

Beyond Bluegrass: soft practice alternatives for bluegrass lawns around lakes, storm sewers, creeks, or drainage areas

What can you do when your lawn washes out due to wave and wind action? How can you protect your property AND the water quality of the lake?

Plant something besides bluegrass! The advantages to planting more durable and stronger-rooted plants than ordinary lawns near any water areas are: deeper, stronger roots of short and tallgrass prairie plants that hold the soil; the colorful attraction of pollinating wildflowers for butterflies and birds, and the restoration of shorelines and riverbanks. This protection adds to the protection and beauty of your property and to the health of the local water bodies.

Here is your introduction to some thinking outside the traditional landscaping 'box'. There really is life after lawn care! With minimal expense, preparation, and maintenance, wildflowers, grasses, shrubs and trees will hold your property in place. Plantings can be incorporated into the riprap, above it, and/or in place of the usual high-maintenance lawn. Natural beauty, healthy protection, and wildlife could be your reward. You can create attractive yards that will require no fertilizers, pesticides or irrigation to keep them healthy and vibrant.

UBSRWP
800 10th Street NW #3
Watertown SD 57201

Permit #



***Upper Big Sioux
Watershed Project
SD Game Fish and Parks
NE Glacial Lakes
Big Sioux Tree Nursery
Poinsett Watershed
Project
Cordington Conservation
District***

Beyond Bluegrass

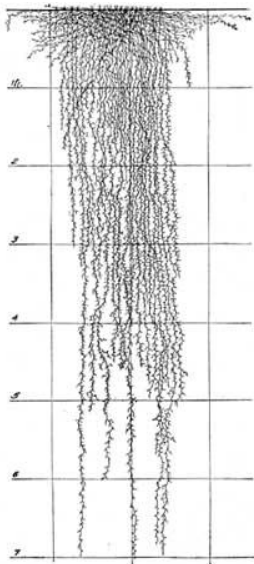
Site Prep and Design

To prepare your site it is important to kill off the existing lawn/weeds in the area you want to install your filter. This can be done by laying out black plastic or the liberal use of roundup (follow directions).

If you design your planting with the taller species on the outside and the shorter ones on the inside you can add value to your yard by “framing” the view of your lakeshore

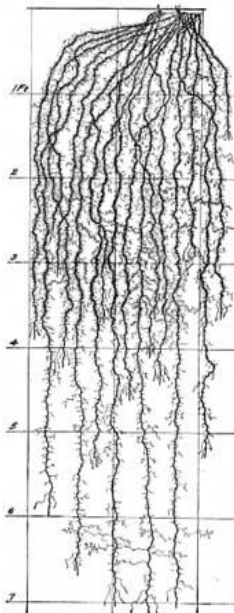
Put down some roots!

Bluegrass roots are typically only as deep as the grass is tall. This doesn't provide much protection when the waves come crashing up your yard. The suggested species below have deep root systems that trap and hold the soil to keep it from washing away. If using plugs, space the grasses 1-3' apart and interspace with wildflowers. Mulch with grass clippings or woodchips until established. Blend native grasses into the boundary with your existing lawn for a seamless transition into your garden planting. With a little planning you can create a beautiful flower/decorative grass garden that is low in maintenance and functions as a filter strip and soil erosion control.

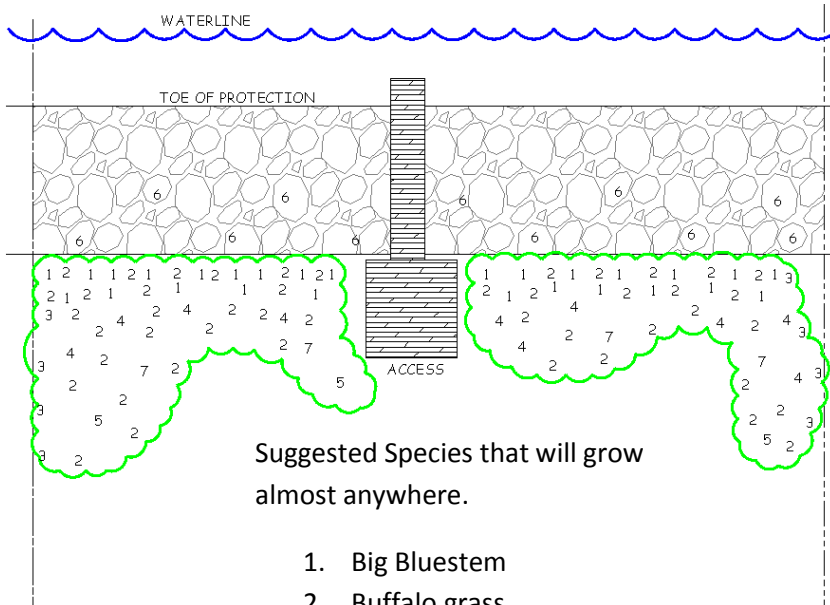


Buffalo Grass Roots

Sandhill Bluestem Roots



Overhead View



Suggested Species that will grow almost anywhere.

1. Big Bluestem
2. Buffalo grass
3. Coneflower / Dropseed
4. False Indigo / Dogwood
5. Your favorite tree
6. Grapes/woodbine
7. Purple Prairie

Resources

Codington Conservation District

<http://codingtoncd.org>

605-882-4989

Hamlin Conservation District

<http://www.sdconservation.org/Districts/hamlin.html>

605-783-3353

Minnesota DNR Shoreline

Restoration

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/restoration/shoreline/index.html>

Northeast Glacial Lakes Watershed

Improvement and Protection Project
Day County Conservation District

<http://neglwatersheds.org/>

605-345-4661 ext 118

NDSU Extension Service

<http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/horticulture/trees-and-shrubs-for-northern-great-plains-landscapes>

SD GF&P – Steve LaBay

605-345-3381

Upper Big Sioux River Watershed Project

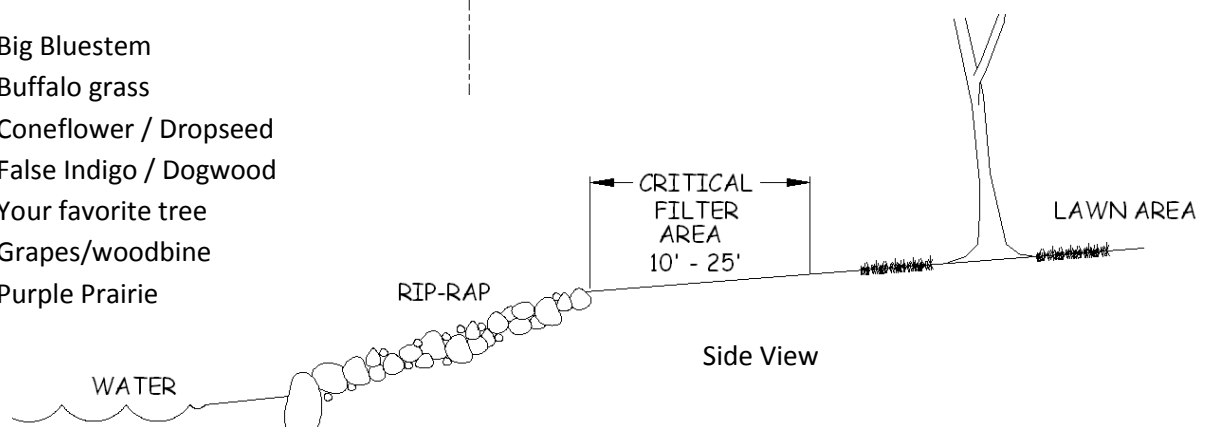
605-882-5250

ubsrw@watertownsd.us

USDA NRCS PLANTS database

<http://plants.usda.gov/index.html>

Online garden planners: some are free and some are trial versions and some may be purchased.



Side View