

## Shoreline Restoration for SLA

In general, a recent 12 year decline in WQ brought Seymour's WQ from pristine to good. For the past 4 years, WQ has held steady. (see <http://seymourlake.org/waterqual.pdf>)

State DEC studies, 2008 National Lakes Assessment and studies of other states all conclude:

1. Blue green algae and its toxins are the greatest threat to recreational use of a lake. Eurasian Milfoil and other invasive species are a serious threat, but do not prevent the use of the lake water by humans (which can happen with blue green algae toxins).
2. Blue green algae blooms result when the near shore and on shore ground with its natural vegetation is disturbed.
3. Seymour Lake because it is quite large, very deep and has a small drainage basin will be slow to degrade and even slower to reverse loss of WQ.
4. Recommendations are *low impact development approaches* and *shoreline management practices* that maintain or restore natural conditions on the edge of the lake. (see <http://seymourlake.org/dec/dec.htm>)

So, if you want to keep the lake in at least good condition, it is necessary to look at your land and decide what portion you are willing to give back to the lake by restoring native forest or vegetation.

If you decide to act, this is what you can do -

- Take an inventory of your property; replace grass with natural trees, shrubs and/or low growth. (see <http://seymourlake.org/buffers/help.pdf> and <http://seymourlake.org/buffers/goWild.pdf>)
- Look for places where you are willing to keep or replant natural vegetation on the 6 to 100 feet abutting the shore.
  - 6 feet filters much better than grass
  - 15 feet maintains bank stability
  - 25 feet maintains healthy near shore conditions
  - 100 feet treats all runoff from carrying pollutants into the lake

*Any bit of this you do helps the overall lake water quality. For example, a 6 foot strip of ferns or flowers like day lilies or black eyed Susan's at the shore will improve conditions somewhat.*

(see <http://seymourlake.org/replant.pdf> and <http://seymourlake.org/buffers/natives.htm>)

- Look for places where water runs toward the lake during a storm and plant a group of native shrubs, ferns or vegetation of your choice to soak up the runoff. This works best if you do not over the long term mulch or disturb the ground in any way except to pull out plants you do not want.
- Make certain that you do not have a straight path of grass or gravel from the road to the lake. Create curving paths of materials that drain water both for your driveway and for paths to access the lake by foot.

- Grade driveways and walkways to drain away from the lake into dense vegetation or cut water bars.
- Maintain 6' wide access paths to the lake front.
- **FOR MORE INFORMATION OR CLARIFICATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

**Peggy Barter**, SLA Water Quality Chairperson or **Dayna Cole**, Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District, may be contacted at (802)-334-8325 ext. 18 or [dayna.cole@vt.nacdnet.net](mailto:dayna.cole@vt.nacdnet.net) for information about the services she provides as lakeshore and stream bank buffering programs. The service is free; plants are low cost.

## **Functions of Natural Shoreline Buffers**

Adopted from DEC publications

- ✓ **Slow down runoff**
- ✓ **Filter out sediment & phosphorus**
- ✓ **Stabilize the shore; prevent erosion**
- ✓ **Provide a home for small creatures that eat algae**
- ✓ **Provide a home for small creatures that are fish food**
- ✓ **Help maintain a natural lake bottom which is home to creatures that eat algae**
- ✓ **Shade the near shore water; less light for algae growth**
- ✓ **Limit aquatic plant growth near the shore**