

## Planting Vegetation

The planting of vegetation works well when paired with other measures. For instance, vegetation on a newly re-graded bluff will aid with the retention of soil, remove excess water from within the bluff, and reduce surface water and wind erosion. Vegetation is also a key element to building and retaining a dune along sandy beaches, as shrubs and grasses retain sand while limiting the impacts of wind erosion. Plant native species of plants as they will survive better within the lake-influenced environment while limiting the potential for introduction of non-native invasive species.

When planting vegetation the site conditions may influence where to plant specific types of vegetation. Larger trees should be located away from the edge of a bluff/bank and typically do better on lower portions of the bluff/bank. Shrubs and grasses often thrive throughout the face of a bluff/bank and along dunes. Smaller plantings do not usually survive very long at the toe of a bluff/bank due to the persistent wave action and effects of strong storms. In all instances, native species are preferred as they are more likely to thrive in the active lakeshore environment, while creating habitat similar to that already found along the shore.

While vegetation is useful for areas on top of and along the bluff, it is typically not a good erosion control measure at the toe of the bluff. The constantly fluctuating environment created by constant wave activity creates a situation that is unsuitable for most plantings.

The condition of plants in vegetated areas should be observed periodically to determine whether plants are growing or declining. In particular, the first two or three years post-planting are critical, and plants may require additional care or replacement of weak individuals in this time frame until they become fully established. To maintain a mature vegetated shore area, look for areas where vegetation is absent and re-vegetate as necessary. Mature vegetation can be damaged in storms, and a severe storm may cause plant damage that will require debris removal and replanting.

Planting vegetation can be done by a property owner and in most cases does not require hiring a contractor. A professional may be hired to plant larger areas, or to assist with property owners who do not wish to conduct the work themselves. A landscape professional may be necessary to determine which plants are best for a given location and how to best mix plants for beauty and stability purposes. Pennsylvania Sea Grant's publication, "Vegetative Best Management Practices - A Manual For Pennsylvania/Lake Erie Bluff Landowners," applies for many reaches of Ohio's coast. You can download it at: [seagrants.psu.edu/publications/erosion.htm](http://seagrants.psu.edu/publications/erosion.htm) and on the LESEMP website.



*Wetland Vegetation*



*Dune Vegetation*



*Milkweed*



*Prairie Vegetation*



*Button Bush*



*Beach Vegetation*



*Dune/Beach Vegetation*