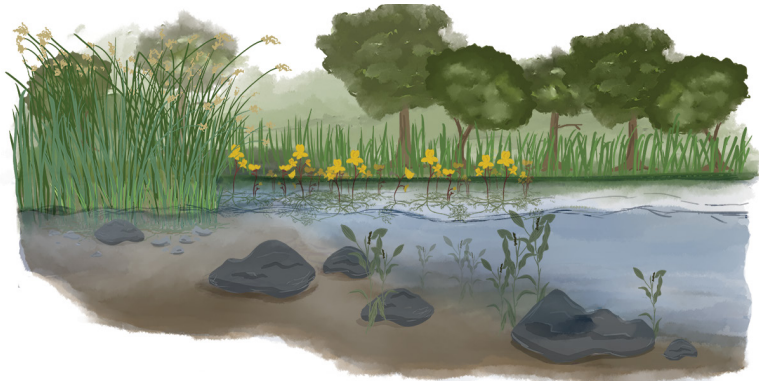


LAKE AGING

AGING IS A NATURAL PROCESS IN LAKE ECOSYSTEMS! OUR ACTIONS CAN EITHER SPEED UP OR STABILIZE THE PROCESS.



An **oligotrophic lake** is a young lake ecosystem that tends to have clearer water, minimal plant growth, less mucky sediment at the bottom, and fewer large producers like fish. Fewer nutrients are in the water, which means there is less algae and weeds.



A **mesotrophic lake** is a middle-aged lake ecosystem that is fed more nutrients and has greater plant production. Sediment accumulates on the bottom, which makes the lake shallower and warmer overall. More algae is produced because of the increased nutrients, which can lead to a less-clear lake with a greenish tint.



A **eutrophic lake** is an old lake ecosystem that typically holds shallow, murky water. The shallow water is warmed more easily by the sun and produces more plants and algae. The lake is in the process of filling in with sediment (like decaying leaves, organisms and aquatic plants) and will eventually become a wetland.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- **Keep yard waste out of the lake.** Never blow clippings into the water, or into the street where they can enter a storm drain.
- **Fertilize sparingly.** Although great for gardens in small doses, excess fertilizer will run-off the lawn and into the lake.
- **Use native plants along your shoreline.** When well-maintained, native plants are a beautiful and low-cost solution to polluted stormwater runoff.