

# Planting Perennials on Your Shoreline



Shoreline vegetation provides critical habitat for some of Minnesota's most important plants and animals. It shades the water, buffers wave action, filters runoff, stabilizes eroding shores, and preserves the scenic character of our waters.

A mass planting with bareroot trees, shrubs, and small containerized herbaceous plants such as those listed here is an excellent way to restore your shoreline and encourage quick establishment. Pick plants based on their site preferences (e.g. soil/light/moisture/winter hardiness), and plant them thick to minimize erosion.

- Preserve any native plants that are established on your shoreline. Plan your design around them.
- Keep dead and fallen trees to provide habitat for fish, ducks, birds, and turtles.
- When planting immediately adjacent to shore, tilling is not recommended as a site preparation method because it can cause erosion and runoff into the water.
- Supplement your planting with trees and shrubs because they have stronger roots. Recommended species can be found in the companion flyer *Planting Trees and Shrubs on Your Shoreline* ([https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt\\_section/shoreland/shoreline-trees-shrubs.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/shoreland/shoreline-trees-shrubs.pdf)).
- View additional species and seed mixes online at [bwsr.state.mn.us/seed-mixes](https://bwsr.state.mn.us/seed-mixes).

## Plant list

The species listed here prefer moist to medium-wet soil conditions but are adaptable to a wide range of soil types, regions, and locations.

### Grasses and Sedges

Bottle brush sedge  
 Canada bluejoint grass (M)  
 Common rush (No)(F)  
 Fowl manna grass  
 Fox sedge  
 Prairie cordgrass  
 River bulrush (F)  
 Switchgrass (F)(M)  
 Virginia wild rye (S)

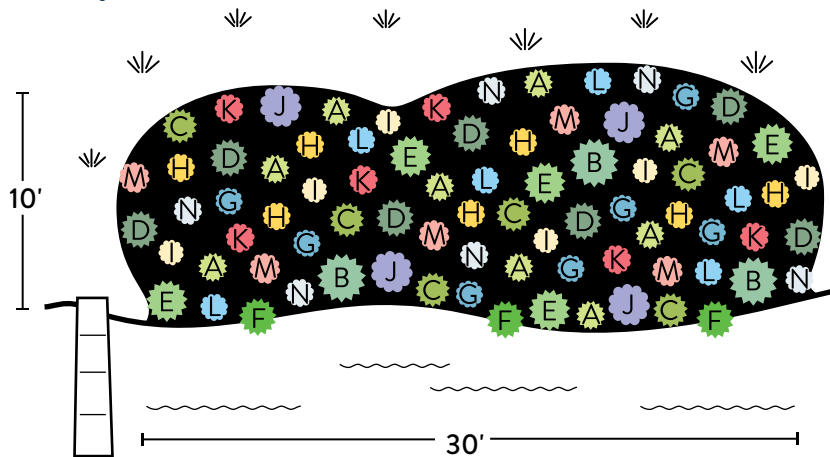
Ironweed (So)  
 Joe-Pye weed  
 Meadow blazing star (So)  
 Monkey flower  
 Mountain mint  
 New England aster (So)  
 Obedient plant  
 Ox eye sunflower  
 Riddell's goldenrod (So)  
 Sneezeweed  
 Swamp milkweed (F)  
 Tall cinquefoil (S)  
 Turtlehead  
 White meadowsweet

### Forbs

Anise hyssop  
 Black-eyed susan  
 Blue flag iris (F)  
 Blue vervain  
 Canada anemone (S)  
 Common boneset  
 Golden alexander (S)  
 Grass-leaved goldenrod  
 Great blue lobelia (So)  
 Great St. John's wort

(No)=Northern MN only  
 (So)=Southern MN only  
 (F)=Flood/water tolerant  
 (S)=Shade tolerant  
 (M)=Use in moderation

## Site plan



## Key

### Grasses and sedges

- A** Bottle brush sedge #9
- B** Canada bluejoint grass #3
- C** Common rush #6
- D** Fowl manna grass #7
- E** Prairie cordgrass #5
- F** River bulrush #3

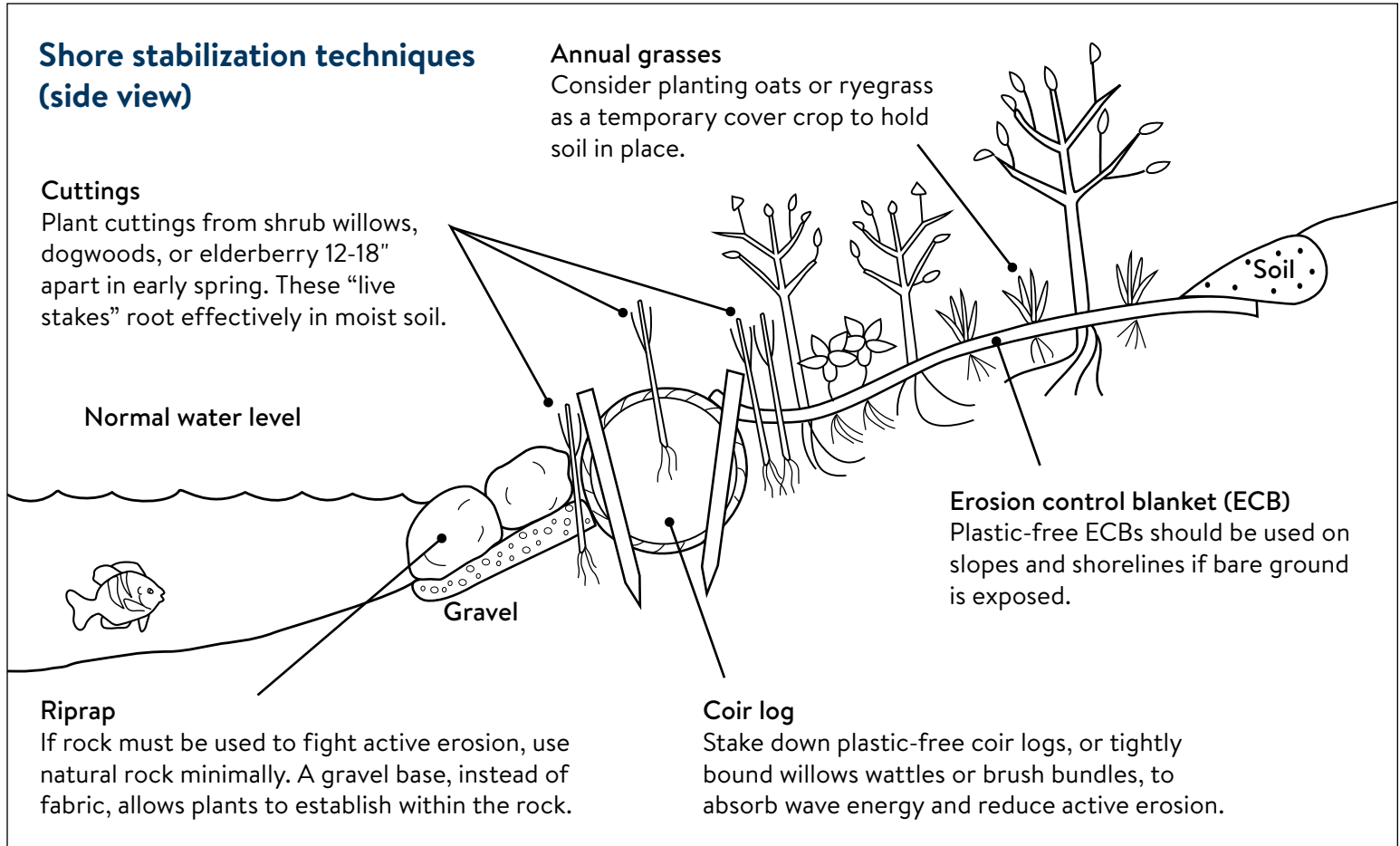
### Forbs

- G** Blue vervain #7
- H** Golden alexander #7
- I** Grass-leaved goldenrod #6
- J** Joe-Pye weed #4
- K** Mountain mint #6
- L** Obedient plant #6
- M** Swamp milkweed #6
- N** White meadowsweet #6

Perennials should be spaced 1.5' - 2' apart. A good mix of plants contains a foundation of native grasses and sedges.

# How to Install Your Shoreline Restoration

Kill the existing grass and non-native plants prior to planting. Any herbicides should be labeled for use near water, including glyphosate products (such as Rodeo® or AquaNeat®) or triclopyr amine products (such as Garlon® 3A or Element™ 3A). Leave the dead sod intact as much as possible. After planting, add mulch or straw to control weeds, retain moisture, and reduce erosion. Water regularly during establishment and avoid midsummer plantings. Pull weeds and replace seasonal losses.



(ECBs, coir logs, and annual grass plantings are recommended when there is loose soil or erosion.)

## Permitting requirements

- Contact your DNR area hydrologist to determine if your work below the ordinary high water level (OHWL) would require a DNR public waters work permit.
- Planting below the OHWL requires a no-cost DNR aquatic plant management permit.
- A local government permit may be needed for vegetation removal or land alteration activities above the OHWL.

## Naturalize your riprap—try a bio-engineered approach

- Plant fast-growing, dense, and resilient plant species near shore such as pussy willows, dogwood, bluejoint grass, and common rush.
- Install plants or cuttings into joints or open spaces in the rock to naturalize and reinforce shorelines.

## More information

- Steps to home landscaping at [mndnr.gov/nativelandscaping](http://mndnr.gov/nativelandscaping).
- Guidance for retaining and restoring natural shorelines—[mndnr.gov/shorelines](http://mndnr.gov/shorelines).
- Your local Soil and Water Conservation District may be able to provide technical assistance, planting recommendations, or cost share.