



Why Create a Living Shoreline?

A common concern of many landowners with shoreline property is erosion. A common response to erosion control is to install a bulkhead. Unfortunately, bulkheads can increase erosion on adjacent unprotected shorelines, are prone to structural failure over time, and cause loss of highly valuable fishery habitat.

Living shorelines are attractive shoreline management options that provide erosion control benefits, while working with nature to enhance the existing natural shoreline habitat. Living shorelines often allow for natural coastal processes to remain through the strategic placement of plants, stone, sand fill and other structural and organic materials.

These structures act as wavebreaks by reducing wave energy and erosion, supporting plant growth and marsh creation. Depending on the location of the property, the wavebreak itself can even become encrusted with oysters and other crustaceans, producing an artificial reef. In addition, living shorelines result in increased water quality and clarity for the landowner, the bay, and its fish!

Project partners



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Living Shorelines

An environmentally friendly alternative
for stabilizing waterfront property



If you would like more information, please contact GBF's Living Shorelines project manager:

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How Do Living Shorelines Benefit Me?

Living shorelines protect the shoreline habitats that support our fisheries, our coastal economies, and provide ecotourism opportunities. Living shorelines are cost efficient compared to bulkheads, sometimes costing up to 50% less than a traditional bulkhead installation. Because living shorelines absorb wave energy from boat wakes and wind, they don't contribute to erosion on neighboring properties along the shoreline as traditional bulkheads can..



Helping communities protect coastal habitat in their own backyards!



Photo: Bob Moore

How GBF can help:

The Galveston Bay Foundation and its partners offer assistance in creating individually designed living shoreline structures for your unique situation and property, which can support aquatic habitat and protect your shoreline from erosion.

Areas in which we can help:

- Project design
- Materials selection
- Permit applications
- Construction
- Plant selection & Installation

We can also help you identify whether grant funds may be available for your project, which could help make your project even more cost advantageous over a traditional bulkhead.



Frequently Asked Questions

1. **How much will it cost?** Living shorelines can cost much less than bulkhead installations based on materials chosen.
2. **Will it protect my shoreline?** Yes! Living shorelines prevent erosion as well or better than a bulkhead, and can be used on bay-front, lake-front, or bayou/stream-front properties.
3. **Will I have more mosquitoes?** No. Mosquitoes reproduce in trapped, still waters, such as containers, poorly draining rain gutters, or discarded tires, without much risk of being eaten. In wetlands, there is greater potential for natural predators such as birds, fish, dragonflies, and amphibians to control mosquitoes.
4. **Will I have more fish and birds?** Landowners who have installed living shorelines report that fish and birds have increased in number and diversity along their property.
5. **How long will it take?** Each project is different, but the Galveston Bay Foundation will be with you to guide you through the entire process.

