

## Shoreline restoration: A Rewarding project for homeowners

By Diane Crandall, Principal, Bloomin' Buddies

This is my final article on the topic of shoreline restoration, greenbelts/buffers, and controlling erosion. Starting a year ago, we have covered the step by step process, from the assessment of your property to planning, designing, plant selection, utilizing biodegradable products, and, finally, implementing your vision. Shoreline restoration has so many benefits for us and for our environment.

Two years ago, when I started Bloomin' Buddies in the spring, my first announcement was an ad in the Antrim County newspaper. I was hoping for interest in my new venture! I was grateful that the editor offered an article with my ad, explaining the shoreline restoration process and its benefits.



I wasn't sure how long it would take before anyone showed interest in the business. So I was excited when two months after the ad, I received a phone call from a woman who had read the article. She had been looking for a company like Bloomin' Buddies for seven years!



My first meeting with the homeowners was wonderful, as they had many questions. They are naturalists, which explained their curiosity and desire to act on the situation to protect their investment and our environment. We talked for a long time, and I did a general overview of their property.

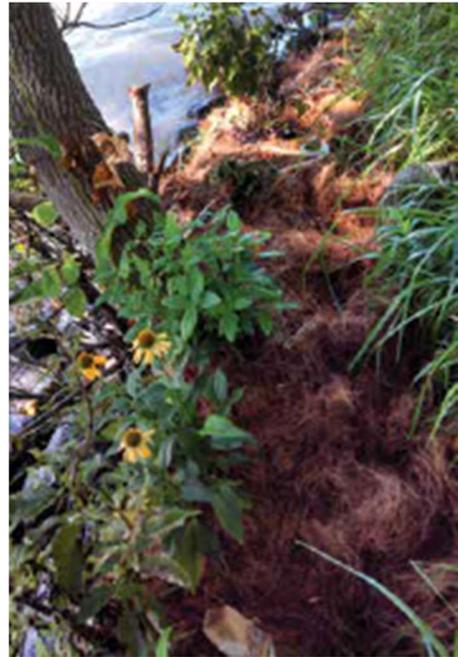
Soon after that first meeting, they decided to move forward with a shoreline restoration, as they were experiencing a great deal of erosion at the shoreline. The property is located on a very high energy site, which experiences high winds from several directions, ice push and boating activity on very deep water. The initial shoreline restoration area included a 15 foot greenbelt/buffer behind the restoration. It also covered the natural swale that had formed, which was eroding.

## **Working Together**

Meeting and working with these homeowners was educational for me, too, as my clients were well informed on native plants, invasive species, and chemicals at the shoreline. The design stage was a lot of fun. We worked together sharing information, which made for a smooth process.

I was quite impressed with my clients' positive attitudes, and they were hands-on about everything. For example, I would give her lists of plants to consider based on the zone requirements, soil conditions, area exposure and other factors. She always did her research online before making her final choices. In addition, she was so alert that she found invasive garlic mustard growing on their property, and we worked together to properly remove it and get it under control.

To my surprise and delight, halfway into the project, these homeowners chose to add three more greenbelt/buffers to deal with erosion issues on the shoreline. The following year, they added some additional coir logs and addressed another erosion issue at the water side.



Hats off to these homeowners as they were the first on Torch Lake to take the natural plunge! I was so impressed that my first clients took that leap of faith with me and am very grateful for that first phone call.

## **Time to Plan**

This winter has been brutal, and storms have kept us inside for much of the season. This makes for a great time to plan ahead. Think warm thoughts and remember the smells of summer! It really brightens a cold and dark day to know that spring is right around the corner!

I would personally like to thank Three Lakes Association for the opportunity to provide these articles for their newsletters. I appreciate TLA's trust and belief in me and my education, and enjoy being involved in their projects. This is a wonderful organization made up of people who work hard and truly care.