

REGULATIONS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LAKES AND GREENBELTS

Preface

Lakes of the North is unique among Michigan's recreational developments in that it has over 3,500 acres of beautiful common property. This land is dedicated to the use and enjoyment of all Lakes of the North property owners. There are many lots which border these common areas, including lots which are located around our lakes. All of our lakes have at least a 50' Greenbelt of common area that surround them. These Greenbelts are designed to protect the natural character, environment and ecology of our lake shores. The Board of Directors, Management and the Ecology Committee have a very active interest in preserving the natural beauty and vegetative cover of our common areas and shore lands.

Because of the chemical and physical interaction between lakes and ponds and the ecology of their immediate shoreline, it is important that certain restrictions be placed on changing the natural state of the Greenbelt. It is also recognized that the owner of the adjoining private property has paid a premium price for his property to enjoy the view of the lake. Accordingly, this booklet presents the rules and regulations adopted by the Lakes of the North Association to preserve the present excellent condition of our lakes and ponds, yet allow the property owners to enjoy their lake environment.

The Green Belt area adjacent to your lot is the property of the Lakes of the North Association and is subject to the rules contained in this publication. Any alteration to the Green Belt which violates these rules may result in a request by the Association to make restoration or modifications. If deemed necessary, appropriate legal action may be taken.

If your property is bordered by Greenbelt please study the following information carefully.

The Rules of Preservation

Following are the rules which have been adopted for the care and preservation of the Greenbelt, lakes and ponds. For the purposes of these rules, as far as an individual property owner is concerned, the Greenbelt is that piece of land bordered by the rear property line of your lot, the lake shore, and the theoretical extension of your two side property lines to the lake shore.

Options

The owner of lake front property separated from a lake or pond by the Greenbelt, may make the following modifications to the natural state of that portion of the greenbelt in a direct line within the side boundaries of his property lines, provided the modification does not contribute to an ecological problem:

1. Trees that are obviously weak and/or are within the drip line of larger trees may be removed.
2. Dead branches and other appropriate pruning of trees and shrubs may be performed to enhance the appearance and vitality of the foliage.
3. A property owner who plans to modify the Greenbelt area must submit a written plan, with appropriate sketches if applicable, to the General Manager for approval.
 - A. A foot path to the lake's shore is acceptable but must be covered in so far as practicable with vegetation. Depending on the severity and length of the slope, it is recommended that the path not be straight to reduce erosion. The use of logs as risers for natural steps is permitted so long as the horizontal portions are planted and have a slight reverse pitch.
 - B. Limited clearing of trees in an area not greater than 25% of the width of the lot is acceptable to improve lake view, under condition that the view area is bounded by trees and is covered with low growth. In all cases pruning of trees is preferable to removal.
 - C. Limited access and storage for small boats will be allowed if modifications are consistent with sound ecological practices.

Requirements

All modifications planned to be made to the Greenbelt by an adjacent property owner must be submitted in writing to the General Manager for approval. The modifications will be reviewed, a decision rendered, and reported to the property owner within 30 days. Should any owner of property that adjoins a Green Belt have questions as to the application of the above rules, the General Manager should be contacted at 231-585-6000.

Requirements (continued):

The following lists the maintenance operations which are essential.

1. All, or as much of the ground surface as possible that is not occupied by trees should be planted with suitable grass, shrubs or wild flowers.
2. Developed or undeveloped property which has a Greenbelt area completely or substantially clear of trees, shrubs or ground cover in some cases should have vegetation planted to provide both deep and shallow rooted plants for nutrient absorption. The Association may direct that various vegetation be planted in Greenbelt areas. Such planting will be paid for by the Association.
3. The area from the shoreline to a line approximately 15' from the shoreline should be cleared of dead vegetation each year.
4. Septic systems should be inspected regularly to assure that they are in good operating condition. Every five years is suggested.

Prohibitions

The following actions are prohibited:

1. Construction of docks or similar structures.
2. Complete clearing of trees or bushes from Greenbelt areas.
3. Dumping of refuse of any kind into a lake or pond.
4. Burning of leaves, vegetation or any other substance within 15' of the shoreline.
5. The use of fertilizers, natural or synthetic, within 15' of the lakeshore.

The following section of this publication presents the rationale behind the "Rules of Preservation" presented above.

The Principles of Preservation

There is no private property within Lakes of the North that includes the immediate shoreline of a lake or pond. Ecological management of lakes and ponds to a great extent depends on proper management of the Greenbelt.

The main detriments to lake management are sedimentation and an overabundance of nutrients. An explanation is as follows:

Sedimentation is the gradual washing of shoreline sand into the lake by run-off of rain water and the melting of the winter snow pack. Bare paths leading to the lake or pond provide channels to erode sand which is washed into the lake by rainfall and the melt of the winter snow pack. The roots of shallow vegetation such as grasses and shrubs will greatly reduce the erosion of lake banks.

Nutrients enter a lake under the water line by leaching from the surface through the sand into the water table and into the lake, and by the entry of organic material such as leaves by wind or wash down directly into the water. It is generally agreed that the first 15' of the shoreline is responsible for nutrient contamination of lakes.

Both natural and man-made nutrients are detrimental to a lake as they promote the growth of algae and water plants which in turn deplete the oxygen content of the water. Any portion of a lake bottom where sunlight can reach is susceptible to plant growth.

The natural substances which cause detrimental nutrients are decaying vegetation both from fallen trees and from the Autumn fall of leaves. These also contribute to the acidification of lake water.

Man made nutrients most detrimental to the chemical balance of a lake are fertilizers used by homeowners to green their lawns, and in some cases the effluent flow from inoperative or blocked septic systems.

The roots of both shallow and deep rooted plants serve to reduce the leaching of nutrients into a lake. The shallow roots of grasses and shrubs discussed under sedimentation also serve to absorb some surface nutrients. The deeper roots of trees and shrubs remove nutrients as they leach farther below the surface.