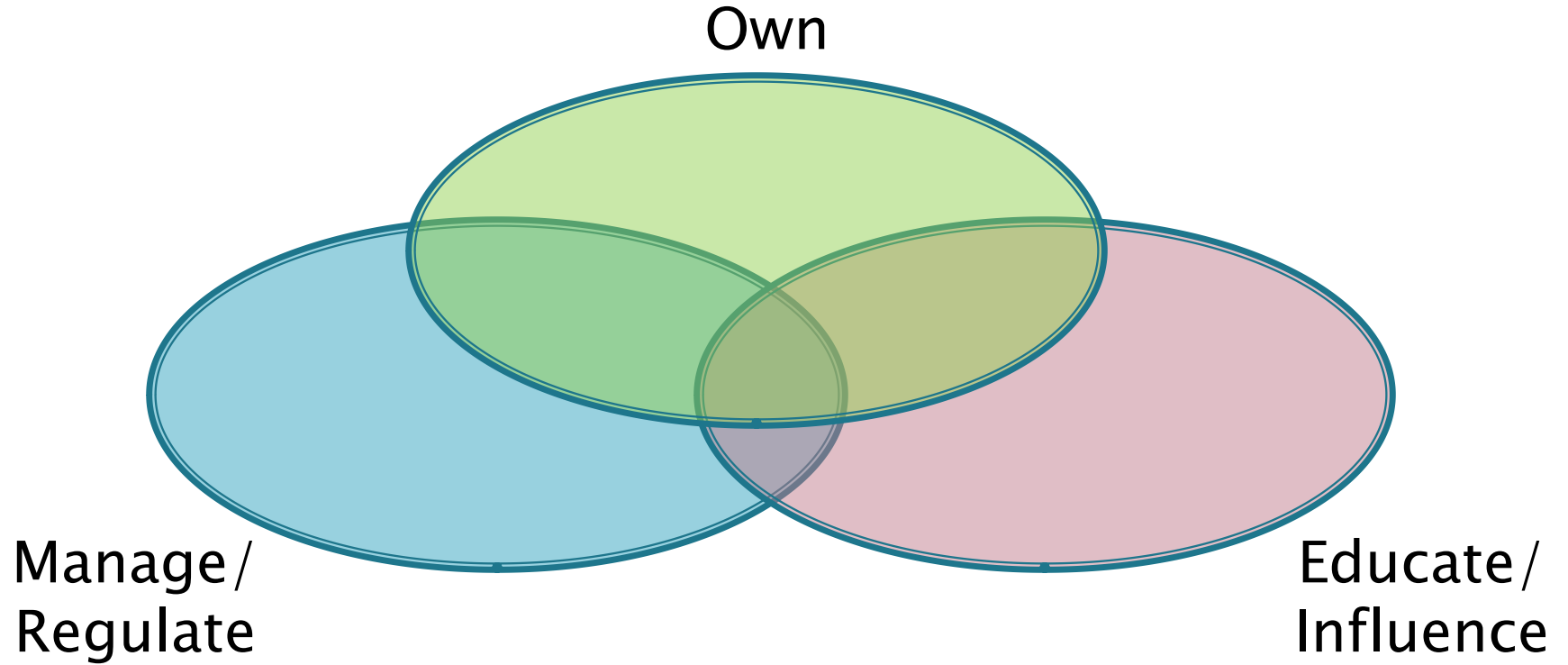


# Natural Shoreline Buffer Incentives

Erika Rivers – MN DNR

Mary Blickenderfer – U of MN Extension

# Conservation Actions



# What does it take?

## Own

Most Minnesota shoreland is in private ownership.

Statewide minimums and local ordinances are only as good as their enforcement.

## Manage/ Regulate

**Educate/  
Influence**

**Key Question: How do we get people to adopt Best Management Practices?**

# What works?

Examples:

- ▶ Burnett Co. WI
  - ▶ MN DNR Shoreland Habitat Program
  - ▶ Watershed and county programs
- 


# What *REALLY* works?

We don't *REALLY* know...

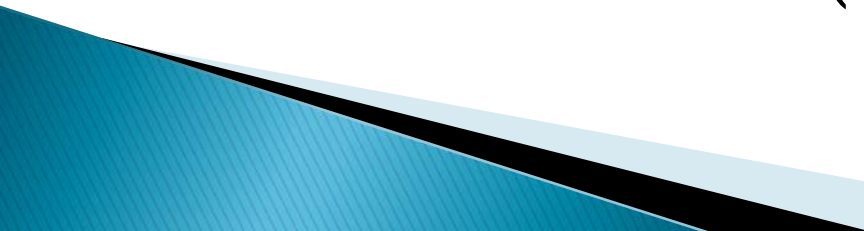
...but we are working on it!



# Native Shoreland Buffer Incentives Program (NSBI)

1. What barriers or constraints prevent people from adopting natural shoreland buffers?
  2. What incentives can we offer to make adoption more appealing?
  3. How effective are incentives at sustaining behavioral change?
- 

# Piloting Incentives in Minnesota

- ▶ \$325,000 from Minnesota Natural Resources Trust Fund (LCCMR)
  - ▶ Two county pilot projects
  - ▶ University of Minnesota Collaboration
    - Water Resources Center
    - Extension Service, Shoreland Program
  - ▶ Three-Year Trials (2008–2011)
- 

# Two Approaches

## Itasca County

- ▶ Five lakes
- ▶ Forested  
Eco-region
- ▶ Only RD and  
NE lakes
- ▶ Non-specific  
demographic

## Otter Tail County

- ▶ Countywide
- ▶ Transition  
Eco-region
- ▶ Variety of lake  
classes
- ▶ Select demographic:  
55+ age group



# Project Timeline

**2008–2009**

Proposals   Planning   Surveys   Incentive Design

**2009–2010**

Incentives   Installations   Ecological Research

**2010–2011**

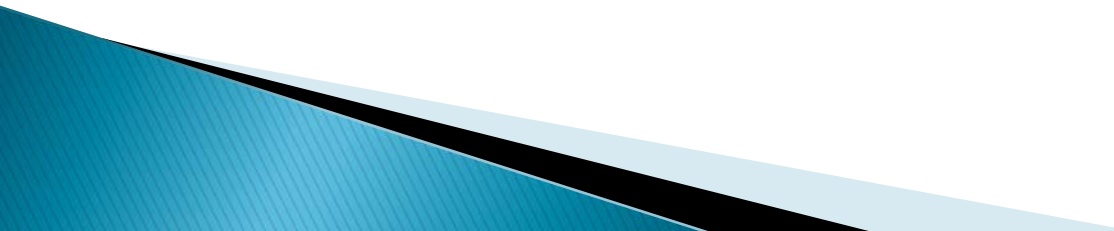
Installations   Research   Evaluation

# Buffer Incentives – *Social Science Approach*

## Step 1: Get to know your audience

- Knowledge – “What they know”
  - Practices – “What they do”
  - Attitudes – “Why they do it”
- 
- ▶ Survey results...

**How well do you know the  
shoreland property owners in  
ITASCA (or your) county?**



# 1) Property owner demographics\*

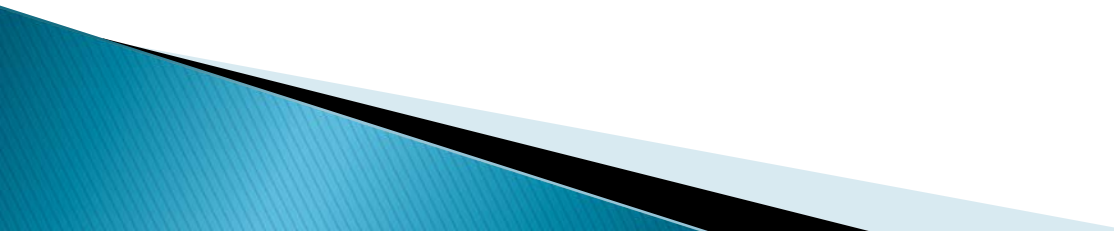
- ▶ 67% of the property owners are seasonal
- ▶ About 90% enjoy a) relaxing, b) non-motorized sports, c) fishing/hunting/trapping
- ▶ About 75% enjoy family events and motorized sports

*\*results based upon 109 door-door and 103 mail-in survey responses of 319 total 10K property owners on 5 lakes in Itasca Co.*

## 2) Where do they go for lake information? (Indicate the top 2)

- ▶ Lake association 73%
- ▶ Neighbor 63%
- ▶ Internet
- ▶ Local contractor
- ▶ Realtor
- ▶ Itasca County
- ▶ Itasca Soil and Water Conservation District } 64%
- ▶ U of MN Extension
- ▶ Minnesota DNR 64%
- ▶ TV
- ▶ Radio
- ▶ They don't seek information

# 3) Shoreland knowledge

- ▶ 62 % or greater could identify common signs of a healthy lake (except 50% didn't know about ice ridges)
  - ▶ 57% or greater could identify what might cause a lake to become unhealthy
- 

## 4) On lakes with associations, how many property owners are members of the lake association?

- ▶ 0–25%
  - ▶ 26–50%
  - ▶ 51–75%
  - ▶ 76–100%     88%
- 
- ▶ 56% of members attend lake association meetings (usually the annual meeting)
  - ▶ 90% of members read the newsletter

## 5) How many know there is a natural shoreline ordinance for their lake?

- ▶ 0–25%
  - ▶ 26–50%      35% “Yes”
  - ▶ 51–75%
  - ▶ 76–100%
- 
- ▶ 20% “No”
  - ▶ 41% “Don’t know”
  - ▶ 0% could accurately describe the ordinance



# 6) Which of these three shorelines do they prefer? Why?

Lawn



Replanted



Other

Natural



## 7) How many enjoy lawn maintenance?

- ▶ 0–25%
- ▶ 26–50% **39%**
- ▶ 51–75%
- ▶ 76–100%

**82% of owners do their own lawn maintenance  
and 48% of those enjoy it**

## 8) How important is it to them to be a good steward of their property?

- ▶ Very important 85%
- ▶ Important 15%
- ▶ Neutral
- ▶ Not important

## 9) Which of the following is the most common reason NOT to replant or maintain a natural shoreline?

- ▶ They already have a natural shoreline **80%**
- ▶ It might cost too much
- ▶ It might take too much time
- ▶ They don't know where to start
- ▶ They have physical limitations
- ▶ They like the look of a mowed yard
- ▶ They like the shoreline as it is and don't want to change it
- ▶ It will limit their view

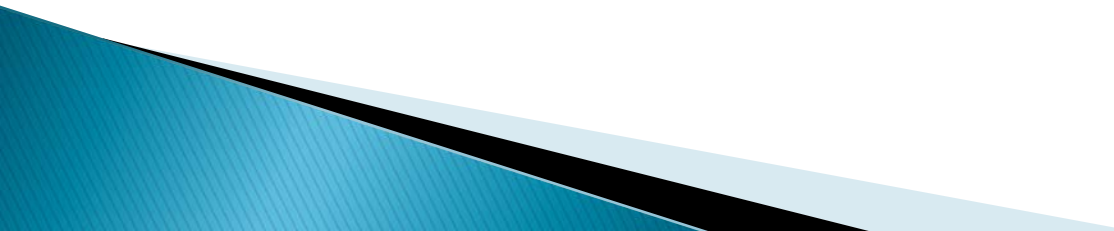
# 10) Which 3 of the following would help them naturalize part of their shoreline?

- ▶ Detailed information and instructions on naturalizing my shoreline 67%
- ▶ A “how-to” workshop on design, installation and maintenance of a natural shoreline 48%
- ▶ Technical assistance in designing the shoreline and selecting and ordering plants 52%
- ▶ Labor assistance to prepare, install and maintain the natural shoreline
- ▶ Having input into the design 48%
- ▶ Financial help 42%
- ▶ Recognition as a lake steward greater than 38%
- ▶ Don't know

# 11) How many would be interested in participating in a project to replant or maintain a natural shoreline?

- ▶ 0–25%
  - ▶ 26–50% **29% “Yes”**
  - ▶ 51–75%
  - ▶ 76–100%
- 
- ▶ **27% answered “Maybe”**

## Buffer Incentives – *Social Science Approach*

- ▶ Step 1.5: Boat-by shore assessment
  - ▶ Get to know the lake
  - ▶ Verify the survey responses
  - ▶ Baseline data (measure change as result of incentive program)
- 









## Buffer Incentives – *Social Science Approach*

Step 2: Use this information to design program  
What would entice them to install/maintain buffers?

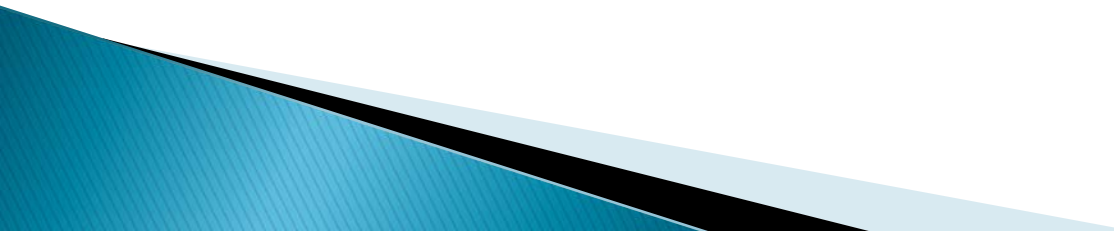
- ▶ Use lake association to disseminate info
- ▶ Peer-to-peer marketing
- ▶ “Tiered” incentives?
- ▶ User-friendly educational materials and opportunities
- ▶ Technical, financial, labor assistance
- ▶ Recognition of ALL with buffers

# Buffer Incentives – *Social Science Approach*

Step 3: Test the program – 2010

Step 4: Tweak the program – 2011

Stay tuned for results...



**Will this approach work in my  
county?**

