

“Buffer Zone: A strip of land 35 feet wide inland from the ordinary high-water mark of any navigable body of water, including but not limited to: streams, rivers, ponds, flowages and lakes.”

– – *Sawyer County Zoning & Conservation*

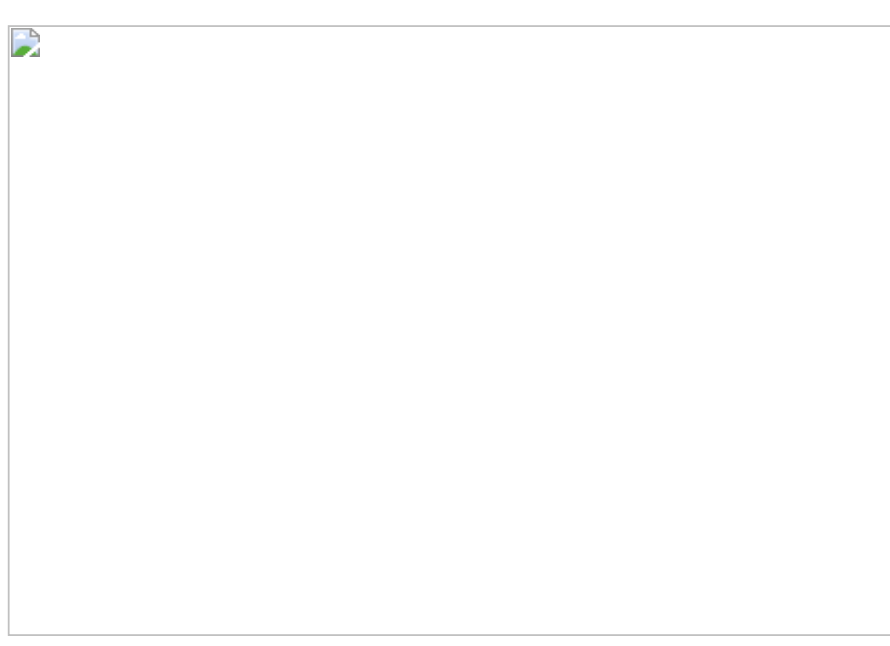
COLA takes another giant step in stewardship; shoreland restoration project begins now

By Kathy Hanson
Contributing Writer

Cathy Bross will be the first Lac Courte Oreilles lake homeowner to play a part in the Lac Courte Oreilles shoreland restoration project, scheduled to begin shortly on her 280-foot shoreline on Winter Bay.

As COLA continues to aggressively set the standard for improving and preserving lake quality, they will work with interested lake property owners who are committed to establishing a buffer zone and working with designated officials, including a landscape contractor, to plan, design and install a Shoreline Vegetation Protection Area (SVPA), buffer zone.

COLA President Kris Sivertson said a \$125,000 grant (funded by DNR with 25 percent matching funds from the Lac Courte Oreilles Foundation, Inc.) is earmarked to eventually complete 25 shoreland restorations, a minimum of 12 by the end of the 2015 season.



“We have allocated \$4,000.00 for every 100 feet of shoreline property in the selected projects,” Sivertson explained. The contractor for the project is Nature’s Designs, owned by Lori Butala and Kathy Kisch.

COLA Vice-President Gary Pulford, who co-chairs the Committee for Shoreland Restoration along with Sivertson, said these buffer zones and restorations will provide wildlife protection and create habitat along the lakeshore and decrease the runoff into the lake, holding the water in the soil. Buffer zones on the lakeshore support water quality, including oxygen levels for favorable fish habitat.

Using plants, particularly native plants, in the buffer zones that have deep root systems, helps to reduce erosion, stabilizes the shoreline, reduces and filters nutrients—mainly phosphorous and other sediments—out of the runoff into the lake.

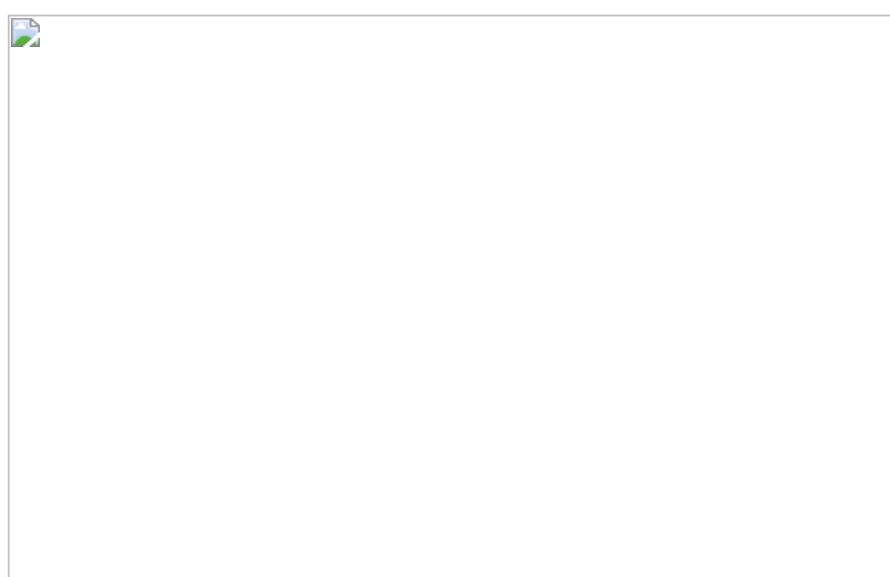
Bross, now a year-round resident at her lake home on Lac Courte Oreilles, said in past years her yard was always maintained much like a suburban lawn. Then about five years ago, she made the decision to stop mowing 35-40 feet from the water up into the yard.



Sivertson contacted her and said her lawn would be a great place to install a buffer zone. “It’s a level sandy beach and people could easily go by and see the restoration,” Bross said. About 125 feet of her property will be involved in the shoreline restoration. Wooded areas on both sides of the property will be enhanced with limited understory plantings, in addition to some plantings on the sand beach in front of these areas, Sivertson said.

“It’s something I’ve always wanted to do but I didn’t have the financial means to do what I wanted,” said Bross, who met with Butala to discuss the project. The plan will highlight the various areas of the shoreline, paying particular attention to the changing habitat—sun, woods, sand, etc., and highlighting particular conditions and aesthetic effects, Bross said. “I know what this can do for the lake and it will be an example of helping people understand what a buffer can do for them,” said Bross.

Another key player in the project is Kelly Nechuta, a conservation specialist with Sawyer County Zoning & Conservation. Nechuta will oversee the project, working with the contractor and homeowner to make certain it’s compliant with Sawyer County Zoning.



“This is a partnership—we usually work off of complaints of violations and spot checks of land use permits. It’s really good to be doing something positive,” Nechuta said.

Pulford said the county will file the SVPA with the Sawyer County Register of Deeds. He explained it is a legal, binding agreement—a conservation covenant with the landowner for the land to be permanently conserved “in perpetuity.” Sawyer County will approve all plans, inspect the work and continue to inspect it every year for three years, according to Pulford.

There is great excitement and hard work surrounding this shoreland restoration project, which has been talked about, considered and planned for years.

“Property owners can be part of the solution,” Sivertson said, adding that the buffer zones are both aesthetic and functional. “What COLA is doing should encourage other lake associations as well,” Pulford said.

COLA continues to raise the bar on ways to preserve Lac Courte Oreilles.

Kathy Hanson is a free-lance reporter for the Sawyer County Gazette, the Sawyer County Field Editor for Our Wisconsin magazine, and Copy Editor for the Bayfield County Journal. She has also served as Staff Reporter, Business Feature Writer, Columnist, and Copy Editor for the Sawyer County Record.

ALL WELCOME!

COLA Annual Meeting
June 27, 2015
St. Francis Solanus
Mission
8:30 am coffee and rolls

9-11 am meeting

UPCOMING EVENTS

Trails End Charity BINGO

Last chance!

Trails End Resort has designated COLA as the June charity for their BINGO events held Sunday mornings at 11:30 in the spring and fall and Monday evenings during the summer.

For the month of June, the final game splits the proceeds between the winner and COLA. Show support and attend this fun event.

Make a note:
COLA Charity BINGO
Monday, 8:00 PM
June 29

For more information, contact Joe or Michele at 715-634-2423.

COLA Boat Parade

July 4, 2015

Wismo Point then on to
Chicago Bay
2 pm

For those with questions or interested in judging, please contact:

Tom Jones
tjones@abc-clc.com
or
Paul Eckerline -
paul.eckerline@cellmark.com
651-238-0794

COLA Annual Picnic

July 18, 2015

Bass Lake Town Hall
12-3 pm

LCO Foundation and COLA Charity Golf

Tournament

August 15, 2015

Big Fish Golf Club

Registration 12 pm

Shotgun Start 1 pm

[Register Now!](#)

NOTICES

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Sawyer Co. Record

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[cuts](#)

April 8, 2015

Are your neighbors and extended

family members of

COLA?

If not, please ask them

to [join](#).

Support COLA by

contributing to the

[Lac Courte Oreilles](#)

[Foundation](#)

Why “Short Ears, ...?”

Lac Courte Oreilles, or Lake Short Ears, was the name used by the first French Traders who visited what was then known as Ottawa Lake. A local band of Ottawas observed the custom of cutting off a portion of their ears.

Tales of Lac Courte Oreilles

This book, edited by Tom and Sue Burgess, together with COLA’s history committee, compiled a detailed history of Lac Courte Oreilles. The book is available from COLA and the Sherman & Ruth Weiss Community Library in Hayward.

COLA Mission: 1) to protect, preserve and enhance the quality of Lac Courte Oreilles and Little Lac Courte Oreilles, their shorelands and surrounding areas, while respecting the interests of property owners and the rights of the general public; and 2) to consider, study, survey and respond to issues deemed relevant by COLA’s membership.

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