

About Ottawa Riverkeeper

Ottawa Riverkeeper (*Sentinelles Outaouais*) is a citizen-based action group that brings people together to protect and promote the ecological health and diversity of the Ottawa River and its tributaries. Expert and independent, our organization advocates for responsible decision-making, public education, participation, access to information, and compliance with protective regulations, for the benefit of our river and our communities. <http://www.ottawariverkeeper.ca>

Ottawa Riverkeeper (*Sentinelles Outaouais*) is a licensed member of *Waterkeeper Alliance*, an international grass roots advocacy organization, founded by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. <http://www.waterkeeper.org>



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This guide is also available in French



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NATURAL SHORELINES WORKING FOR YOU!

A no-nonsense guide to the value of shorelines for the health and future of the Ottawa River watershed, brought to you by Ottawa Riverkeeper.

www.ottawariverkeeper.ca

Defending the Ottawa River, Protecting our Communities.

Naturalized shorelines are vital to the overall health of the Ottawa River.

A naturalized shoreline will help you:

One lawn at the river's edge might not seem like a big deal, but when everyone does it, it can have a big impact on river health.

When you replace your lawn at the river's edge with native vegetation, you are doing your part to protect the river and helping yourself in the process!

1 **Protect your property from shoreline erosion.**

Natural shorelines provide excellent protection from erosion and are often a more effective and less expensive option than artificial structures like cement walls.

- Heavy machinery and building materials can cost thousands of dollars, but all you really need are basic tools, seeds, bulbs, shrubs and trees to protect your shoreline.
- Unlike artificial structures, natural vegetation is able to repair itself and become even stronger over time.

2 **Preserve the river as a great fishing resource.**

Best known for its bass, catfish, crappie, pike, shad, walleye, pickerel and muskie catch, the Ottawa River is considered one of the top fishing spots in North America! Many of these fish species use the shoreline during spawning season. Great fishing requires a healthy, naturalized shoreline!

3 **Improve water quality for swimming, drinking, and fishing.**

Natural shorelines act as filters to stop pollutants such as fertilizers, pesticides, sediment and *E.coli* bacteria from entering the river and help keep the Ottawa River swimmable, drinkable and fishable for everyone!

DID YOU KNOW?

90% of rain falling on a natural shoreline is absorbed before reaching the water, while up to 55% of rain falling on hard surfaces like cement flows right into the river!

4 **Protect the river's biodiversity.**

The Ottawa River is home to over 300 species of birds, 33 species of reptiles and amphibians, 53 species of mammals, and 85 species of fish, many of which depend on naturalized shorelines to survive. Among these species, several are rare or at risk including the spotted and northern map turtles, western chorus frog, American eel and lake sturgeon. Protecting the river's biodiversity is critical to maintaining the overall health of the Ottawa River.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Ottawa River supports one of only a handful of naturally reproducing muskellunge fisheries, home to world-record muskies weighing over 50 pounds (22 kg)!

For information on how to improve your shoreline contact Ottawa Riverkeeper: www.ottawariverkeeper.ca