

Small Lake Management

Best Practices for Cabin & Lakehome Owners



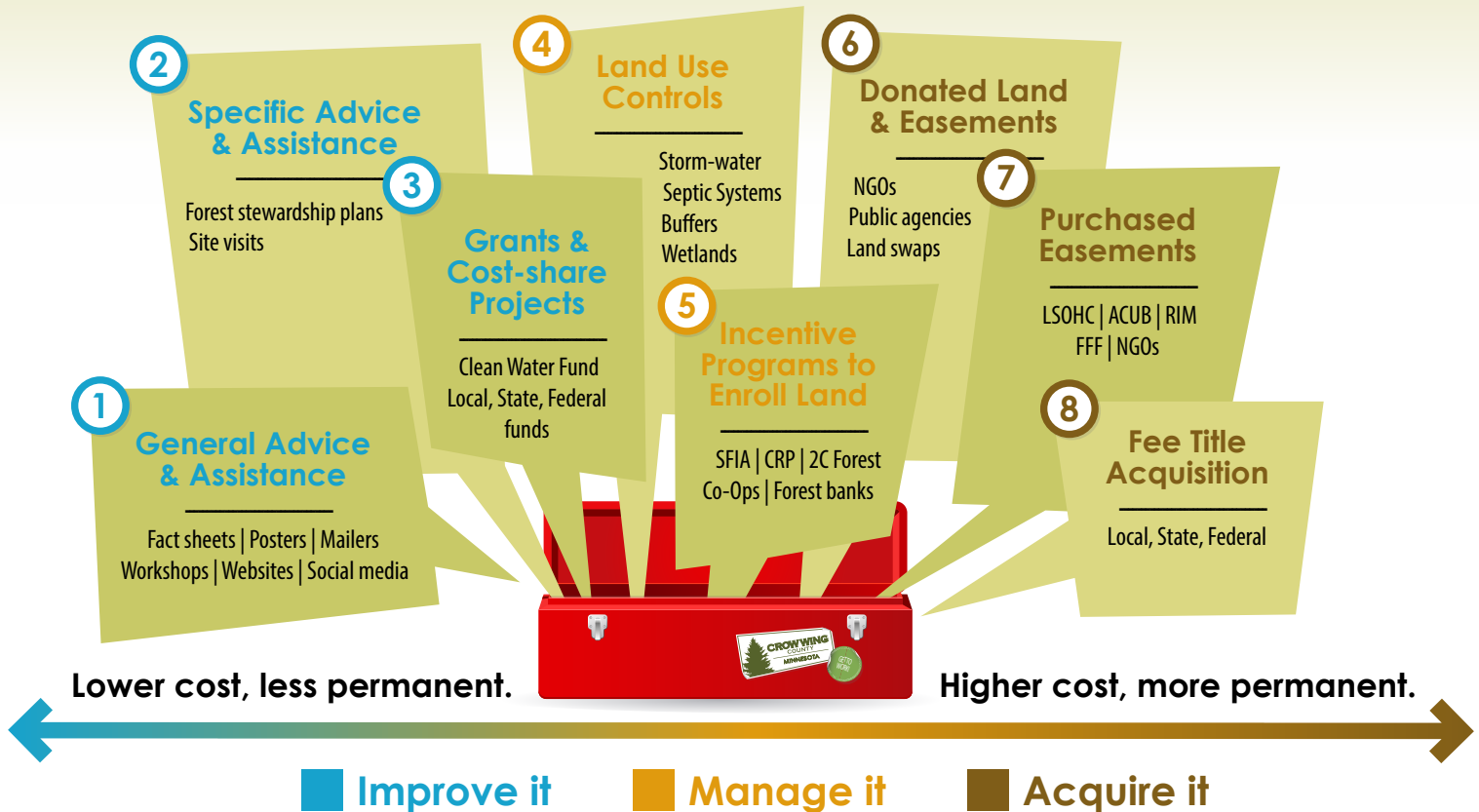
Many drops make a bucket,
many buckets make a pond,
many ponds make a lake.

...To protect one,
we protect them all.



Implementation Toolbox

Property owner options for watershed protection



How do we actually do Watershed Protection?

Select your tool...

We believe that landowners want to “do the right thing” to protect their resources. We recognize that the “right thing” varies for each situation and that there is no single tool or program that works in all of these situations. The toolbox shows the range of local, state, and federal resources and regulations that are available to assist landowners. Whether that is a simple site visit, a plan to better manage your forest, or funding to restore your shoreline or set aside areas for conservation purposes, we’re here to help!

Managing lakeshore on small lakes

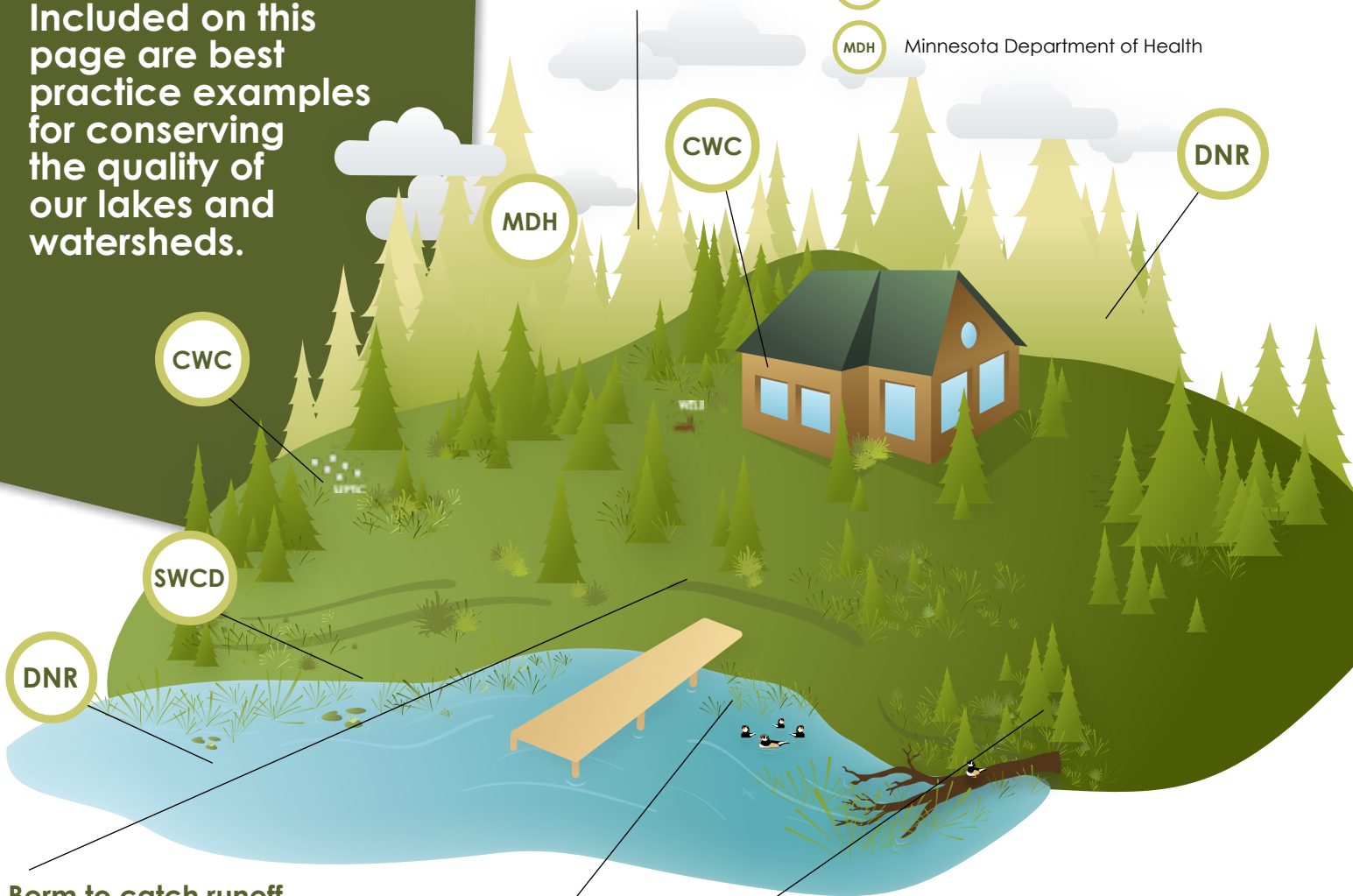
For the sake of the Lake!

Included on this page are best practice examples for conserving the quality of our lakes and watersheds.

Keep forested land forested

Forests are essential to water quality and overall watershed health. Forests also provide critical habitat.

- DNR** Department of Natural Resources
- CWC** Crow Wing County
- SWCD** Soil & Water Conservation District
- MDH** Minnesota Department of Health



Berm to catch runoff

A berm or a slightly raised ridge can be used to limit and store rain runoff from steep slopes and/or direct water to a rain garden.

Benefits of a natural shoreline

Natural shorelines are essential to the ecosystems that sustain wildlife and fish. A natural shoreline also reduces runoff, erosion, and sedimentation. These plants provide shelter for songbirds, waterfowl, and other animals. Natural shorelines will also minimize erosion and help to maintain lake water quality.

Natural buffer to prevent runoff

A natural buffer can be the placement of shrubs, trees, and other native plants along a lakeshore or simply an area that is not mowed or maintained. These buffers can reinforce the natural shoreline buffers as an additional filter for runoff and lawn pollutants before it reaches your lakeshore. The roots from larger shrubs and trees can absorb nutrients and serve to slow erosion. The leaves will also shade your shoreline keeping water temperatures cooler for amphibians, fish, and aquatic insects.

Shoreline wetlands and transitional buffers



Wetlands

Approximately 25% of Crow Wing County is comprised of wetlands. In Minnesota, an estimated 11 million acres of wetlands have been drained or filled over the last one hundred years. Crow Wing County is fortunate to have greater than 80% of our original wetlands still intact. This includes sedge meadows to emergent marshes to forested swamps and bogs.

Wetlands are lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water.

Wetlands are protected by the Wetland Conservation Act. Areas meeting this definition that are located below the ordinary high water level of a lake or average bank height of a stream are regulated as a Public Water by the DNR.

Note: You must consult your local government unit or the DNR before you perform any activities in a wetland or near shore aquatic areas. A wetland delineation by an approved delineator is typically required to determine the boundaries of a wetland.

The 4 most important steps

While there are many things you can do to help protect our small lakes and streams, the most important 4 steps are:

1

Protect your shoreline.

Vegetated shorelines not only prevent erosion, they also provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife and are aesthetically appealing. They can be as simple as a no-mow/maintenance buffer or planted with native grasses, wildflowers, shrubs, and trees from a local vendor or the Crow Wing Soil & Water Conservation District.

3

Look for ways to help fish & wildlife

Because you live on a small lake, you have more of a chance to positively impact the environment around you: whether it's installing a wood duck box / loon nesting platform, creating a wildlife opening, planting trees, or controlling invasive species.

2

Keep forested land forested

Forests are essential to water quality and overall watershed health because they absorb rainfall and snowmelt, reduce soil erosion, filter pollutants, and improve infiltration to our groundwater aquifers. Forests also provide critical upland habitat for many species that rely on our small lakes for other parts of their life cycle.

4

Plan for the future!

Your land is your legacy. Having a plan can often reduce estate taxes and secure the land you love for future generations. Conservation easements are a popular estate planning tool that protects land from future development, while providing a tax benefit to the landowner.

PROTECT OUR LAKES!

YOU CAN HELP

Call 218-824-1010 to speak with one of our specialists.
We're ready to help you.

www.crowwing.us

Crow Wing County is committed to protecting, preserving & improving water resources in Crow Wing County by being proactive, efficient, customer focused, organized, and innovative while being good stewards of the County's resources.



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