

Adapting living shorelines to protect Bank Swallow nesting habitat

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Living shorelines are a nature-based solution for slowing accelerated coastal erosion caused by climate change. Although living shorelines are natural, using a one-size-fits-all design strategy could have unintended negative impacts on species-at-risk living in the area. Bank Swallow, a species at risk, are particularly vulnerable to suffering a massive loss of nesting habitat to typical erosion-reducing living shorelines. In Youghall Beach Park, in Bathurst New Brunswick, we have implemented a community-supported coastal living shoreline designed to maintain natural Bank Swallow nesting habitat while slowing ocean-facing bank erosion. We will share an overview of this important pilot study, and Bank Swallow monitoring data from before and after the living shoreline implementation. We will discuss habitat characteristics of Bank Swallow nesting habitat and how you can adapt living shorelines to help keep species-at-risk and your property safe. It is critically important that we understand how native species are using the area of the coastline that we intend to strengthen before we implement a living shoreline design.

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