How You Can Help…
As A Waterfront Homeowner

The shorelines along Tampa Bay and area rivers and lakes are the last line of defense against water pollution that originates on land. To protect them:

- Establish a zone of native plants between your lawn and shoreline, or in areas where natural, unvegetated shoreline remains.
- Where seawalls exist, consider "softening" the shoreline by planting mangroves or salt marsh, or placing clean rip-rap (native limestone) in front of them. Natural buffers like these not only protect shorelines from storms, but provide food and shelter for fish and wildlife. Enhancements may require a permit. Before proceeding, contact the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).
- Remove noxious exotic plants and replant native species. Exotics like the Brazilian Pepper, Australian Pine, and Melaleuca (punk tree) choke native vegetation and destroy wildlife habitat. For information on the identification and removal of these species, contact your county extension service or DEP.

Maintain and encourage native mangrove trees, which stabilize shorelines and provide food and shelter for small fish. Because of their importance to the Bay, pruning or removal of mangroves may result in a penalty or fine. To inquire about proper maintenance, contact DEP or your local environmental management department.