

## CITIZENS FOR A SCENIC WISCONSIN

September 2, 2005

### Shoreland Stewardship: Scenic Considerations

#### Recommendations for Revisions to NR115

**The most important thing that can be done to protect the scenery is to maintain the shorelands as close to their original natural state as possible.**

**The rules for size of buildings and for set-back of buildings is very important to maintaining the scenic quality of shorelands.** Rules for the amount of impervious surfaces are important because they relate directly to the size of buildings. We recommend that a limit of 30% of the area of the lot within 300 feet of the shoreline be the limit on impervious surfaces of any kind. This limit allows construction of a very large house, a driveway and a garage on even the smallest legal lot, which is 20,000 square feet. Covering more than 30% of the lot will not only detract from scenery, but change the atmosphere from peaceful lake retreat to suburban subdivision. Also, a limit on impervious surfaces will increase the reliability and effectiveness of devices to prevent stormwater run-off, known to be detrimental to water quality and fish. A limit on impervious surfaces will also limit the size of run-off devices such as rain gardens and bioretention areas, thus limiting disruption to the secondary buffer. In urban areas a limit of 45% on impervious surfaces could be allowed. Height of buildings should not exceed 35 feet.

**The rules for buffer zones along the shore and for maintaining vegetation in buffer zones, including mitigation done to rebuild buffer zones, are also important to scenic quality.**

**To manage the scenic quality of shorelands, it is important to consider the view of the shoreland from the water.** A simple standard to encourage minimum disruption to the natural scenery would be a statement in NR115 that any new building be screened by existing vegetation to the maximum extent practical, taking into account the needs of the owner. A goal could be stated that at least 50% of a building be screened, as viewed from out in the water. Painting the building a color similar to that of the natural vegetation or ground is also a recommended standard.

**The interests of the public, the lakeshore property owners, the construction industry and real estate businesses are really very similar.** Clean, healthy, scenic lakes and shorelands are what the public wants for recreation on the water, are what maintain the dollar value of lakeshore property owners' houses and land, and are what is good for building and selling lakeshore homes. It is important that all parties take a long-term view of lakeshore stewardship when setting rules for shoreland development.