

Waterfront Living in Saskatchewan

The Importance of Shorelines

Natural shorelines are richly diverse habitats and an integral part of a functioning lake ecosystem. The abundant aquatic vegetation found there not only provides important habitat for fish and other aquatic species, but also acts as erosion control to protect the shoreline from the actions of the wind and waves. Also protecting the shoreline from the actions of the wind and rain is the tangle of trees, shrubs and grasses found at the top of the bank in the riparian zone. As these areas are disturbed by development they cease to provide this protection and valuable habitat is lost.

Recreational Developments

As we make improvements to our waterfront properties by landscaping or installing boat docks, decks or stairs, we need to be aware that we can take measures to lessen any potential adverse impact the work may have on the shoreline and riparian zones. Choice of building materials and location of potential developments are only two of many important considerations.

Saskatchewan Environment regulates and monitors shoreline alterations through *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2002* (EMPA). EMPA provides for the protection of aquatic habitat and states that a permit is required:

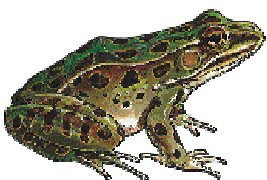
- ❖ to alter the bed, bank or boundary of any water body or water course,
- ❖ to remove or add any material to the bed, bank or boundary of any water body or watercourse, or
- ❖ to remove vegetation from the bed, bank or boundary of any water body or water course.

Authorizations may also be required from other agencies. For more information or to obtain a permit application, contact your local Saskatchewan Environment office.

Expert Help

Although aware that incorporating environmental friendly practices into waterfront living will help to preserve natural shorelines and maintain healthy aquatic and riparian habitats, waterfront residents may not be sure how to best implement those practices. There are many sources of expert advice available such as the waterfront stewardship publications and fact sheets which have been developed by various agencies. Some of those publications that will be of particular interest to cottage owners and lakeside residents are listed below:

- ❖ DFO, Saskatchewan Fact Sheet 2 - Working Around Water? What You Should Know About Fish Habitat and Docks, Boathouses and Boat Launches - Fisheries and Oceans Canada – (306) 780-8725
- ❖ DFO, Saskatchewan Fact Sheet 3 - Working Around Water? What You Should Know About Fish Habitat and Building Materials - Fisheries and Oceans Canada – (306) 780-8725
- ❖ DFO, Saskatchewan Fact Sheet 5 - Working Around Water? What You Should Know About Fish Habitat and Shoreline Stabilization - Fisheries and Oceans Canada – (306) 780-8725
- ❖ Waterfront Living Brochure and Checklist - Living by Water Project – (306) 780-9834
- ❖ Fish Habitat Protection Guidelines - Recreational Developments - Saskatchewan Environment and Fisheries and Oceans Canada – (306) 780-8725
- ❖ The Shore Primer - A Cottager's Guide to a Healthy Waterfront - Cottage Life and Fisheries and Oceans Canada – (306) 780-8725
- ❖ The Dock Primer - A Cottager's Guide to Waterfront Friendly Docks - Cottage Life and Fisheries and Oceans Canada – (306) 780-8725



The once common Northern Leopard Frog (*rana pipiens*) is now considered threatened.



**Saskatchewan
Environment**