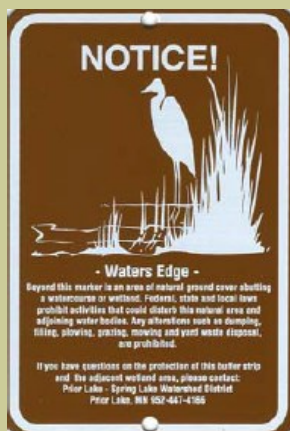


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### *Did you know...*

- Wetlands help reduce flooding by providing a natural storage area for runoff.
- Wetlands help clean runoff water before it reaches our lakes and streams.
- Many of the buffers that have been established by PLSLWD are permanently protected with conservation easements.
- Buffer signs, like the one pictured below, help mark the boundaries of the buffer areas within the PLSLWD.



# Buffers: Protecting the Water's Edge



## WHAT IS A BUFFER AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

A buffer is a strip of undisturbed vegetation at the edge of a lake, stream or wetland. Buffer vegetation helps filter out pollutants before they reach our valuable water resources. The vegetation also helps soak up stormwater runoff which reducing flooding downstream. In addition, these areas also add beauty and open space to our neighborhoods and provide critical wildlife habitat.

To help protect these vital resources, the Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District (PLSLWD) and local cities require that lakes, wetlands and streams in new developments are protected with buffer strips. Buffer strips protect our water resources from erosion, stormwater runoff and pollution.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO IN A BUFFER AREA?

- Plant native vegetation.
- Remove harmful and invasive vegetation like buckthorn.
- Maintain an unimproved trail to access the lake, wetland, or stream.

## WHAT IS NOT ALLOWED IN A BUFFER AREA?

To be successful, it is important that buffers are not mowed, dumped in or used as compost sites. Buildings and structures, landscaping features, and non-native ornamental plants are not allowed in the buffer areas.

Buffer signs like the one shown to the left help PLSLWD mark the boundaries. These signs must not be removed.

*Please see the terms in the conservation easement for your land to determine what specific restrictions it might contain, or contact Maggie Karschnia, Water Resources Project Manager at (952)447-9808 for more information.*