

COMMUNITY BASED SOCIAL MARKETING

CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE NATURAL LAKESHORES

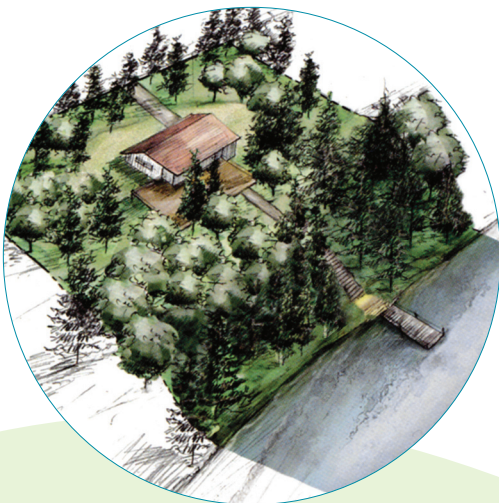
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WHY TARGET LAKESHORE OWNERS WITH A CBSM CAMPAIGN?

Over the years, more and more of us are living and building along lakes. One lot at a time, we are changing the natural features of shoreland areas to accommodate our landscaping and recreational preferences.



Long and Des Moines Lakes, Burnett County, Wisconsin



The rate of development has increased tremendously during the past 30 years. Current patterns of shoreland development include bigger homes, larger lawns and more impervious surfaces—all of which continue to grow in number and scale as more of us move to lake shores. Well documented adverse impacts associated with these changes include loss of fish and wildlife habitat and gradually declining water quality. These development patterns, lot features and landscape choices along lake edges negatively change lakes in ways that older, smaller, less intensely developed cabins did not. Traditional educational measures, while necessary and valuable for raising awareness about what is needed to protect the health of our lakes, are not creating significant behavior changes among lakeshore property owners. Conservation groups, citizens and agencies are looking for better ways to encourage residents to take better care of

lakes and lakeshore habitats. Interest in CBSM within Wisconsin's lake professionals' community has grown in recent years. This pilot project capitalized on that growing interest to implement and evaluate CBSM principles in the context of protecting lakes in northwest Wisconsin.

WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CBSM LITERATURE WERE USED TO DESIGN THE BURNETT COUNTY PROJECT?

The list below summarizes various aspects of the community-based social marketing process used in the project so far.

- **BEHAVIOR SELECTION:** Regarding the design of the project, we worked with local fisheries, wildlife, and lake management experts during a pontoon boat tour to select specific desired behaviors that are achievable for lake owners and offer the potential to substantially improve their lakes. While touring the lakes, each resource expert



expressed a range of best management practices for protecting lakes based on habitat, water quality and various other concerns. In the end, everyone agreed that protecting or restoring near shore vegetation was the single most beneficial management practice.



- **UNDERSTAND THE AUDIENCE:** We worked to understand our audience's perceptions of barriers and benefits to protecting or restoring near shore vegetation with focus groups, surveys and phone interviews. In forming our questions, we targeted a wide range of factors that might affect a person's intention to protect or restore vegetation.
- **REVIEW PAST RESEARCH:** We conducted a literature review looking for results and suggestions from similar projects.
- **EMPLOY SOCIAL NORMS:** We decided to focus some of our outreach effort on building community support for restoring near shore vegetation. A property is targeted for shoreland demonstration. We plan to revegetate the shoreland sites later this summer and schedule tour in conjunction with the annual ice cream social held on Long Lake that is attended by a flotilla of boats from both lakes to increase the social desirability among neighbors of Long and Des Moines lakes for adopting natural shorelines. To increase a growing sense of momentum about the social desirability of adopting natural shorelines, we also plan to develop property signage that is more subtle and appealing to property owners to address concerns heard during the focus groups that lakefront signage currently placed along properties enrolled in the County's Shoreland Incentives Program are unattractive.



For Clean Water & Lakeshore Habitat

listened to what our audience had to say, specifically paying attention to what were our target audiences' barriers and incentives to adopting more natural shorelines, as well as their perception of the benefits of restoration. We focused on our target behavior, reintroducing buffers on lakeshore property, and developed specific messages to address what we heard. Also, the messages we developed are clear, specific and produced with vivid images and design formats.

HOW IS THE PROJECT EMPLOYING CBSM TOOLS NOW OR IN THE FUTURE?

Tools of CBSM campaigns are listed below with a brief description of how this project uses each of them.

- **COMMUNICATION** – Campaign messages focus on re-vegetating shoreline areas while addressing barriers and benefits identified from survey and interview responses. The messages are being distributed in a source appraised as most credible by survey respondents - the County Lakes

HOW DO WE USE CBSM PRINCIPLES IN NEW OUTREACH MATERIALS FOR THIS PROJECT?

Prior to developing the topics or messages in our publications and other outreach efforts, we asked and



Learn to Create a Natural Shoreline with a free, no-strings-attached visit

A natural shoreline is a healthy, vibrant place for people, birds, and fish alike. The Burnett County Shoreland Incentives Program encourages preservation and restoration of natural shorelines.

Natural shorelines provide many benefits:

- keep the water clean by filtering runoff and building the soil in place
- provide a home for a diversity of creatures
- create natural, northwinds, boater
- allow you to access and enjoy the water

Burnett County provides incentives to encourage shoreline preservation. One of the ways to receive a natural shoreline is through the Burnett County Shoreland Incentives Program since it offers an annual property tax credit in return for existing shoreline protection for the shoreline zone. Incentives provided for each parcel enrolled in the Shoreland Incentives Program:

- An annual property tax credit of \$50
- An enrollment payment of \$250
- A free visit with a natural landscape expert
- Planning plans to restore a natural shoreline
- Materials that cover 75% of the cost of plants and materials
- An exclusive shirt or cap that identifies you as a Shoreland Incentives participant
- An optional sign to post at the water's edge

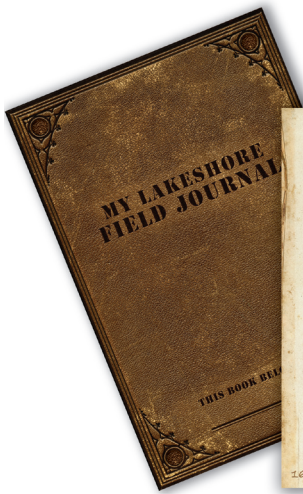


Interested in joining the hundreds of property owners who are creating a legacy of natural shorelines in the Burnett County northwinds? Contact the Burnett County Land and Water Collaboration Department to arrange a free visit. Call 715-842-2186 or email landwater@burnettcounty.org. More information is available on line at www.burnettcounty.com/shoreline.

Free No-Strings-Attached Visit

What exactly does a property visit entail?

- Consultation with a qualified landscape expert
- Technical assistance with shoreline property concerns
- Individualized landscape designs
- Native plant lists specific to your property
- Step-by-step instructions for proper installation
- Delivery of plants, mulch and educational materials
- More information about the Shoreland Incentives Program



Youth Field Guide

grandchildren. One additional component of our communication materials is the "Share Your Shore" logo and color scheme we developed to brand the campaign and provide visual unity across the various campaign materials.



A "no strings attached" visit can help residents plan a more natural shoreline

COMMITMENT – The existing Shoreland Incentive program is an example of encouraging public commitment, and we are working to improve the way this strategy is currently executed. Attempting to help the county rethink their shoreland incentive program signs and address the negative things we heard about the current signs being used on the shore and consider other

options is one way we plan to encourage people to make a public commitment to the program without the perceived negative aspects of sign clutter on the shore. Gaining commitment to a "no strings attached" shoreland site visit by our restoration specialist will be one approach used at lake association meetings and the lake ice cream social through the use of on site visit request cards during the summer of 2010. We also plan to include a "no strings attached" shoreland site visit request card in the Spring 2010 edition of the county lake newsletter.

SHARE YOUR SHORE
FOR CLEAN WATER & LAKESHORE HABITAT
BURNETT COUNTY

- Finished Products
- Goals
- Minutes
- Articles
- Contact Us
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Burnett County CBSM Project
Natural Resource Marketing to Encourage Lakes Protection

Research in behavior change suggests that we humans are resistant to change—and we don't like being told what to do. Many counties and states have for years taken a rather awkward approach to messaging with top-down directives. The public's been told what not to do, rather than what they should be doing. While sometimes necessary it's not always the most effective approach.

The Burnett County Community Based Social Marketing project is working to understand our local lake audience, understand their perceived barriers and benefits to more natural lake shores and then develop and target effective strategies to encourage landowners to develop more natural shorelands. [Learn more](#)

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PROMPTS – We are developing appealing prompts that provide cabin owners with tangible and durable products that have both a recognizable brand and a web link for additional information that we believe residents will keep for years to come. A laminated water proof lake map encouraging use of the county web site is one element we plan to pursue. Floating key chains, wooden

bookmarks or fishing bobbers are possible additional items that would include the project logo and county web site. Point of purchase in-store signs at local nurseries are also being used to direct attention to native plants that were promoted in the newsletters along with a coupon. The Burnett County Top Ten Shoreland Plants brochure encourages property owners to plant native plants along shorelines.

- **NORMS COMMUNICATION** – We planned a restored shoreland demonstration as part of an annual lake ice cream social event on Long Lake. Forty one percent of current lake properties are mostly natural or moderately natural, and focus group respondents say they want to keep their shorelands natural. We will emphasize the many properties that do have lake-friendly landscaping and the many residents who are planning on making the change toward more natural shorelines.
- **INCENTIVES** – We developed a point-of-sale promotion and coupon to accompany the new Burnett County Top Ten Shoreland Plants brochures. Additionally, we promoted native plants in lake association newsletters as a way to accomplish benefits they told us about such as maintaining clean water, improving habitat and discouraging pesky, poopy Canada Geese.



Top Ten Native Plants brochure and coupon

- **CONVENIENCE** – 1) We coordinated the Top Ten plant sales and coupon redemption program with local nurseries and grocery stores. 2) We also simplified the existing county shoreland plant list to the simple, more visually appealing “Top Ten Shoreland Plants” and included simple tips on planting and explained the direct benefits of these plants such as more butterflies and other wildlife. 3) We developed a “no strings attached” shoreland site visit campaign to address property owner concerns about potential regulatory consequences of a person visiting their property and to provide property owners with easy access to expert natural landscape advice.

WHY SHARE CBSM STUDY FINDINGS NOW, PRIOR TO COMPLETING THE PROJECT?

As a component of the grant, we committed to keep our sponsors and others informed about the status and results of this project. Like other formative research, we believe it is important to let others know what we’re learning during the process of conducting this initiative.

DOES THE CBSM CAMPAIGN INVOLVE ANY PARTNERS?

From the initiation of the CBSM project, the following local partners have been involved. We continue to discuss and plan project activities during regular meetings with these primary partners.

- Burnett County UW Extension’s Community Economic and Natural Resource Development Agent, Mike Kornmann,
- Burnett County Land and Water Resource Department Conservationist, Dave Ferris ,
- Harmony Environmental Consultant, Cheryl Clemens,
- Department of Natural Resources Lakes Specialist, Pamela Toshner
- The project also works with Long and Des Moines Lake Associations and the Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Association.