

What is MAPLE Inc.?

MAPLE, the Mutual Association for the Protection of Lake Environment in Ontario, is a non-profit environmental organization incorporated in 1987 to promote the preservation of the natural lake environments. Through the maintenance of existing natural shorelands and wetlands, it promotes the restoration and enhancement of waterfronts by encouraging natural regeneration and initiating revegetation of shoreland.

MAPLE is funded through membership fees, private and public donations and special project funding through local and provincial government for surveys and individual planting programs. MAPLE works with individuals, lake associations, environmental groups, business and government agencies primarily through the following three interdependent programs:

- Shoreland Inventory and Classification
- Shoreland Restoration
- Nursery Operation

Shoreland Inventory and Classification Program

The purpose of the Shoreland Classification Program is to survey the present state of a lake shoreland and outline the corrective action required on a property by property basis. This is achieved by mapping and photographing the shoreline, classifying it into homogenous zones, and recommending restorative action. Recommendations will vary from “total revegetation required,” to “leave in present natural state,” to “recommend enhancement of the existing vegetative cover.”

The Shoreland Restoration Program

MAPLE makes native shrubs and plants available to participating associations and groups for pick-up from its Nursery. Assistance from MAPLE (and from associated Conservation Authorities for required plantings through “development” applications) is free of charge to members for regeneration of shoreland environments. Currently, red osier dogwood, meadowsweet, willow (shrubby variety) and virginia creeper are provided to participating Lake Associations and property owners who volunteer at the nursery or take part in the inventory and regeneration programs.

The Shoreland Nursery Development Program

Nursery Operation

MAPLE cultivates indigenous plants and shrubs at its Christie Lake Shoreland Restoration Nursery in the Perth/Rideau lakes area of Eastern Ontario. Volunteers assist in the operation of the nursery propagating plant cuttings from mature shrubs. Shrubs are available free of cost (in exchange for “time donated”) to participating member lake associations and

individuals for planting along devegetated sections of shoreland. In some circumstances, monetary donations are made in lieu of time donations.

MAPLE also continues to develop an ongoing public awareness program to educate citizens of practical, common sense ways to protect, maintain and restore natural shoreland environments.

Septic system surveys, fisheries and wetlands management schemes, municipal land use plans (Official Plans and Zoning By-laws), provincial and even federal planning and policy initiatives complement the "hands-on" MAPLE work.

Retaining natural vegetation on the shoreline, or restoring degraded shorelines is still the most important fundamental first step toward maintaining and conserving a healthy natural lake.

Ontario is blessed with a great number of beautiful lake areas. People are drawn to lakeshore environments to live, for leisure and for sport. Lake and river shorelines also provide the most important base of habitat for land and water based flora and fauna. The lake provides people with the opportunity to get in touch with nature. However, pollution of lake waters is a widespread and increasing problem. In addition, the removal of natural vegetation from the shoreland and the filling-in of shore waters by waterfront owners has played a significant role in the deterioration of our lake environments.

Source: <http://www.rideauvalley.on.ca/maple/index.html>