

Natural Shoreline Lakescaping & Restoration - Part 2, Plan Design

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In the last edition, we discussed specific property concerns, including soil erosion and storm water run-off. The project design starts with a site plan or base map, which must include certain standard information: an arrow indicating which direction is North, the scale to which the map is drawn, property lines with measurements, the position of roads and access points, existing structures, water access, dock locations, yard traffic patterns, and entertainment areas.

Once the base map has been created, it should be very carefully reviewed. It is very important to consider where picnic tables, lawn furniture, and fire pits will be placed; where the water toys will be kept, and where the docks and hoists will be stationed, as well where these items will be stored for the winter.



Figure 3.4. Base map illustrating the various zones. Source: Julia Kirkwood.



The next step is to indicate on the base map, the zones of the property – upland, wetland, and aquatic. The upland zone is the area of dry soils. The aquatic zone is in the lake. The wetland zone is between the upland and aquatic zones. The different zones call for different plants and site-specific treatments. Breaking the property down into its zones makes the project easier to address.

Once the base map is complete, a specially designed software program allows the homeowner to explore all the candidate layouts. Using actual photographs of the site scanned into the program allows for even greater customization, producing a truly personalized lakescaping design. The software offers temporary views of the restoration project, throughout the process, based on the homeowner's specific choices along the way. This part of the process is the most creative and the most time-consuming. Experience teaches that the importance of this step simply cannot be overstated. Recreating nature does not happen overnight.

With the basic design worked out, the exact number of plants and materials needed can be determined, based on spacing, growth rates, and the magnitude of the required shoreline restoration. Various restoration tools will be incorporated into the design, such as erosion blankets, rocks, coir logs or blocks. Plants of



different colors, fragrances, sizes and bloom times, as well as grasses, bushes and trees, are included in the design based on the homeowner's preferences, to achieve an attractive and naturally appealing look.

Next Issue: Plant Selection