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RE: A Resource for Okanagan Lakeshore Living

As a waterfront property owner, you're probably well aware of the benefits of living close to the Okanagan Lake.

We're enlisting your help to keep our lake in the best possible shape. To do that, we've developed '*A Resource for Okanagan Lakeshore Living*'. It's designed specifically for properties surrounding Okanagan Lake.

This guide offers some practical solutions to restore and enhance natural areas along the waterfront. It's a resource that can be used to help the lakeshore area become more resilient to the change in weather patterns which has resulted in an increased threat posed by high water levels and groundwater flooding.

Over the last 25 years, increased urban and rural development has significantly changed the landscape around Okanagan Lake resulting in altered, degraded and lost natural areas. There's less critical habitat for wildlife and we've seen invasive, non-native species gain a foothold. These changes have also impacted the quality of water we drink and play in.

Natural shorelines are a richly diverse environment and are vital for the surrounding lake ecosystem to work as it should. The vegetation found there not only provides important habitat for fish and other aquatic species, but also offers some protection from waves and erosion. Native trees and shrubs found along the lake help buffer the shoreline allowing room for lake waters to rise and fall with the changing seasons. These benefits are lost when shoreline areas are disturbed by concrete retaining walls, lawns, and other forms of development.

The good news is across the region work's being done to enhance shoreline protection. While much of the responsibility to preserve shoreline over the long term lies with individual landowners, our hope is that you'll look through the guide to see what you might do along your waterfront property to help reverse the loss of natural areas along the lake.

This collaborative project was initiated by the Regional District of Central Okanagan and supported through a partnership with the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program, South Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program, and partly funded by Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wayne Carson'.

Wayne Carson  
Director  
Central Okanagan West Electoral Area

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gail Given'.

Gail Given  
Board Chair