

Go Au Naturale



Patrick Goggin / Carolyn Scholl
Vilas County – Land & Water Conservation Department

Talk Outline

- Shoreland buffer zone overview
- Structural & plant components of wildlife habitat
- Checklist run through
- Handouts overview
- Q & A

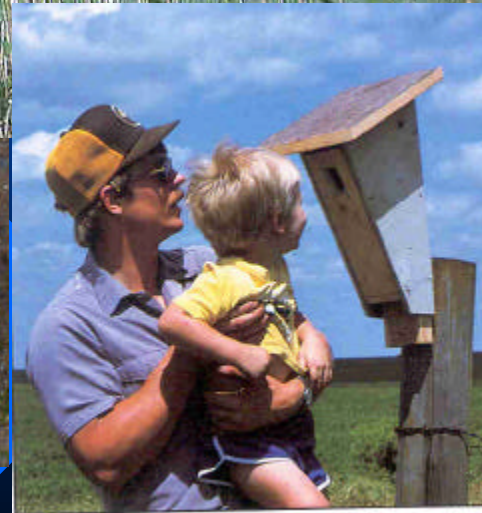
Structural and plant components of wildlife habitat



Nest boxes



- Nest boxes & platforms are used by at least 46 species of northern wildlife
- Nest cavities can help supplement the availability of natural cavities



Dead trees (snags), fallen trees & perches

- A 'snag' is a dead or dying tree
- To wildlife, a snag is a version of fast food
- 43 species of birds & at least 26 mammal species in the Midwest use snags as nesting sites, for perching sites, for territorial establishment, & as a food source
- A snag should be at least 6" in diameter X 15' tall or larger
- Snags can be good locations to place suet feeders



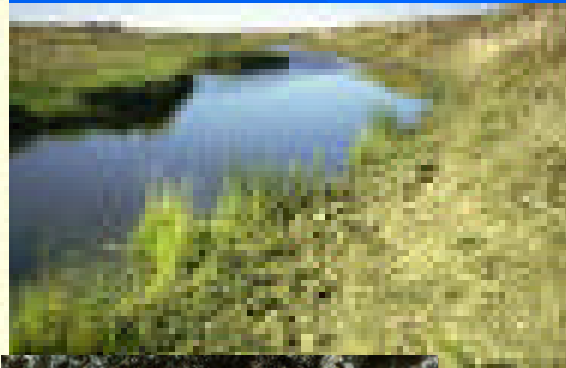
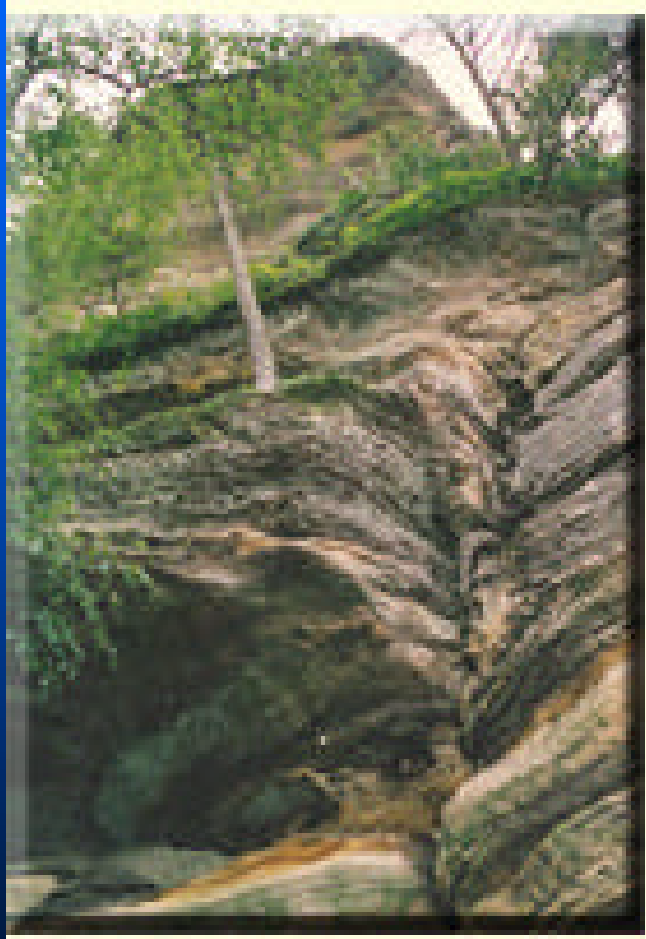
Structural component

Brush piles & rock piles



- Provide escape cover, nesting sites & den sites for cottontail rabbits, weasels, woodchucks, skunk, fox, snakes, & other species
- Important to reptile & amphibian habitat if placed on the edge of a small pond with part of the pile submerged
- Rock piles can be excellent duck & turtle loafing sites if placed out in the water

Cut banks, cliffs, & caves



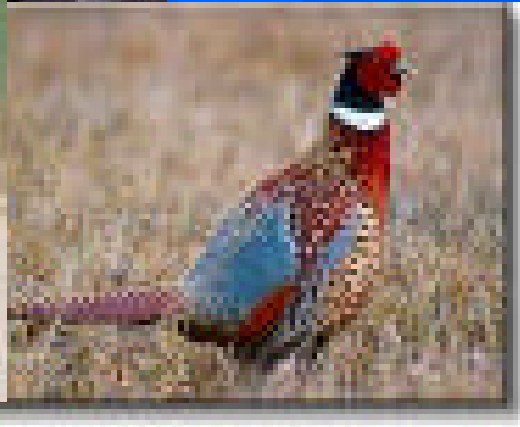
- Unlikely you can create them, important features to maintain if you have them on your property
- Sites for kingfishers, bats, bank swallows, etc.
- Exposed cut banks in old gravel pits used by badgers, red foxes, coyotes & woodchucks
- Caves vital to bats & some invertebrates

Salt

- Salt & other trace elements are essential components of wildlife habitat
- Animals like deer, moose, pine grosbeaks, & crossbills will actively seek out salt
- Consult your local game warden or conservation officer before placing salt out



Dust beds & grit



- Both dust & grit are used by many wild birds to satisfy special needs
- Bobwhite quail, pheasants, turkey, & other birds control external parasites by dusting
- Mourning doves are an example of a bird that uses grit for digestion

Water features



- Vital component in wildlife habitat, often overlooked on uplands near lakes
- Attracts songbirds, mammals, small reptiles, amphibians, & insects
- Can be provided in many forms from a dripping source to bird baths to backyard ponds, waterfalls, to natural springs, creeks, or ponds
- Dripping or flowing water is more attractive to wildlife than still water

Structural component

Feeders

- Providing supplemental foods already available
- For best results, provide feeding areas with 'clusters' of 4-5 different feeders that have different kinds of foods
- A protective shelter of poles, brush, & grass can be built up near the feeders to enhance a potential site
- Maintain feeders all winter as wildlife will become dependent on your hospitality in cold snaps especially



Structural component

Conifers



- Critically escape cover
- Winter shelter
- Summer nesting sites
- Sap, needles, twigs, buds, and seeds eaten by wildlife

Plant component

Grasses & legumes



- Ground nesting habitat
- Forage for plant-eating animals
- Cover for ground nesting birds' young
- Hunting grounds for fox, raptors, owls, coyotes, weasels and skunks

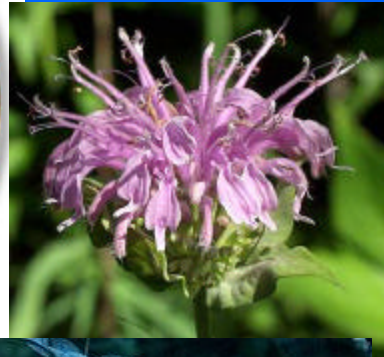
Butterfly, bee & moth plants



- Attract Midwest's 200 + species of butterflies, moths, & bees
- Supply butterfly caterpillars need for food & nectar sources for adults
- Herbs are great for bees, moths, & butterflies
- Bee plants include fruit trees & shrubs, berries, daffodils, lilacs, & pussy willows



Hummingbird plants



- Ruby-throated hummingbirds common locally
- Flower nectar & tiny insects it's preferred diet
- Tubular red flowers attractive to hummingbirds
- Spread plants in bloom over season like columbine, bergamont, lobelias, salvia, scarlet trumpet vine, etc.

Summer fruit, berry, & cover plants



- Planting a landscape component comprised of trees, shrubs, aquatic plants, & wildflowers which provide food and nesting cover from June through August
- Fruit & berry plants vital
- Shrubs that form thickets
- Wildflowers & aquatic plants that provide food & cover

Fall fruits, grains, & cover plants



- Landscape includes shrubs, grasses/grains, & cover plants ripening in fall

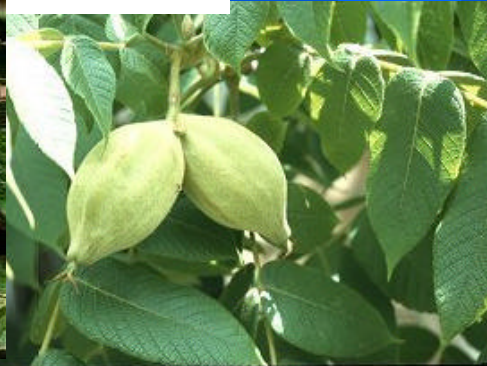
Winter fruits & cover plants



- Best winter wildlife plants are characterized by two qualities: persistence & low appeal to wildlife when they first mature



Nut & acorn plants



- Hardwood trees good long term investment in wildlife production
- Significant food in fall & winter for white-tailed deer, turkey, ducks, squirrels, ruffed grouse, black bear, & other species
- Many of these species also contain natural cavities that are used by up to 96 species of wildlife

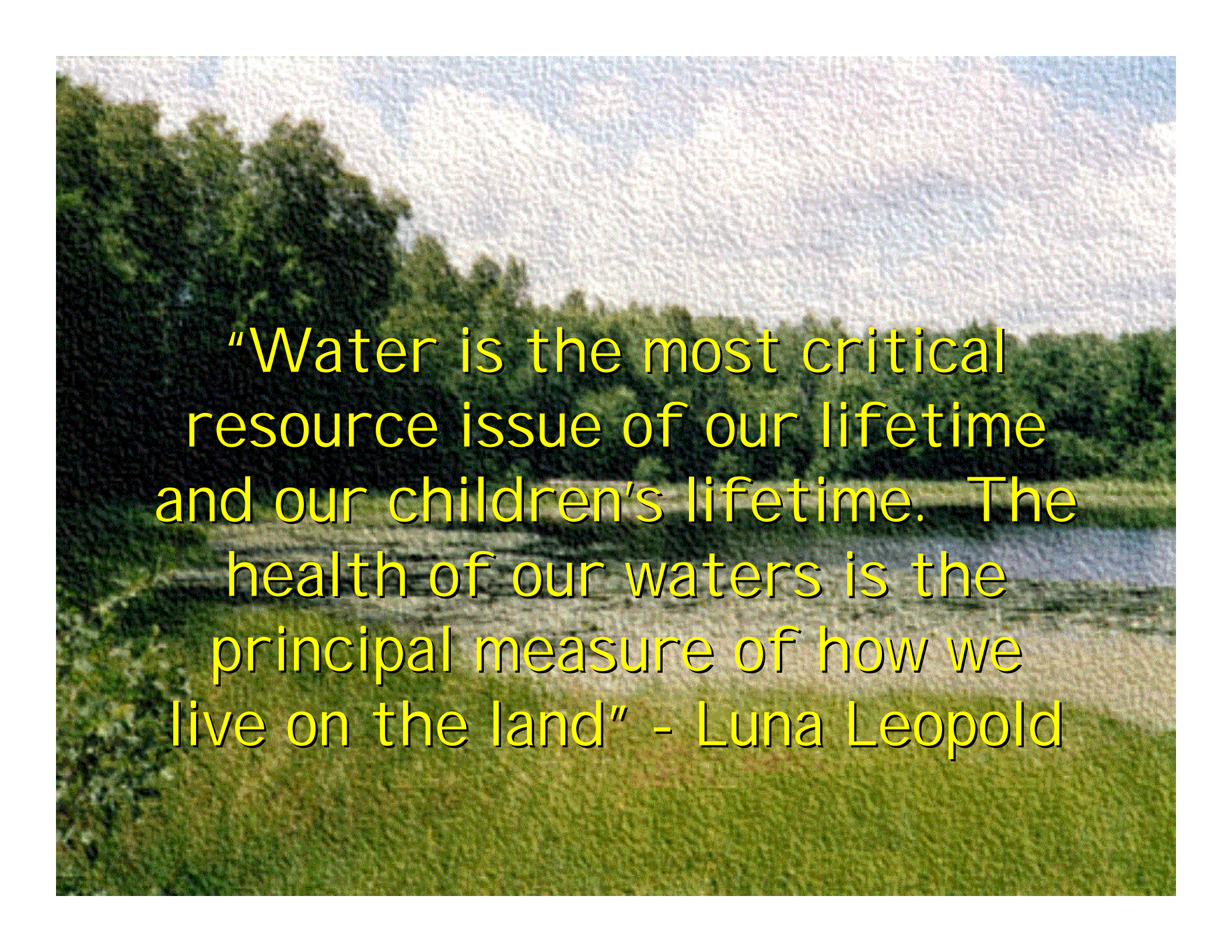
Checklist overview



Handouts

- "The Water's edge"
- Native plant lists
- Web sites listing
- Fiber logs flyer
- ""What is a shoreland buffer?"
- "A fresh look at shoreland restoration"
- Program application
- Business cards



A scenic landscape featuring a river in the foreground, a lush green field, and a dense forest in the background under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

“Water is the most critical resource issue of our lifetime and our children’s lifetime. The health of our waters is the principal measure of how we live on the land” - Luna Leopold

Questions ?

