

Living Shoreline Design Team Template

This template will help guide Design Teams through a process to get to our final goal of developing 50% designs for each site. This document can serve as a checklist and reference for the team and a place to take notes during meetings. Site assessment and design planning will not be a linear process and teams are encouraged to move iteratively between sections of this template and also modify this template to suit their project's needs.

1. Project Goals

Guidance: After reviewing the site profile and talking with the landowner, use this space to summarize and refine your understanding of the landowner's priorities and other ecological goals that are relevant to your design work. Over the course of the first two site visits, identify the bounds and scope of the design project. Make a note of any remaining questions or uncertainties; some of these could be addressed during a future conversation or next step of project.

1.A. Ecological Goals

Existing habitats and ecological assets	
Potential ecological goals for project and any tradeoffs to consider	
Potential eco/physical design constraints (e.g., invasive spp., elevations vs. flooding limitations)	

1.B. Landowner Goals

Landowner goals for the shoreline (short term and longer term)	
Current and anticipated human uses of the site	
Potential cultural design constraints (e.g., budget, aesthetics, adjacent land use)	

1.C. Site Considerations

Sources of impairment (e.g., human activity, stormwater, surrounding land use, boats, ice, shading etc.)	
Other site constraints (utilities, bedrock, access, property line, infrastructure, etc.)	

1.D. Design Team Project Scope, Objectives and Spatial Bounds (This may need to be refined over time in consultation with landowner)

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1.E. Remaining Questions about Project Goals

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2. Site Assessment

Guidance: Use the tables below to document what you are learning about site conditions that could influence a living shoreline design. Not all of the variables below will be relevant to every site and project. Some can be assessed in a qualitative way visually or by consulting existing resources, some may require field measurements, and some may be important to consider at a later stage. This resource (page 16) – [Living Shorelines in New England: State of the Practice](#) - provides an explanation of some of the characteristics in Table 2A.

2.A. Site Characteristics to Select a Suitable Technique (some of this was considered prior to selecting site)

Attribute	Qualitative Observations
Existing environmental resources (e.g., habitats)	
Vegetation (description, shade, roots, etc.)	
Nearby sensitive resources	
Energy state (e.g., high, moderate, low)	
Tidal range	
Elevation of project site (relative to tidal range, e.g., above and/or below mean high water)	
Intertidal slope (e.g., flat, moderate, steep)	
Bathymetric slope (e.g., flat, moderate, steep)	
Signs of erosion	
Existence of scarp (location relative to tides, height, composition, vegetation, etc.)	
Traffic (evidence of wildlife, pet, or human impacts)	
Debris (wrack, trash, flotsam, partially buried)	

2.B. Potential Data Needs about Site

Variable	Specific Observations / Notes/Links to datasets
Topography	
Sediment/ soils	
Erosion rates	
Existing plant communities and elevation distribution	
Shoreline/marsh edge characteristics	
Wetland delineation	
Slopes and scarps to inform protection / fill / migration	
Local site materials appropriate for use	
Seaward fetch (length, direction, water depth)	
Wave climate	
Tides	
Property boundaries, easements, protections	
Archaeological resources	
Public site access (land and water)	
Utilities and buried infrastructure	

2.C. Objectives for Next Site Visits (Review plans with Dave and Tom)

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2.D. Additional Questions or Data Needs about Site Conditions

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3. Living Shoreline Design Concepts

Guidance: Refer to the resources provided about different living shoreline designs (such as the [NOAA Guidance](#), [New England Report](#) and [NH shoreline planting guide](#)) and, if needed, look for other examples relevant to your shoreline. Identify the categories of shoreline techniques that could be appropriate for your site and then brainstorm how the technique could be applied and other design concepts for your site. When you're ready, star the ideas that seem promising and make a note of remaining questions or information gaps.

3.A. Types of Shoreline Techniques Relevant to your Site (Indicate how each addresses site impairments and specify locations within site if needed.)

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3.B. Design Concepts to Consider (Brainstorm and then star ideas that seem promising for your site.)

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3.C. Remaining Questions

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4. Evaluating and Refining Design Ideas

Guidance: As you refine your project ideas, be sure to consider the following additional factors and invite review from others outside your team. During the second workshop, we will discuss the first three topics below and there will be time to consult with project experts (e.g., Dave Burdick, Tom Ballestero, Kevin Lucey). Some teams may choose to share one or a couple draft design concepts with the landowner before developing final design documents. Use this space as a checklist to confirm you have considered each factor and make a note of key information learned.

Additional Considerations	Notes
Permitting concerns	
Construction constraints (e.g. access issues)	
Cost considerations	
Maintenance needs	
Consult with other experts	
Consult with landowner	
Performance monitoring needs	

5. 50% Design Elements

Guidance: For this project, 50% designs should include the rationale and details that would be useful to share with project stakeholders, confirm landowner support, and have a preliminary meeting with regulatory agencies. At the end of this initial planning phase, all layout decisions and big selections should be made. [Here](#) is a 50% design example from Wagon Hill Farm.

Once you have a design concept that works for your site, meets landowner’s goals, and protects and builds ecological functions, begin developing the 50% design documents. The table below lists the suggested elements to include with space for notes, e.g., people working on that piece, status, and/or next steps. This table can be modified to best support your team’s collaborative process.

Element to include	Notes (status, people involved and/or next steps)
Project drawings	
Suggested materials	
Suggested plant list	
Short narrative summary of concept and design justification	
Slides to present at final workshop	