Common Erosion Issues and Best Management Practices for Homeowners

Below are common examples of erosion and the Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are recommended to prevent it. Erosion takes many forms and can occur naturally, but in all cases, the end result is that running water (stormwater runoff) picks up soil and transports it into the lake. These practices are designed to trap stormwater and allow it to infiltrate into the ground before it reaches the lake, while also operating as functional and aesthetic landscaping features on a property. Some BMPs are useful for residential properties and some are specifically for use on private and town-owned roads. Residential BMPs are relatively simple to install and can be done by homeowners and landscapers. Road BMPs often require heavy machinery and in some cases require engineering (i.e. culvert installation).

For additional information on Stormwater Runoff and Erosion BMPs, please use the following resources:

- BMP Manuals (Maine DEP) - https://www.maine.gov/dep/land/watershed/materials.html
- Gravel Road Manual: www.maine.gov/dep/land/watershed/camp/road/gravel_road_manual.pdf
- NH Homeowner's Guide to Stormwater Management: https://www.des.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt341/files/documents/2020-01/homeowner-guide-stormwater.pdf
- Conservation Practices for Homeowners - awwatersheds.org/conservation-practices-for-homeowners

Common Erosion Issues

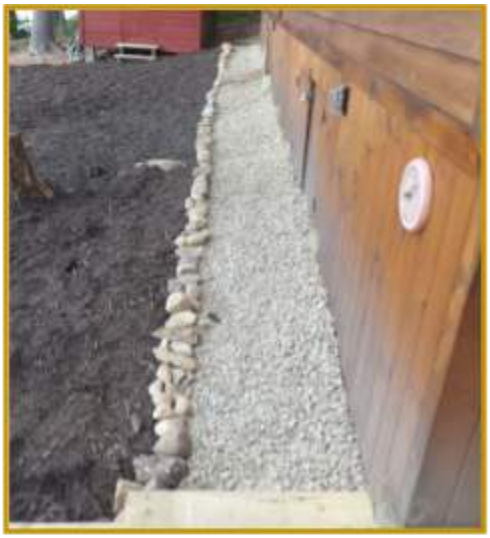
Gully Erosion - forms when fast moving water forms a channel on bare soil and begins to pick up and transport sediment downhill to the lake. Most visually obvious form of erosion. Smaller gullies are referred to as rills.

Shoreline Erosion - Shoreline can erode both from stormwater runoff and intense wind and wave action. The root systems of plants on the shoreline work to stabilize soil on the slope and protect it from eroding. In the absence of permanent, woody vegetation, the bank soils have no structure and can easily erode into the lake.

Sheet Erosion - Less apparent than a gully. Occurs when soil erodes in equal amounts across the landscape and the soil level lowers. Exposed roots are evidence of this. Roots naturally grow underground, so the amount of soil loss equals at least the height of the exposed roots. Sheet erosion often goes unnoticed and can lead to significant soil loss.

Best Management Practices: *Infiltration*

Infiltration Path - a trench filled with crushed stone that traps stormwater. Can replace dirt paths susceptible to runoff.



Dripline Trench - Traps roof runoff and directs it into the ground. An alternative to gutters.

Infiltration Steps - Crushed stone steps that trap stormwater instead of allowing it to flow downhill.

Best Management Practices: *Diversion*

Rubber Razor - strips of hard rubber are partially buried in the driveway, placed on an angle to divert stormwater into an adjacent trench or natural area.

Water Bars - 6"x 6" lumber is installed on a slope with crushed stone on the uphill side to trap and divert stormwater. Water bars are left slightly raised to slow water down an can be used as seen above, or placed in a pathway in shorter lengths to function as steps.

Firehose Diverter - In paved driveways, burying rubber and wood are not an option. Old firehose, or other durable material, can be filled with sand or stone and placed on an angle to divert stormwater. These have the added benefit of being movable.

Best Management Practices - *Retention*

Rain Garden - pervious detention basin designed to store stormwater during a rain event and allow it to infiltrate. Typically a trench directs water into the rain garden. Water tolerant plants are put in to uptake additional water and absorb excess nutrients.

Vegetated Buffer - The shoreline is the last line of defense from stormwater. Dense, woody vegetation slows down stormwater and the root system binds sediment together and keeps it from eroding.

Erosion Control Mulch - This chunky mulch is made of tree and stump grindings of various sizes, this allows it to bind together and trap stormwater without washing away. This is the simplest way to protect bare soil and will last for many years before breaking down.

Best Management Practices - *Roads*

Hard Pack - This is an aggregate stone material that does not wash away as easily as sand and gravel. The lack of fine materials means less sediment erosion.

Crowning - A dirt road must be slightly pitched so water will run off of it instead of forming potholes and gullies. The high point can be in the middle to direct water in both directions, or on a far side to direct all water in one direction.

Ditching - Once water is directed off the road, it should flow into a pervious ditch to allow it to infiltrate. There are various methods such as vegetation and check dams which can be used to slow stormwater down in a ditch.