

Land Use Report

By Richard Gallea, Land Use Committee

The SRCLA was pleased to partner with the Stearns Co. Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), who sponsored a Shoreline Tour featuring six properties around the Chain. Approximately 60 people met at Lion's Park in Richmond on Thursday, August 10th and boarded a bus that toured properties that had engaged in shoreline restoration projects over a wide-ranging period of time, including one that's still in the planning stage.

The first stop was at Brad and Nichole Matuska's place. They executed a project just this summer to manage stormwater runoff and to convert much of their shoreline from mowed grass to native plantings (look for a feature article on the Matuska's project on page 26.

The second stop was at Randy Siem's place on Cedar Island Lake. Randy's project was done last year and involved the removal of a failing retaining wall, as well as several steps taken to control erosion and install a native buffer. Randy's project was highlighted in last fall's magazine.

Next up was a short stroll to Randy's next-door neighbors, Roger and Katie Theiler. The Theiler's project dates back to 2009 and involves a shoreline stabilization initiative that utilized cedar tree revetments along the shore and emphasized the preservation of a large area of natural vegetation on either side of their dock.

The fourth stop was to Hoobie and Bonnie Eskuri's home, also on Cedar Island Lake. The Eskuri's had an extensive project done in 2015 to stabilize a failing slope. Tile trenches were installed into the



Top left: Greg Berg (SWCD) speaking at the Shoreline Tour. Top Right: Exploring the Gallea's native prairie. Bottom: Hoobie and Bonnie Eskuri's stabilization project

slope to intercept surface and groundwater. A storage tank was installed to capture runoff, which is now used for irrigation purposes. In addition, the shoreline and adjacent slope were restored by regrading and planting with native vegetation.

Then the bus pulled up to John Rocky's home on Great Northern Lake. John's property was selected for the tour as he's currently working with the SWCD on a plan to convert much of his mowed shoreline to native plantings. Touring a "before" parcel like John's provided the participants with a chance to visualize how a shoreline project may enhance their own property.

The tour concluded with a stop at Richard and Mary Gallea's home on Great Northern Lake, which underwent an extensive project in 2006. In addition to converting 310 feet of lakeshore to native plantings, the Gallea's replaced mowed grass with a native prairie on an adjacent parcel. The SWCD provided pizza and beverages to wrap up what was a fun and informative day.

