**Appendix Four: Shoreline Erosion Control Plants**

<b>COMMON NATIVE NORTHERN MICHIGAN WOODY SHRUBS OR VINES FOR SHORELINE LANDSCAPING</b>						
Sleeple bush, Hardhack	<i>Spiraea tomentosa</i>	FACW	4	pinkish-purple upright cluster	dry brown seed pods	
Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	FACU	3 - 6	Pinkish	purplish-red or white berry	
American Yew <sup>2</sup>	<i>Taxus canadensis</i>	FACU	2 - 6	small, inconspicuous	large brown seed in cup-like red berry	
Poison Ivy <sup>2</sup>	<i>Toxicodendron radicans</i>	FAC	vine (1 - 20+)	whitish	white or cream-colored berry	
Wild Blueberry <sup>2</sup>	<i>Vaccinium sp.</i>	UPL-OBL	0.5 - 2	white	blue berry	
Maple-leaved Viburnum <sup>2</sup>	<i>Viburnum acerifolium</i>	UPL	3 - 6	creamy white	purple-black berry	
Nannyberry <sup>2</sup>	<i>Viburnum lentago</i>	FAC+	10 - 30	white	bluish-black berry	
Downy Arrowwood	<i>Viburnum rafinesquianum</i>	UPL	3 - 6	white	blackish berry	
Highbush Cranberry <sup>2</sup>	<i>Viburnum trilobum</i>	FACW	6 - 16	white	red berry	
Wild Grape <sup>3</sup>	<i>Vitis sp.</i>	FACU-FACW	vine (20+)	green	bluish-black	

1. **OBL:** Obligate wetland plants, estimated probability of wetland occurrence > 99 %  
**FACW:** Facultative wetland plants, estimated probability of wetland occurrence 67-99 %.  
**FAC:** Facultative plants, estimated probability of wetland occurrence 34-66 %.  
**FACU:** Facultative upland plants, estimated probability of wetland occurrence 33-1 %.  
**UPL:** Obligate upland plants, estimated probability of wetland occurrence < 1 %.
2. Photo available from Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council photo collection

COMMON MICHIGAN CONIFER TREES <sup>1</sup>				
COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	WETLAND TOLERANCE <sup>2</sup>	HEIGHT (FEET)	
Balsam Fir <sup>3</sup>	<i>Abies balsamea</i>	FACW	30-80	
White Fir	<i>Abies concolor</i>	UPL (?)	35-60	
Eastern Red Cedar	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	FACU	25-45	
Tamarack	<i>Larix laricina</i>	FACW	35-60	
Norway Spruce	<i>Picea abies</i>	UPL	45-80	
White Spruce	<i>Picea glauca</i>	FACU	45-80	
Colorado Blue Spruce	<i>Picea pungens</i>	UPL	30-45	
Black Spruce	<i>Picea mariana</i>	FACW	15-45	
Jack Pine	<i>Pinus Banksiana</i>	FACU	30-55	
Austrian or Black Pine	<i>Pinus nigra</i>	OBL	45-75	
Mugo Pine	<i>Pinus mugo</i>	UPL (?)	3-25	
Red Pine	<i>Pinus resinosa</i>	FACU	60-95	
White Pine	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	FACU	60-95	
Scotch Pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	UPL	30-58	
Douglas Fir	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	FACU (?)	35-65	
Northern White Cedar	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	FACW	30-45	
Eastern Hemlock	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>	FACU	60-95	

1. All of these conifers except tamarack are evergreen.

2. **OBL:** Obligate wetland plants, estimated probability of wetland occurrence >99 %  
**FACW:** Facultative wetland plants, estimated probability of wetland occurrence 67-99 %.  
**FAC:** Facultative plants, estimated probability of wetland occurrence 34-66 %.  
**FACU:** Facultative upland plants, estimated probability of wetland occurrence 33-1 %.  
**UPL:** Obligate upland plants, estimated probability of wetland occurrence <1 %.

3. **Bold** indicates native Michigan species. All others are exotic.

## Appendix Four: *Shoreline Erosion Control Plants*

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### PLANT IDENTIFICATION AND NATURAL HISTORY GUIDES

- Barnes, Burton V. and Wagner, Warren H. 1981. *Michigan Trees—A Guide to Trees of Michigan and the Great Lakes Region*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, MI. 383 p.
- Billington, Cecil. 1952. *Ferns of Michigan*. Cranbrook Institute of Science Bulletin #52, Bloomfield Hills, MI. 240 p.
- Billington, Cecil. 1968. *Shrubs of Michigan*. Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills, MI. 339 p.
- Birdseye, Clarence and Eleanor Birdseye. 1951. *Growing Woodland Plants*. Dover Publications, New York, NY. 223 p.
- Borman, S., R. Korth, and Temte. 1997. *Through The Looking Glass, A Field Guide to Aquatic Plants*. Wisconsin Lakes Partnership. 248 p.
- Chadde, Steve W. 1998. *A Great Lakes Wetland Flora*. Pocketflora Press, Calumet, MI 569 p.
- Eastman, John and Amelia Hansen. 1992. *The Book of Forest and Thicket Trees, Shrubs, and Wildflowers of Eastern North America*. Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA. 212 p.
- Eastman, John and Amelia Hansen. 1995. *The Book of Bog and Swamp Trees, Shrubs, and Wildflowers of Eastern Freshwater Wetlands*. Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA. 237 p.
- Fassett, Norman C. 1978. *Spring Flora of Wisconsin*. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI. 413 p.
- Hallowell, Anne, and Hallowell, Barbara. 1981. *Fern Finder*. Nature Study Guild, Berkeley, CA. 59 p.
- Hotchkiss, Neil. 1972. *Common Marsh, Underwater and Floating-Leaved Plants of the United States and Canada*. Dover Publications, New York, NY. 223 p.
- Knobel, Edward. 1980. *Field Guide to the Grasses, Sedges, and Rushes of the United States*. Dover Publications, Inc., New York, NY. 83 p.
- Newcomb, Laurence. 1977. *Newcomb's Wildflower Guide*. Little, Brown, and Co. New York, NY. 490 p.
- Peterson Roger Tory, and McKenny, Margaret. 1968. *A Field Guide to Wildflowers of Northeastern and North Central North America*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, MA. 420 p.
- Prescott, G.W. 1969. *How to Know the Aquatic Plants*. Wm. C. Brown Company. 171 p.
- Smith, Helen V. 1966. *Michigan Wildflowers*. Cranbrook Institute of Science Bulletin #42, Bloomfield Hills, MI. 468 p.
- Voss, Edward. 1972. *Michigan Flora, Part I*. Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bulletin #55, Bloomfield Hills, MI. 488 p.
- Voss, Edward. 1985. *Michigan Flora, Part II*. Cranbrook Institute of Science (Bulletin #59) and University of Michigan Herbarium, Ann Arbor, MI. 724 p.
- Voss, Edward. 1996. *Michigan Flora, Part III*. Cranbrook Institute of Science (Bulletin #61) and University of Michigan Herbarium, Ann Arbor, MI. 622 p.
- Watts, May T. 1963. *Master Tree Finder: A Manual for the Identification of Trees by their Leaves*. Nature Study Guild, Berkeley, CA. 58 p.



**COMMERCIAL SOURCES OF EROSION CONTROL PLANTS**

This is a listing of suppliers known to carry plants native to the Great Lakes Basin which may be useful for biotechnical erosion control projects or for establishment of vegetated buffer strips along the shoreline. Some suppliers may specialize in a certain type of plant, such as rooted stock versus seeds; or evergreens, wetland plants, or ground covers. The list includes only those suppliers located in the Great Lakes Basin states and Ontario. In addition, there are many other suppliers located outside the Great Lakes Basin. However, since it is always best to obtain plants with genotypes from as close to the project site as practical, suppliers outside the Great Lakes Basin were not included. Suppliers known to carry plants with Michigan genotypes are indicated by an asterisk (\*). Although the list was compiled from a variety of sources, it is undoubtedly incomplete. Inclusion on this list does not constitute an endorsement or guarantee of products quality or services.

**Alpha Nurseries Inc.**  
3737 65th Street  
Holland, MI 49423  
p. 616-857-7804  
e. info@alphanurseries.com  
www.alphanurseries.com

**Amturf**  
1123 - 129th Avenue  
Bradley, MI 49311  
p. 800-632-1998  
f. 616-792-1700

**Armintrout's West Michigan Farms, Inc**  
1156 Lincoln Road  
Allegan, MI 49010  
p. 616-673-6627  
f. 616-673-3519

**Badger Evergreen Nursery**  
902 26th Street  
Allegan, MI 49010  
p. 269-673-5546  
f. 269-673-2263  
e. badger@accn.org

**Bordine's**  
1835 S Rochester Road  
Rochester Hills, MI 48307  
p. 810-651-9000  
f. 248-651-9009  
www.bordines.com

**Bosch's Countryview Nursery**  
10785 84th Avenue  
Allendale, MI 49401  
p. 269-892-4090  
f. 269-892-4290

**Cold Stream Farm\***  
2030 Free Soil Road  
Free Soil, MI 49411  
p. 231-464-5809  
www.coldstreamfarm.net

**Conservation Resource Center**  
61591 30th Street  
Lawton, MI 49065  
p. 616-624-6054  
f. 616-624-5700

**Engel's Nursery**  
2080 64th Street  
Fennville, MI 49408  
p. 269-543-4123  
f. 269-543-4123  
e. infor@engelsnursery.com  
www.engelsnursery.com

**Fairplains Nursery**  
PO Box 45  
Greenville, MI 48838  
p. 616-754-5738  
f. 616-754-4580  
e. mtf@pathwaynet.com

**Grass Roots Nursery**  
24765 Bell Road  
New Boston, MI 48164  
p. 734-753-9200  
f. 734-654-2405  
www.grassrootsnursery.com

**Great Lakes Nursery Company**  
W2390 County Road J  
Gleason, WI 54435  
p. 888-733-3564  
f. 715-873-3416  
www.greatlakesnursery.com

**Hartmann's Plant Company**  
310 60th Street  
Grand Junction, MI 49056  
p. 269-253-4281  
f. 269-253-4457  
e. info@hartmannsplantcompany.com  
www.hartmannsplantcompany.com

**Hensler Nursery, Inc.**  
5715 N 750 E  
Hamlet, IN 46532  
p. 574-867-4192  
e. henslernursery@skyyenet.net

**Hramor Nursery**  
2267 Merkey Road  
Manistee, MI 49660  
p. 231-723-4846  
f. 231-732-5580  
e. hramor@jackpine.com  
www.hramornursery.com

**J & J Tranzplant Aquatic Nursery, LLC**  
P.O. Box 227  
Wild Rose, WI 54984-0227  
p. 715-256-0059  
f. 715-256-0039  
e. jmalchow@tranzplant.com  
www.tranzplant.com

**JF New Native Plant Nursery**  
128 Sunset Dr  
Walkerton, IN  
p. 574-586-2412  
f. 574-586-2718  
e. info@jfnnew.com  
www.jfnnew.com

**John Arnoldink Nursery**  
723 Old Orchard Road  
Holland, MI 49423  
p. 616-335-9823

**Kester's Wild Game Food Nurseries, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 516  
Omro, WI 54963  
p. 920-685-2929  
f. 920-685-6727  
e. pkester@vbe.com  
www.kestersnursery.com

## Appendix Five: *Commercial Sources of Plants*

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### **Kobe Nursery**

43264 County Road 653  
Paw Paw, MI 49079  
p. 269-657-3094

### **Land O' Pines Nursery**

1056 N Schoenherr Road  
Custer, MI 49405  
p. 616-757-2141

### **Michigan State Seed Solutions**

717 N Clinton  
Grand Ledge, MI 48837  
p. 800-647-8873  
f. 517-627-7838  
e. fsiemon@seedsolutions.com  
www.seedsolutions.com

### **Michigan Wildflower Farm**

11770 Cutler Road  
Portland, MI 48875-9452  
p. 517-647-6010  
f. 517-647-6072  
e. wildflowers@voyagernet  
www.michiganwildflowerfarm.com

### **The Native Plant Nursery LLC**

PO Box 7841  
Ann Arbor MI 48107-7841  
p. 734-677-3260  
f. 734-677-5860  
e. plants@nativeplant.com  
www.nativeplant.com

### **Needlefast Evergreens, Inc**

4075 West Hansen Road  
Ludington, MI 49431  
p. 877-255-0535  
f. 231-843-1887  
e. nickel@needlefastevergreens.com  
www.needlefastevergreens.com

### **Newago Conservation District Nursery**

1725 E. 72nd Street  
Newago, MI 49337  
p. 231-652-7493  
f. 231-652-4776

### **New Life Nursery**

3720 64th Street  
Holland, MI 49423  
p. 269-857-1209  
f. 269-857-1770  
e. info@newlifenuresery.com  
www.newlifenuresery.com

### **Northern Pines Nursery**

2300 South Morey Road  
Lake City, MI 49651  
p. 231-839-3277  
f. 231-839-3331  
e. npn@voyager.net

### **Oikos Tree Crops**

P. O. Box 19425  
Kalamazoo, MI 49019  
p. 269-624-6233  
f. 269-624-4019  
e. customerservice@oikostreecrops.com  
www.oikostreecrops.com

### **Peterson's Riverview Nursery**

873 26th Street  
Allegan, MI 49010  
p. 269-673-2440  
f. 269-673-6250  
e. jptrees@accn.org  
www.petersons-riverview.com

### **Pine Hill Nursery**

866 US 31 N  
Kewadin, MI 49648  
p. 231-599-2824  
www.pinehill-nursery.com

### **Southern Tier Consulting, Inc**

P. O. Box 30  
West Clarkville, NY 14786  
p. 585-968-3120  
f. 585-968-3122  
e. froghome@southerntierconsulting.com  
www.southerntierconsulting.com

### **Stempky Nursery**

5157 N. Straits Hwy.  
Cheboygan, MI 49721  
p. 231-627-4814  
f. 231-627-3087

### **Vans Pines Nursery, Inc.**

14731 Baldwin Street  
West Olive, MI 49460-9708  
p. 800-888-7337  
f. 616-399-1652  
e. info@vanspinesnursery.com  
www.vanspinesnursery.com

### **Wahmhoff Farms**

11121 M-40 Highway  
Gobles, MI 49055  
p. 888-MITREES  
f. 269-628-7324  
e. info@mitrees.com  
www.mitrees.com

### **Wavecrest Nursery and Landscaping Co.**

2509 Lakeshore Dr  
Fennville, MI 49408  
p. 888-869-4159  
f. 269-543-4100  
e. wavecrest@i2k.com  
www.wavecrestnursery.com

### **Wetlands Nursery**

P. O. Box 14553  
Saginaw, MI 48601  
p. 989-752-3492  
f. 989-752-3096  
e. JewelR@aol.com

### **Wildlife Nurseries, Inc.**

P. O. Box 2724  
Oshkosh, WI 54903-2724  
p. 920-231-3780  
f. 920-231-3554

### **Windy Hills Farm**

1565 E. Wilson Road  
Scottville, MI 49454  
p. 231-757-2373  
e. windyhills@jackpine.com

### **Zelenka Nursery, LLC**

16127 Winans Street  
Grand Haven, MI 49417-9652  
p. 800-253-3743  
f. 616-842-0304  
e. information@zelenkanursery.com  
w. www.zelenkanursery.com

**NATIVE PLANT MATERIALS NURSERIES SPECIALIZING IN MICHIGAN GENOTYPES**

**Earth Joy**

22493 Milner  
St. Claire Shores, MI 48081  
p. 810-778-0693  
e. joycejanicki@hotmail.com

**Fruit Full Acres**

4166 County 416 20th Road  
Gladstone, MI 49837  
p. 906-786-3899

*Specializes in grasses, forbs.  
Sells seeds.*

**Grass Roots**

PO Box 4001  
East Lansing, MI 48826  
p. 517-337-2405  
e. grassroots@voyager.net

*Specializes in woodland forbs.  
Sells rescued plants.*

**Grow Wild Nursery**

PO Box 401  
Byron, MI 48418  
p. 810-266-9453

*Specializes in grasses, forbs.  
Sells plants and seeds.*

**Hortech, Inc.**

PO Box 533  
Spring Lake, MI 49456-0533  
p. 616-842-1392  
f. 616-842-3273

*Specializes in perennials, ground  
covers, vines and ferns. Sells plants.*

**Huria Nursery**

4687 Grenadier SW  
Wyoming, MI 49509  
p. 616-538-4359

*Specializes in trees and shrubs.  
Sells bare root, saplings.*

**JF New**

708 Roosevelt Road  
Walkerton, IN 46574  
p. 574-586-2412  
f. 574-586-2718  
e. info@jfnew.com  
www.jfnew.com

**Michigan Wildflower Farm**

11770 Cutler Rd.  
Portland, MI 48875  
p. 517-647-6010  
f. 517-647-6072  
e. wildflowers@voyager.net  
www.michiganwildflowerfarm.com

*Specializes in grasses and forbs.  
Sells sees and plants*

**Nesta Prairie Perennials**

1019 Miller Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
p. 800-233-5025  
f. 616-343-0768

*Specializes in grasses, forbs, sedges.  
Sells plugs.*

**Oikos Tree Crops**

PO Box 19425  
Kalamazoo, MI 49019-0425  
p. 616-624-6233  
f. 616-624-4019  
e.customerservice@oikos  
treecrops.com  
www.oikostreecrops.com

*Specializes in shrubs,  
trees (nut bearing).  
Sells bare root saplings.*

**The Native Plant Nursery**

PO Box 7841  
Ann Arbor, MI 48107  
p. 734-994-9592  
e. plants@nativeplant.com  
www.nativeplant.com

*Specializes in grasses and forbs.  
Sells plants.*

**Sand Hill Farm**

11250 Ten Mile Rd., NE  
Rockford, MI 49341  
p. 616-691-8214  
f. 616-691-7872  
e. cheryl@iserv.net

*Specializes in grasses, sedges, forbs,  
ferns, wetland plants. Sells plugs  
and seeds.*

**Wetlands Nursery**

PO Box 14553  
Saginaw, MI 48601  
p. 989-752-3492  
f. 989-752-3096  
e. jewelr@aol.com

*Specializes in wetland forbs, grasses,  
sedges. Sells plants and plugs.*

**Wildtype Native Plants**

900 N. Every Rd.  
Mason, MI 48854  
p. 517-244-1140  
e. wildtype@msu.edu  
www.wildtypeplants.com

*Specializes in grasses, forbs, shrubs,  
and trees. Sells plants and seed.*

## Appendix Six: Sources of Shoreline Erosion Products

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### SOURCES OF SHORELINE EROSION PRODUCTS

This is a listing of manufacturers and suppliers known to carry products which may be useful for shoreline erosion control projects. Although the list was compiled from a variety of sources, it is undoubtedly incomplete. Inclusion on this list does not constitute an endorsement or guarantee of product quality or services.

#### **Advanced Drainage Systems, Inc**

3300 Riverside Drive  
Columbus, OH 43221  
p. 800-733-7473  
e. info@ads-pipe.com  
www.ads-pipe.com

*Geotextiles and geogrids.*

#### **Albright Seed Company, Inc**

P.O. Box 1275  
Carpinteria, CA 93014-1275  
p. 805-684-0436  
f. 805-684-2798  
e. paul@albrightseed.com  
www.albrightseed.com

*Seed, geotextiles, and hydroseeding materials.*

#### **American Excelsior Co**

850 Avenue H East  
Arlington, Texas 76011  
p. 817-385-3500  
f. 817-649-7816  
e. erosionsales@american  
excelsior.com  
www.americanexcelsior.com

*Full line of erosion control products.*

#### **Amoco Fabrics & Fibers Co.**

260 The Bluffs  
Austell, GA 30168  
p. 800-445-7732  
f. 770-944-4745  
www.geotextile.com

#### **Atlantic Construction Fabrics, Inc**

2831 Cardwell Road  
Richmond VA 23237  
p. 804-271-2363  
f. 804-271-3074  
www.acfenvironmental.com

#### **Belton Industries, Inc**

5600 Oakbrook Parkway  
Suite 150  
Norcross, GA 30093  
p. 800-225-4099  
f. 770-248-1655  
e. customerservice.dept  
@beltonindustries.com  
www.beltonindustries.com

#### **Bestmann Green Systems, Inc**

53 Mason Street  
Salem MA 01970  
p. 508-741-1166  
e. bgs@bestmann-green  
-systems.de  
bestmann-green-systems.com

*Full line of erosion control products,  
including coir bundles.*

#### **Biomass Farms**

15 Mohawk Avenue  
E. Freetown, MA 02717  
p. 508-763-5253  
f. 508-763-8781  
www.biofence.com

*Bio-fences and mulch blankets.*

#### **Bradley Industrial Textiles, Inc.**

PO Box 254  
Valparaiso, FL 32580  
p. 850-678-6111  
f. 850-729-1052  
e. geotextile@aol.com  
www.bradley-geotextile.com

*Sandbags and geotextiles.*

#### **Buckley Powder Company**

42 Inverness Drive East  
Englewood, CO 80112  
p. 800-333-2266  
f. 303-790-7033  
www.buckleypowder.com

*Root reinforcement material, soil  
blankets, mulches, tackifiers, and  
stabilizers.*

#### **Carthage Mills**

4243 Hunt Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45242  
p. 800-543-4430  
f. 513-794-3434  
e. info@carthagemills.com  
www.carthagemills.com

*Full line of erosion control products.*

#### **Cascade Distribution, Ltd**

15620 121 A Ave.  
Edmonton, ALTA T5V 1B5  
p. 800-565-6130  
f. 780-451-0911  
e. mailbox@cascade.ab.ca  
www.cascade.ab.ca

*Geo ridge permeable berm.*

#### **AB Chance**

A Division of Hubbell Power  
Systems, Inc.  
210 N. Allen  
Centralia, MO 65240  
p. 573-682-8414  
f. 573-682-8660  
e. hpsliterature@hps.hubbell.com  
www.abchance.com

*Earth retention anchors.*

#### **Contech Construction Products, Inc.**

9025 Centre Pointe Drive,  
Suite 400  
West Chester, OH 45069  
p. 800-338-1122  
www.contech-cpi.com

*Erosion control blankets, mats,  
and geotextiles.*

## Appendix Six: Sources of Shoreline Erosion Products

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### **Dayton Bag & Burlap**

322 Davis Avenue  
Dayton, OH 45403  
p. 800-543-3400  
f. 937-258-0029  
www.daybag.com  
*Geotextiles, jute bedding,  
burlap, and ground cover.*

### **Eastern Products, Inc**

One Copperfield Way  
Mahwah, NJ 07430-3200  
p. 201-684-0463  
f. 201-684-0464  
e. info@epinj.net  
www.epinj.net

*Full line of erosion control products.*

### **Environmental Protection Products, Inc.**

8951 M-72  
Williamsburg, MI 49690  
p. 616-267-9911  
f. 616-267-9922

*Full line of erosion control products.*

### **Foresight Products, Inc**

6430 E 49th Drive  
Commerce Ctiy, CO 80022  
p. 800-325-5360  
f. 303-287-3866  
www.earthanchor.com

*Anchoring systems.*

### **Greenfix America**

P.O. Box 1459  
Brawley, CA 92227  
p. 760-351-7791  
f. 760-351-7795  
e. sales@greenfix.com  
www.greenfix.com

*Rolled erosion control blankets.*

### **Greenstreak**

3400 Tree Court Industrial Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63122-6614  
p. 800-325-9504  
f. 636-225-2049  
www.greenstreak.com

*Mats.*

### **Huesker, Inc**

P.O. Box 411529  
Charlotte, NC 28241-1529  
p. 800-942-9418  
f. 704.588.5988  
e. marketing@hueskerinc.com  
www.hueskerinc.com

*Geotextiles, geogrids, and  
concrete mattresses.*

### **Indian Valley Industries, Inc**

PO Box 810  
Johnson City, NY 13790-0810  
p. 800-659-5111  
f. 607-729-5158  
e. jbrauer@iviindustries.com  
www.iviindustries.com

*Silt fence, sandbags, jute mesh, and  
turbidity curtains.*

### **In Line Plastics, LC**

8615 Golden Spike Lane  
Houston, Texas 77086  
p. 800-364-7688  
f. 800-449-5090  
e. sales@in-lineplastics.com  
www.in-lineplastics.com

*Geomembrane liners.*

### **Mirafi**

365 South Holland Drive  
Pendergrass, GA 30567  
p. 706-693-2226  
f. 706-693-4400  
e. tc\_mirafi@rtcusa.net  
www.mirafi.com

*Geosynthetics.*

### **New England Geotextiles Co Inc**

67 Millbrook St  
Worcester, MA 01606  
p. 508-756-3734

*Coir and jute materials.*

### **North American Green**

14649 Highway 41 North  
Evansville, IN 47725  
p. 800-772-2040  
e. customerservice@nagreen.com  
www.nagreen.com

*Erosion control products.*

### **Pallen Enterprises, Inc**

1695 Farmer Road NW  
Conyers, GA 30207  
p. 800-229-7458

*Coconut fiber blankets.*

### **Price and Company, Inc**

425 36th Street SW  
Wyoming, MI 49548-2108  
p. 800-248-8230  
f. 616-530-2317  
e. geopro@priceandcompany.com  
www.priceandcompany.com

*Geotextiles, erosion control blankets,  
and sediment control products.*

### **RoLanka International, Inc**

155 Andrew Drive  
Stockbridge, GA 30281  
p. 800-760-3215  
f. 770-506-0391  
e. rolanka@rolanka.com  
www.rolanka.com

*Coconut fiber roll and blankets.*

### **Soil Stabilization Products Company, Inc**

PO Box 2779  
Merced, CA 95344-0779  
p. 800-523-9992  
f. 209-383-7849  
e. info@sspc.com  
www.sspco.com

*Geocellular confinement system.*

### **Verdyol Alabama, Inc.**

407 Miles Parkway  
Pell City, AL 35125  
p. 205-338-4411

*Straw and wood fiber mats.  
Wholesale only.*

### **Webtec, Inc**

6509-C Northpark Blvd.  
Charlotte, NC 28216  
p. 800-438-0027  
f. 704-394-7946  
e. info@webtecgeos.com  
www.webtecgeos.com

*Geotextiles, erosion control mats,  
and cellular confinement systems.*

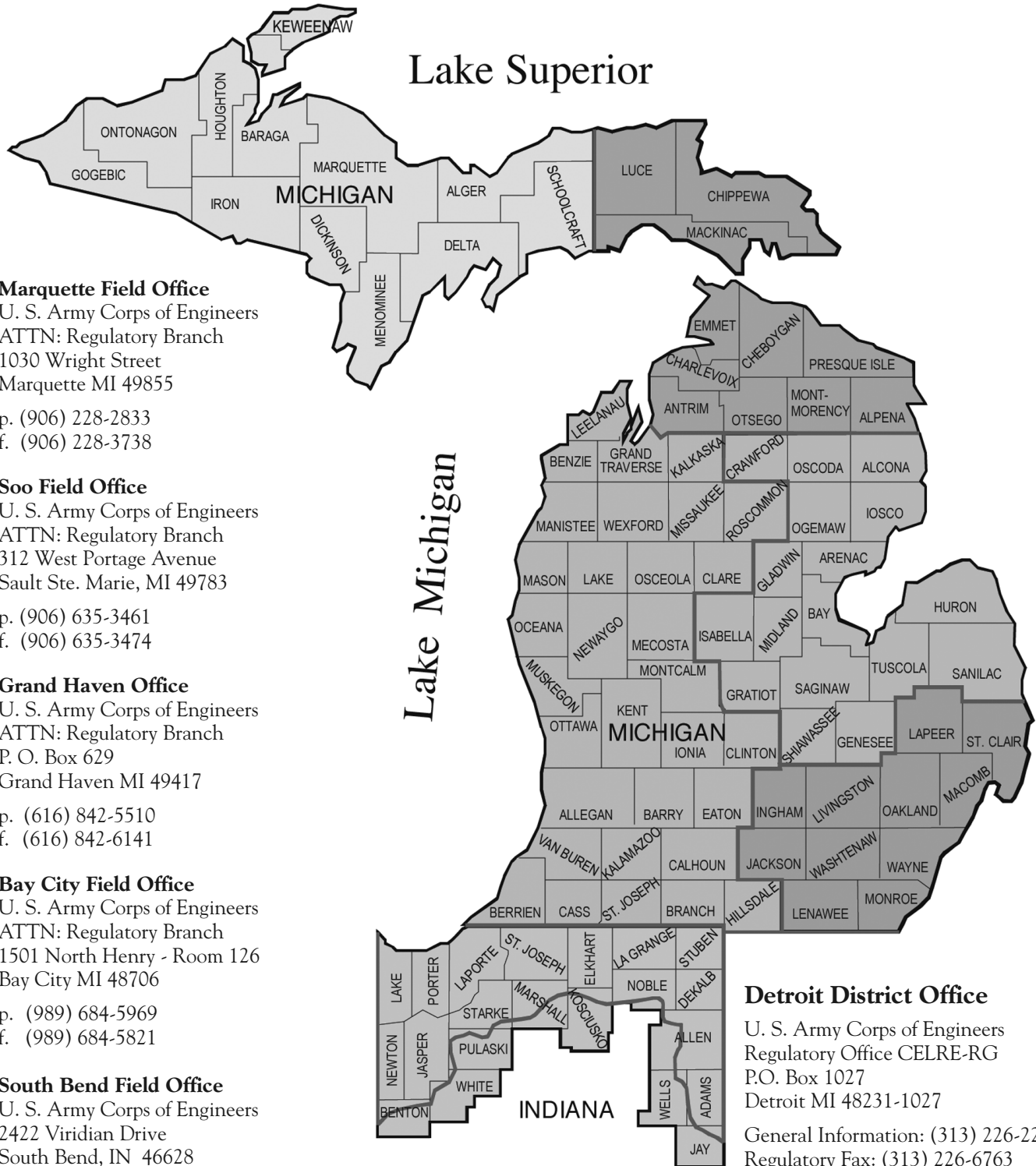
# Land/Water Interface Permitting Staff Map



Land and Water Management Division

12/15/2006

**DETROIT DISTRICT  
REGULATORY  
JURISDICTIONAL BOUNDARIES**



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## Appendix Seven: Regulatory Agencies and Potential Sources of Technical Assistance in Michigan

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### SOURCES OF POTENTIAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SHORELINE EROSION CONTROL IN MICHIGAN

#### Cooperative Extension Service

PO Box 231  
East Lansing, MI 48823-0231  
p. 517-353-9568

*Cooperative Extension Service offices are found locally in most counties.*

#### US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

1405 S Harrison  
East Lansing, MI 48823  
p. 517-337-6701

*Natural Resources Conservation Service offices are found locally in most counties.*

#### Michigan Association of Conservation Districts

PO Box 539  
Lake City, MI 49651  
p. 616-839-3360

*Conservation District offices are found locally in most counties.*

#### US Army Corps of Engineers

##### Detroit District Office

PO Box 1027  
Detroit, MI 48231  
p. 313-226-7504

#### Michigan Sea Grant University of Michigan

2200 Bonisteel Blvd.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109  
p. 313-764-1138

*Field offices are located in six coastal communities.*

#### Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

##### Land and Water Management Division

116 W Allegan  
PO Box 30458  
Lansing, MI 48909  
p. 517-373-1170

#### North Central Region of Resource Conservation and Development Councils

991 E London Rd  
Harrisville, MI 48740  
p. 517-736-3218

*Six Resource Conservation and Development councils are found throughout Michigan.*

#### Huron Pines

501 Norway Street  
Grayling, MI 49738  
p. 989-344-0753  
[www.huronpines.org](http://www.huronpines.org)

#### Tip of Mitt Watershed Council

426 Bay Street  
Petoskey, MI 49770  
p. 231.347.1181  
f. 231.347.5928  
e. [info@watershedcouncil.org](mailto:info@watershedcouncil.org)  
[www.watershedcouncil.org](http://www.watershedcouncil.org)



## Appendix Seven: Regulatory Agencies and Potential Sources of Technical Assistance in Michigan

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### RC&D IN MICHIGAN

Michigan has seven authorized RC&D Areas and one pending RC&D Area.

For a current list and map visit: <http://www.mi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/rc&d.html>

#### **Sauk Trails RC&D**

5360 Holiday Terrace  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009-2126  
p. 616-372-8947

#### **Potawatomi RC&D**

Clahoun Co. Bldg.  
315 W. Green Street  
Marshall, MI 49068-1518  
p. 616-789-2354

#### **Timberland RC&D**

6655 Alpine Avenue NW  
Comstock, MI 49321  
p. 616-784-1090

#### **Upper Peninsula RC&D**

780 Commerce Drive, Suite C  
Marquette, MI 49855  
p. 906-226-7487  
f. 906-226-7040  
[www.uprcd.org](http://www.uprcd.org)

#### **Huron Pines RC&D**

501 Norway Street  
Grayling, MI 49738  
p. 989-344-0753  
[www.huronpines.org](http://www.huronpines.org)

#### **Saginaw Bay RC&D**

4044 S. Three Mile  
Bay City, MI 48706-9206  
p. 989-684-5660

#### **Conservation Resource Alliance**

Grandview Plaza Building  
10850 Traverse Highway, Suite 1111  
Traverse City, MI 49684  
p. 231-946-6817  
f. 231-947-5441  
[www.rivercare.org](http://www.rivercare.org)

#### **Southeast Michigan RC&D**

7203 Jackson Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103-9506  
p. 734-761-6722  
f. 734-662-1686  
e. [info@semircd.org](mailto:info@semircd.org)  
[www.semircd.org](http://www.semircd.org)

## Appendix Seven: Regulatory Agencies and Potential Sources of Technical Assistance in Michigan

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### MICHIGAN WATERSHED ORGANIZATIONS

#### **Au Sable River**

Anglers of the Au Sable  
403 Black Bear Drive  
Grayling, MI 49738  
p. 517-348-8462  
[www.mich.com/~anglers/index.htm](http://www.mich.com/~anglers/index.htm)

#### **Bellaire (Lake Bellaire)**

See "Three Lakes Association"

#### **Central Lake**

Superior Watershed Partnership  
[www.superiorwatersheds.org](http://www.superiorwatersheds.org)

#### **Chocolay River**

Chocolay River Watershed Project  
1030 Wright St.  
Marquette, MI 49855  
p. 906-226-2461  
f. 906-228-4484  
[www.portup.com](http://www.portup.com)

#### **Clam Lake**

See "Three Lakes Association"

#### **Clinton River**

Clinton River Watershed Council  
101 Main Street, Suite 100  
Rochester, MI 48307  
p. 248-601-0606  
f. 248-601-1280  
e. [contact@crwc.org](mailto:contact@crwc.org)  
[www.crwc.org](http://www.crwc.org)

#### **Clinton River**

Clinton River Remedial Action Plan  
Clinton River RAP Public  
Advisory Council  
40 North Main, 6th Floor  
Mt. Clemens, MI 48043  
p. 586-469-5593  
f. 586-469-5609  
[www.crwc.org/rap/raphome.html](http://www.crwc.org/rap/raphome.html)

#### **Crystal Lake, Benzie County**

Crystal Lake & Watershed  
Association (CLWA)  
P.O. Box 89  
Beulah, MI 49617  
p. 231-882-4009  
f. 231-882-7810  
e. [info@CLWA.us](mailto:info@CLWA.us)  
<http://CLWA.org>

#### **Crystal River**

Friends of the Crystal River  
6275 Summit Ct.  
Traverse City, MI 49686  
p. 616-922-5115  
616-386-9285  
f. 616-922-5024

#### **Detroit River**

Detroit River RAP  
Wayne State University  
Detroit, MI 48202  
p. 313-577-3861  
f. 313-577-3810 fax

#### **Flint River**

Flint River Watershed Coalition  
432 N. Saginaw St, Suite 805  
Flint, MI 48502  
p. 810-257-3190  
f. 810-257-3125  
[www.flintriver.org](http://www.flintriver.org)

#### **Galien River**

Galien River Watershed Council  
PO Box 345  
New Buffalo, MI 49117  
p. 616-469-3826  
f. 616-469-2624

#### **Grand Traverse Bay**

The Watershed Center  
Grand Traverse Bay  
232 East Front Street  
Traverse City, MI 49684  
p. 231-935-1514  
f. 231-935-3829 fax  
[www.gtbay.org](http://www.gtbay.org)

#### **Huron River**

Huron River Watershed Council  
1100 North Main Street, Suite 210  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
p. 313-769-5123  
f. 313-998-0163 fax  
[www.hrwc.org](http://www.hrwc.org)

#### **Jordan River**

Friends of the  
Jordan River Watershed, Inc.  
P.O. Box 412  
East Jordan, MI 49727  
p. 231 536-9947  
e. [foj@friendsofthejordan.org](mailto:foj@friendsofthejordan.org)  
[www.friendsofthejordan.org](http://www.friendsofthejordan.org)

#### **Kalamazoo River**

Kalamazoo River Watershed Council  
408 East Michigan Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
p. 269-978-4606  
f. 269-978-4607  
[www.kalriver.org](http://www.kalriver.org)

#### **Macatawa (Lake Macatawa)**

Macatawa Watershed Project  
Macatawa Area Coordinating Council  
400 136th Avenue, Suite 416  
Holland, MI 49424  
p. 616-395-2688  
f. 616-395-9411  
[www.macatawa.org/~macc/wshed/wshed.htm](http://www.macatawa.org/~macc/wshed/wshed.htm)

#### **Manistique River**

Manistique River RAP  
453 South Mackinac Avenue  
Manistique, MI 48854  
p. 906-341-2175

#### **Menominee River**

Menominee River RAP  
PO Box 427  
Menominee, MI 49858  
p. 906-863-2679  
f. 906-863-3288 fax

#### **Muskegon Lake**

Muskegon Lake RAP  
1001 E. Wesley Ave  
Muskegon, MI 49442  
p. 616-773-0008  
f. 616-788-3880

#### **Pere Marquette River**

Pere Marquette Watershed Council  
PO Box 212  
Baldwin, MI 49304  
p. 231-745-2583 or  
231-745-PMWC  
f. 231-745-7692

#### **Raisin River**

River Raisin Watershed Council  
1042 Sutton Road, Suite 3  
Adrian, MI 49221  
p. 517-265-5599  
f. 517-263-0780  
e. [river.raisin@lenawee.mi.us](mailto:river.raisin@lenawee.mi.us)  
[www.riverraisin.org](http://www.riverraisin.org)

## Appendix Seven: Regulatory Agencies and Potential Sources of Technical Assistance in Michigan

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### Rifle River

Rifle River Watershed  
Restoration Committee  
501 Norway  
Grayling, MI 49738  
p. 517-348-9319

### Rouge River

Friends of the Rouge  
24401 Ann Arbor Trail  
Dearborn Heights, MI 48127  
p. 313-792-9900  
f. 313-792-9628  
www.therouge.org

Rouge River RAP  
c/o Washtenaw County  
Environment & Infrastructure  
PO Box 8645  
Ann Arbor, MI 48107  
p. 734-971-4542 ext 2001  
f. 734-971-6947

### Saginaw Bay

Saginaw Bay Watershed,  
Partnership for the William Wright  
c/o Saginaw County Planning  
400 Court Street  
Saginaw, MI 48602  
p. 517-79-6800  
f. 517-797-6809

### Saginaw Bay Watershed

Saginaw Bay Watershed  
Initiative Network  
c/o The Conservation Fund  
53 W. Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, Illinois 60604  
p. 1-877-Ask4WIN (toll free)  
f. 312-913-9523 fax  
www.saginawbaywin.org

### Saginaw River

Saginaw River/Bay RAP  
716 E. Forest Blvd  
PO Box 325  
Lake George, MI 48633  
p. 517-588-9343  
f. 517-588-2574

### Shiawassee River

Friends of the Shiawassee River  
PO Box 402  
Owosso, MI 48867  
p. 517 723 5256

### St. Joseph River

Friends Of The  
St Joe River Association Inc.  
PO Box 354  
Athens, MI 49011  
p. 616-729-5174  
f. 616-729-5045  
www.fotsjr.org

### St. Clair River

St. Clair River RAP  
108 McMorrans Blvd  
Port Huron MI 48060  
p. 810 987 4884

St. Clair River RAP  
Ontario Ministry of  
Environment & Energy  
1094 London Rd.  
Sarnia Ontario, Canada N7S 1P1  
p. 519-383-3794  
f. 519-336-4280

### St. Marys River

St. Marys River RAP  
PO Box 520  
Sault Ste Marie, MI 49783  
p. 906 635 1581

### Sturgeon/Otter River

Sturgeon/Otter River Watershed  
Council  
P.O. Box 365  
Houghton, MI 49931  
p. 906-482-7205  
www.sorwc.org

### Thornapple River

Thornapple River Watershed Group  
P.O. Box 341  
Caledonia, MI 49316  
p. 616 868 5831

### Three Lakes Association

PO Box 353  
Alden, MI 49612-0353  
p. 231-322-4TLA  
f. 231-599-2894  
e. 3lakes@torchlake.com  
www.torchlake.com/3lakes

### Thunder Bay River

Thunder Bay River  
Watershed Council  
PO Box 751  
666 Johnson  
Alpena, MI 49707  
p. 517 379 3740

### Tip of the Mitt Area

Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council  
426 Bay Street  
Petoskey, MI 49770  
p. 231-347-1181  
f. 231-347-5928  
e. info@watershedcouncil.org  
www.watershedcouncil.org

### Tittabawassee River

Northern Tittabawassee River  
Task Force  
4667 Appleby Court  
Gladwin MI 48624  
p. 517-426-4345  
517-426-2660  
f. 517-426-4336

### Torch Lake (Antrim County)

See "Three Lakes Association"

### Torch Lake (Houghton County)

Torch Lake RAP  
PO Box 486  
Dollar Bay, MI 49922  
p. 906-487-7757  
906-482-0443  
f. 906-482-6120

### Whetstone Creek

Whetstone Watershed Project  
Marquette Co. Conservation Dist.  
1030 Wright St.  
Marquette, MI 49855  
p. 906-226-2461  
f. 906-228-4484

### White Lake

White Lake RAP  
714 Alice Street  
Whitehall, MI 49461

## Appendix Seven: Regulatory Agencies and Potential Sources of Technical Assistant in Michigan

### MICHIGAN CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Below is the contact information for all 80 conservation districts in Michigan.  
For a copy of the District Directory published online visit [www.macd.org/macdsdir.html](http://www.macd.org/macdsdir.html)

District Office	Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number
Alcona CD	P.O. Box 291 320 S. State Street	Harrisville	48740-9243	989-724-5272
Alger CD	101 Court Street	Munising	49862-9243	906-387-2222
Allegan CD	1668 Lincoln Rd., M-40 North	Allegan	49010	269-673-8965 ext.3
Alpena CD	1900 M-32 West	Alpena	49707-8105	989-356-3596 ext.3
Antrim CD	4820 Stover Road	Bellaire	49615	231-533-8363
Arenac CD	4490 West M-61	Standish	48658	989-846-9662
Baraga CD	35 Ojibwa Industrial Park Rd. Route 1 Box 303	Baraga	49908	906-353-8225 ext.106
Barry CD	1611 South Hanover, Suite 105	Hastings	49058-2579	269-948-8056 ext.3
Bay CD	4044 South 3 Mile	Bay City	48706	989-684-1040
Benzie CD	PO Box 408, 280 S. Benzie Blvd	Beulah	49617	231-882-4391
Berrien CD	3334 Edgewood Road	Berrien Springs	49103	269-471-9117
Branch CD	387 N. Willowbrook Rd. Suite F	Coldwater	49036	517-278-8008 ext.5
Calhoun CD	13464 Preston Drive	Marshall	49068	269-781-4867 ext.5
Cass County CD	1127 East State St.	Cassopolis	49031	269-445-8643 ext.3
Charlevoix CD	303 North Street	Boyne City	49712-1337	231-582-7341
Cheboygan CD	825 S. Huron Street, Suite 2	Cheboygan	49721	231-627-3383
Chippewa/ East Mackinac CD	2847 Ashmun St.	Sault Ste Marie	49783	906-635-1278
Clare CD	PO Box 356, 225 W. Main St.	Harrison	48625	989-539-6401
Clinton CD	2343 North US-27	St. Johns	48879	989-224-3720 ext.3
Crawford- Roscommon CD	606 Lake St., PO Box 156	Roscommon	48653	989-275-5231
Delta CD	2003 Minneapolis Ave., Suite 101	Gladstone	49837	906-428-9469 ext.3
Dickinson CD	102 North Hooper St.	Kingsford	49802-8548	906-774-8441
Emmet CD	200 Division Street, Suite G78	Petoskey	49770	231-348-0605
Genesee CD	1525 North Elms Rd.	Flint	48532	810-230-8766 ext.131
Gladwin CD	1501 N. State Street	Gladwin	48624-1663	989-426-9621 ext.3
Gogebic CD	100 W. Cloverland #3	Ironwood	49938	906-932-3614
Grand Traverse CD	1222 Veterans Drive	Traverse City	49684-4454	231-941-0960
Gratiot CD	301 Commerce Drive	Ithaca	48847	989-875-3050
Hillsdale CD	588 Olds St., Building 2	Jonesville	49250	517-849-9890 ext.3
Houghton-Keweenaw	600 East Lake Shore Dr.	Houghton	49931	906-482-0214

## Appendix Seven: Regulatory Agencies and Potential Sources of Technical Assistant in Michigan

### MICHIGAN CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

District Office	Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number
Huron CD	1460 South Van Dyke	Bad Axe	48413	989-269-9540 ext.3
Ingham CD	1031 West Dexter Trail	Mason	48854	517-676-2290
Ionia CD	431 Swartz Court, #300	Ionia	48846	616-527-2620 ext.101
Iosco CD	190 W. M-55	Tawas City	48763-9330	989-362-2591 ext.5
Iron CD	Courthouse 2 S. Sixth, Suite 15	Crystal Falls	49920	906-875-3765
Isabella CD	5979 East Broadway Rd.	Mt. Pleasant	48858	989-772-9152 ext.3
Jackson CD	211 W. Ganson St., Suite 200	Jackson	49201	517-782-7404
Kalamazoo CD	1911 West Centre Avenue	Portage	49024-5333	269-327-1258 ext.4
Kalkaska CD	605 North Birch St.	Kalakaska	49646	231-258-3307
Kent CD	3260 Eagle Park Drive NE, Suite 111	Grand Rapids	49525	616-942-4111 ext.100
Lapeer CD	1739 N. Saginaw St., Suite 300	Lapeer	48446	810-664-3941 ext.3
Leelanau CD	112 Philip St., PO Box 205	Lake Leelanau	49653-0205	231-256-9783 or 231-256-9669
Lenawee CD	1100 Sutton Road	Adrian	49221	517-263-7400 ext.5
Livingston CD	3469 E. Grand River Ave.	Howell	48843	517-548-1553 ext.5
Luce/ West Mackinac CD	405 Newberry Ave., Room 4 P.O. Box 432	Newberry	49868	906-293-3419
Macomb CD	75701 Memphis Ridge Rd. (M-19)	Richmond	48062	586-727-2666
Manistee CD	8840 Chippewa Hwy. (US-31)	Bear Lake	49614-9400	231-889-4761
Marquette CD	780 Commerce Drive, Suite B	Marquette	49855	906-226-2461 ext.5
Mason-Lake CD	655 N. Scottville Road	Scottville	49454	231-757-3708 ext.3
Mecosta CD	18260 Northland Dr.	Big Rapids	49307	231-796-0909 ext.3
Menominee CD	P.O. Box 574, E. 106 South Dr.	Stephenson	49887	906-753-4663
Midland CD	275 W. Saginaw Road	Sanford	48657	989-687-9760
Missaukee CD	6180 W. Sanborn Road, Suite 3	Lake City	49651	231-839-7193
Monroe CD	1137 South Telegraph Rd.	Monroe	48161-4005	734-241-7755 ext.3
Montcalm CD	77 South State	Stanton	48888	989-831-4606
Montmorency CD	P.O. Box 789, 13210 M-33 North	Atlanta	49709-0789	989-785-4083
Muskegon CD	940 N. Van Eyck St.	Muskegon	49442-3130	231-773-0008
Newaygo CD	940 W. Rex St.	Fremont	49412	231-924-2420 ext.5
Oakland CD	2891 Dixie Highway	Waterford	48328	248-673-4496
Oceana CD	1064 Industrial Park Drive	Shelby	49455	231-861-4967 ext.3
Ogemaw CD	240 W. Wright	West Branch	48661	989-343-0923
Ontonagon CD	900 River St.	Ontonagon	49953	906-884-2141
Osceola-Lake CD	138 W. Upton, Suite 2	Reed City	49677	231-832-2950 ext.3

## Appendix Seven: Regulatory Agencies and Potential Sources of Technical Assistant in Michigan

### MICHIGAN CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

District Office	Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number
Oscoda CD	PO Box 820	Mio	48647	517-826-8824
Otsego CD	800 Livingston Blvd., Suite 4A	Gaylord	49735-9387	989-732-4021
Ottawa CD	16731 Ferris St.	Grand Haven	49417-9601	616-846-8770 ext.5
Presque Isle CD	948 N. Bradley Hwy.	Rogers City	49779-1408	989-734-4000
Saginaw CD	178 North Graham Rd.	Saginaw	48609	989-781-4077 ext.4
Sanilac CD	50 East Miller Rd.	Sandusky	48471-9412	810-648-2116 ext.4
Schoolcraft CD	300 Walnut St., Room 221	Manistique	49854	906-341-8215
Shiawassee CD	1900 South Morrice Road	Owosso	48867	989-723-8263 ext.3
St. Clair CD	P.O. Box 7870	Kimball Township	48074-7870	810-984-3001 ext.5
St. Joseph CD	693 E. Main St.	Centreville	49032-9603	269-467-6336 ext.5
Thornapple-Grand CD	551 Courthouse Dr., Suite 3	Charlotte	48813	517-543-5848 ext.5
Tuscola CD	1075 Cleaver Road	Caro	48723-1166	989-673-8174 ext.3
Van Buren CD	1035 E. Michigan Ave., Suite A	Paw Paw	49079	269-657-4030 ext.5
Washtenaw CD	7203 Jackson Road	Ann Arbor	48103-9506	734-761-6721 ext.5
Wayne CD	5454 Venoy Rd.	Wayne	48184	734-727-7248
Wexford CD	7192 East 34 Road	Cadillac	49601	231-775-7681 ext.3

GLOSSARY

**Accelerated erosion** – Erosion progressing at a rate greater than would be expected under normal conditions.

**ACOE** – United States Army Corps of Engineers.

**Alluvium** – Sediment deposited by flowing water.

**Bar** – A fully or partially submerged mound of sand, gravel, or other substance built by waves, currents, or human activities in shallow water.

**BEC** – Biotechnical erosion control, the use of primarily vegetation (either living or dead) to control erosion.

**Bedload** – Sediment particles which are transported by rolling, sliding, or bouncing off the streambed.

**Bedrock** – The solid rock that underlies all soil and loose material on the earth's surface.

**Bulkhead** – A structure that retains or prevents sliding of land or protects against wave action.

**Cobble** – A rounded rock 3 to 10 inches in diameter. Cobbles are intermediate between gravel and boulders.

**Cohesive** – A tendency for soil particles to stick together.

**Coir** – Fiber from the outer husk of the coconut.

**Deadhead** – A massive buried object to provide support and/or stability.

**Deposition** – The settlement of materials out of moving water and onto the channel bed, banks, and

floodplains that occur when the flowing water is unable to transport the sediment load.

**Discharge** – The amount of water that passes a point on a stream in a given time. Often expressed as cubic feet per second.

**Downdrift** – See longshore drift.

**Dune** – A hill, bank, bluff, ridge, or mound of loose, windblown material, usually sand.

**Dynamic equilibrium** – A net balance where the amount lost in one location is offset by the amount gained in another.

**Ecology** – The relationship of living organisms with their environment.

**Ecosystem** – A functioning system consisting of living organisms interacting with nonliving components of the environment.

**Eddy** – A swirling current traveling contrary to the overall direction of flow.

**Erosion** – The wearing away of the land surface by the action of wind, water, ice, or gravity.

**Eutrophication** – Process by which a body of water becomes highly productive either due to natural causes or excessive inputs of pollution rich dissolved nutrients.

**Fascine** – A bundle of sticks or other fibers bound together.

**Fetch** – The over-water distance across which the wind blows.

**Fieldstone** – Rounded stones found in glacial deposits, and often discarded in piles at the margins of agricultural fields.

**Flanking** – In the context of erosion, refers to the start or continuation of erosion around the side or end of a previously installed erosion control structure.

**Floodplain** – The land adjacent to streams and lakes which is inundated at regular intervals by water overflowing the normal channel.

**Geotextile** – A natural or synthetic fabric with openings sized to allow the passage of water or the growth of plants, but to prevent the passage or movement of soil particles.

**Gradient** – The slope of the bed of the stream, usually measured in feet of elevation drop per mile of stream channel.

**Groin** – A structure built perpendicular to the shore to trap sediment.

**Ground water** – Water that seeps below the surface of the ground and fills the pores between soil particles and cracks in rocks.

**Habitat** – The place where a plant or animal lives, which has all the conditions necessary to support its life and reproduction.

**Headland** – A point, or other broad area of the shore which protrudes noticeably outward.

**Hydrograph** – A graphic depiction of the amount of stream discharge over a period of time.

**Hydrology** – The occurrence and movement of water.

**Ice-shove ridge** – A ridge of soil along the shoreline caused by years of ice pushing against the shore.

## Appendix Eight: Glossary

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**Live stake** – A section of stem or trunk from a living woody plant which has the ability to sprout and grow when placed in moist soil.

**Longshore current** – A relatively weak current in lakes which develops near the shore as the result of wave action and moves parallel to the shore in the general direction of wave movement.

**Longshore drift** – The movement of suspended sediment and bedload by a longshore current. Because the current and sediment moves downwind in the direction of the waves, it is often referred to as downdrift.

**MDEQ** - Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

**MDNR** – Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

**Meander** – An S-shaped bend in a stream channel.

**NRCS** – Natural Resource Conservation Service, a part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

**Nutrient** – A substance that nourishes. The elements nitrogen, phosphorous, and carbon are the most important nutrients for plants in fresh water.

**Organic soil** – A soil with a thick surface layer or layers (comprising half of the uppermost 32 inches) which consists almost exclusively of plant materials in various stages of decomposition (peat and muck), with virtually no mineral particles present.

**Overland erosion** – Erosion of the land surface caused by runoff.

**pH** – A symbol for the degree of acidity or alkalinity of a solution.

**Pool** – A relatively deep, slow

area of water with a smooth surface within a stream channel.

**Revetment** – An armoring layer to protect shoreline soils against erosion.

**Riffle** – A relatively swiftly flowing, shallow area of water with a rough surface within a stream channel.

**Rill** – A shallow channel caused by runoff, often one of the first indications of accelerated overland erosion.

**Runoff** – Rainfall or snowmelt which exceeds the rate at which water can soak into the soil and flows downhill over the land surface.

**Sediment** – A material suspended in water, or which has settled to the bottom.

**Sedimentation** – The deposition of eroded soils in waterways or other locations.

**Shear** – Relatively swift moving water masses sliding past others of slower speed.

**Significant wave height** – The average height of the largest 1/3 of the waves present.

**Slope** – The amount of deviation from a horizontal or vertical surface. Slope can be expressed as a ratio of vertical: horizontal, degrees, or percent.

**Stormwater** – Runoff which occurs in urban areas, primarily due to large areas of impervious surfaces.

**Stream power** – The ability of a stream to erode its bed and banks and transport sediment.

**Super critical flow** – High velocity

water flow found in rapids or where water pours over ledges and short waterfalls.

**Suspended sediment** – Particles of soil kept in suspension by water turbulence.

**Swash** – The surge of water up the face of the beach as a wave hits the shore.

**Systemic** – Found throughout or affecting an entire system, such as a watershed.

**Till** – A glacial deposit consisting of an intermingled mixture of clay, silt, sand, gravel, and boulders.

**Toe** – The base of a slope where it meets the beach, lake, or stream.

**Undercut bank** – A cavity created underwater beneath a streambank by the erosive action of the current.

**Urbanization** – The conversion of natural or forested landscape to a built-up or developed condition.

**Watershed** – The area of the land surface which drains to a particular point or water body.

**Wave height** – The vertical distance between the highest (crest) and lowest (trough) points of a wave.

**Wavelength** – The horizontal distance between wave trough and crest.

**Wetland** – An area of the land surface where the ground water is close to the surface for long enough during the growing season that the vegetation community is dominated by species tolerant of wet soils.

**Wind setup** – A short-term rise of water level caused by wind pushing water against the shore.