



# Buffer Zones for Lakes & Wetlands

LLPOA Lake Committee - 2023

*A riparian landowner is a landowner that owns property adjacent to a lake or stream. Riparian landowners enjoy benefits from the lake or stream's natural attributes and are responsible for maintaining the streambanks or lakeshore (and riparian buffer) on your property. **Riparian landowners are the last defense to protect our lakes and streams!***

<https://www.lakecountyl.gov/3619/Native-Plant-Buffer>

## Buffer Zone = Aquatic Buffer + Land Buffer

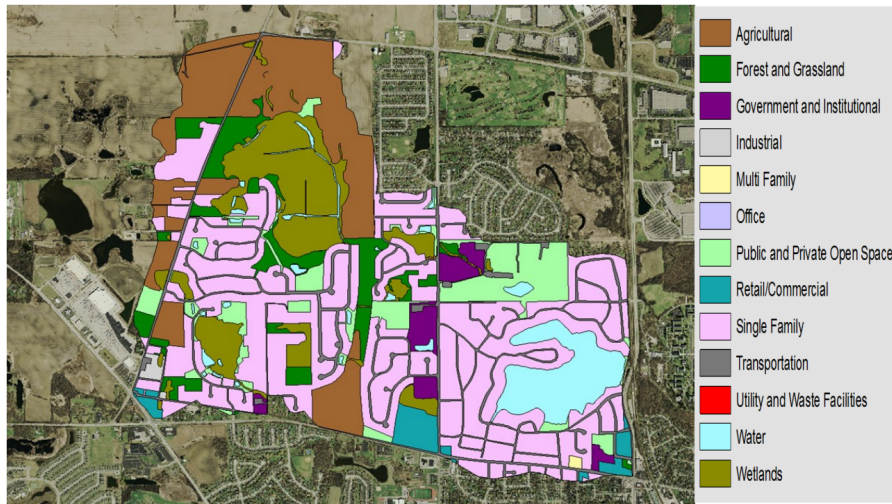
- **Buffer Zones or Buffer Zones are the primary filter of nutrients from runoff entering the lake. Buffers provide space for plants on land & in water along the shoreline.**
- **Manicured lawns all the way to the shoreline will eventually cause erosion along the shoreline.** Turf grass roots are only a few inches deep, hold only the top few inches of soil along the shoreline, and do not stand up to waves. Shallow roots will not filter nutrients or sediment entering the lake from rain water flow over your lawn, and grass provides little to no wildlife habitat.
- **Effective Buffers:**
  - *Run 10-25 feet deep along the length of the lakeshore, with paths for lake access;*
  - *Reduce soil erosion, nutrients, & pesticides in runoff by 50%;*
  - *Remove 75% of sediments from water runoff;*
  - *Establish natural vegetation with native wildflowers, grasses, and wetland plants;*
  - *Minimize lake odors;*
  - *Improved overall water quality!*
- **Wetland Buffers combined with other measures provide the greatest benefit:**
  - *Eliminating Phosphorus in yard fertilizers in runoff*
  - *Remove firewood, grass clippings, & leaves from the shoreline area*
  - *Planting native plants*



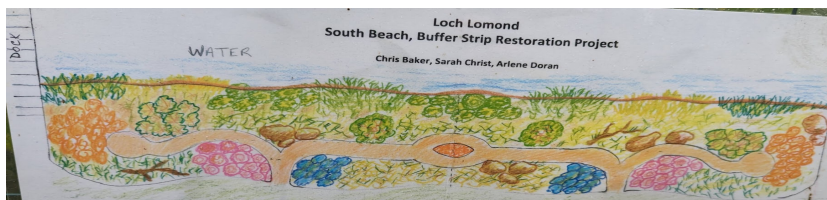
- **In 2015, Loch Lomond had less than 5% Wetland Buffers, or less than 600 feet of its 2.18 mile lakeshore.** To create an effective buffer zone of aquatic and land buffers, we need 20-40% of our lakeshore, or 1/2 - 1 mile of buffers. Even more would be better!
- **The 2015 Lake County Report on Loch Lomond measured the major sources of runoff into Loch Lomond to be: Residential (48.3%), Transportation (25.6%) and Retail/Commercial (7.6%).**



LOCH LOMOND WATERSHED AND LAND USE



- **In 2023 LLPOA installed over 200' of Buffers on the shoreline of South Beach!**



- **In Community Park the Mundelein Parks & Recreation District created Wetland Buffers along the entire length of Bull Creek and the perimeter of the Pond!**
- These buffers typically exceed 25 feet deep, and some exceed 100 feet deep!

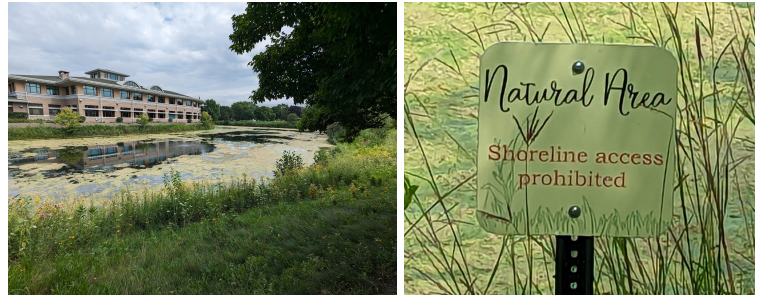


- **Every watershed pond that drains into Loch Lomond has Wetland Buffers around 100% of their perimeters!**

**South of Firehouse**



**Library**



**North of Magnolia**



**North of Timber**



*Buffer zones, typically made up of native flowers and grasses, are invaluable to any lake ecosystem, but especially to those surrounded by high density residential land. It's normal for most of us to want a well manicured lawn surrounding our house. It's what we grew up with. It's what we see around us. But, if you are a lakeshore homeowner, you need to re-evaluate what a "normal" lawn looks like.*

<https://www.lakecountyil.gov/2390/Buffer-Strips>

### **Information & Other Resources**

- <https://lochlomondlake.com/our-lake/ecology/>
- [https://lochlomondlake.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/LLPOA\\_Management\\_Plan\\_2018-09-24.pdf](https://lochlomondlake.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/LLPOA_Management_Plan_2018-09-24.pdf)
- <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/2390/Buffer-Strips>
- <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/3619/Native-Plant-Buffer>
- [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-07/documents/2006\\_8\\_24\\_msbasin\\_symposia\\_ia\\_session4-2.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-07/documents/2006_8_24_msbasin_symposia_ia_session4-2.pdf)
- <https://crops.extension.iastate.edu/encyclopedia/conservation-buffers-and-water-quality>
- <https://www.solitudelakemanagement.com/beneficial-buffers-native-plants-for-ponds-lakes-in-the-midwest/>

**The LLPOA Information Sheet "Native Plants List" provides a partial list of suggested native plants. USDA Hardiness Zone 5b (-20°F to -10°F)**

**To search native plants for color, blooming season, height, location, etc., go to the websites of Prairie Moon Nursery, Morton Arboretum, Illinois Extension**

- <https://www.prairiemoon.com/>
- <https://mortonarb.org/plant-and-protect/trees-and-plants/>
- [https://extension.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/checklist\\_of\\_illinois\\_native\\_trees\\_0.pdf](https://extension.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/checklist_of_illinois_native_trees_0.pdf)