

BLCA Healthy Lakes *Gentle Footprint* Program



Background - Here's What You Need To Know

The Briggs Lake Chain Association (BLCA) has a long history of promoting improvement of water quality and of supporting conservation efforts. In 2008 the BLCA initiated a Shoreland Education Restoration Program (SERP) to increase awareness of the benefits of restoring shoreland with natural plants and controlling rainwater runoff. These reduced the quantity of pollutants and nutrients in our lake waters. The SERP program, funded by the DNR and administered by the BLCA, featured grants to individual property holders to pay for restoration projects. A second program (SERP II) followed the original SERP program.

Eventually the MN DNR stopped funding the grants and the BLCA decided to fund and administer shoreland restoration and runoff control programs under the BLCA Mini-Grant program. These grants and subsequent projects followed the SERP guidelines but were of a smaller scale. We have changed the name of the Mini-Grant program to **Gentle Footprint**, but the guidelines and process remain essentially the same.

Gentle Footprint General Guidelines:

- Projects are to be located on shoreland property of the Briggs Lake Chain and improve water quality by creating shoreland buffers of native plants to filter runoff or to reduce rainwater run-off by slowing the flow of water into the lakes.
- Applications are to be submitted to the Healthy Lakes Committee for review and recommendation to the BLCA Board. Applications will be evaluated in the order received. Applicants must be BLCA sponsors. Only one project per applicant per year.
- Applications are to include a description of the project, list of materials (plants, etc.), a budget, and timeline for the project. Plants must be native to Minnesota as based on Sherburne Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) guidelines.
- Permits may be required by MN DNR or Sherburne County and must be obtained by the applicant or contractor and included with the project documents.
- Projects must be completed within the year of the application and must be maintained for a minimum of three years after completion.
- Program representatives will be allowed access to the project site for inspection and photo-taking.
- Volunteer assistance may be available for various projects.
- The BLCA will assume no liability for accidents, injuries, property damage or other losses, and the property owner agrees to hold the BLCA harmless from any and all claims.

Project Guidelines:

Shoreland Restorations:

- Should be a minimum of 300 square feet in area (larger is fine).
- Invasive and non-native plants must be replaced by native species.

Raingardens:

- Should be a minimum of 150 square feet in area (larger is fine).
- Plants must be native species and suitable for wet areas.
- A single project may consist of multiple rain gardens.

French Drains/Rain Barrels:

- Should capture all runoff from a 1 inch 24-hour rainfall.
- Any overflow should be directed away from the lake.
- A single project may consist of multiple catchments

Other projects (berms and other water diversions):

- Should directly reduce run-off to the lake and reduce erosion.
- May include rain garden(s).
- These projects may need detailed site plans and agency approvals.

