

## Wetlands and Shorelines



**Wetlands:** In settled areas of Canada, over 70% of wetlands have been destroyed or drained. This is happening because most people don't understand how beneficial wetlands are to both us and the environment! Wetlands provide the following "ecological services":

- Preventing flooding by capturing and storing runoff
- Recharging groundwater sources, which many of us rely on for drinking
- Cleaning water by removing sediments, polluting nutrients, and toxins
- Acting as a carbon sink by storing carbon in biomass, mitigating global warming
- Providing critical habitat for many species of fish, wildlife, and plants

**Shorelines:** The transitional areas found along stream banks, lake shores and wetlands are highly productive areas. The most important move you can make to protect the river, lake, or wetland on which you live is to maintain a strip of vegetation along your shoreline, known as a "buffer". Up to 15m of solid vegetation is recommended, but even a 1-meter strip of un-mowed grass will provide HUGE benefits, such as:

- Preventing shoreline erosion. Plant roots hold the soil in place.
- Providing habitat and food for fish and wildlife
- Protecting the water by filtering pollutants and sediments from runoff
- Shading the water, preventing overheating



### Wetland Restoration Incentive Program

Manitoba Water Stewardship, working with project partners Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation and Ducks Unlimited Canada, provides financial incentives, technical support, and advice to landowners wishing to restore wetlands on their property.

Landowners first enter into a Conservation Agreement, a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a conservation agency that provides long-term protection of habitat but does not interfere with activities on the landowner's more productive agricultural lands. Subsequently, the landowner will be offered an additional "ecological goods and services payment" to restore wetlands on the secured land.

For more information, please visit the Manitoba Water Stewardship website:

[http://www.gov.mb.ca/waterstewardship/water\\_info/riparian/wetland\\_restoration.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/waterstewardship/water_info/riparian/wetland_restoration.html)