

Shoreline Restoration Workshop Summary



On August 20th volunteers came together to install a shoreline restoration project and learn how to organize their own! The Shoreline Restoration Workshop took place at Grant and Linda Warning's property on Blue Lake. Sixteen volunteers joined from a variety of lakes throughout the county! The biggest lesson from the workshop was how simple and quick a shoreline restoration can be especially when you have a group of people able to help you.

Shelley Larson with Hayland Woods led the group through the installation. All along the shoreline native plants were installed to provide a buffer at the lakeshore. Shoreline restorations prevent runoff carrying nutrients from entering the lake and therefore protect lake health! In the project 546 plants were installed in 569 square feet. There were three categories for the plants used in the project: emergent edge, wet meadow short edge, and wet meadow diverse. The emergent edge plants consisted of native plants that did well in very wet soils and were resilient to temporary water submerges. These resilient plants consisted of Swamp Milkweed, Bottlebrush Sedge, Blue Flag Iris, Sweet Flag, and more. Edges of the buffer away from the water were planted with wet meadow short edge plants that consisted of many sedges and some flowering plants. The remainder was filled in with a diverse variety of native plants. Over the course of the next few years, these plants will grow and fill in along the shoreline while protecting lake health and providing habitat.

Participants worked together to make the installation of the shoreline restoration go quickly and smoothly. One participant in each group used a drill bit to dig holes, and then a few people followed behind burying the native plants in the hole. With everyone working together the restoration was installed in less than two hours! As the saying goes, many hands make light work.

If you are interested in installing your own restoration project, there are some simple items to keep in mind. Projects do not always need to be complicated or large. A simple planting can still protect the lake and prevent shoreline erosion! These simple projects can also be installed relatively easily, especially if you have neighbors, friends or family willing to help. Don't be afraid to take initiative! If you are looking for advice before getting started consider talking to your Lake Improvement District, or Lake Association, or you can contact the Isanti SWCD for free technical advice.

Here are some other helpful resources to get started:

A list of Popular Native Plants used in Lakeshore Restorations:

https://www.isantiswcd.org/images/Isanti/Educational_Materials/Final_Native_Plants_for_Shoreline_Buffers.pdf

The website Minnesota Wildflowers gives good care instructions for plants:

<https://www.minnesotawildflowers.info/>

Blue Thumb also has information on their website about the basics of shoreline restorations:

<https://bluethumb.org/shoreline-stabilization/>