The purpose of the wetland tour is to expose landowners to the variety of plant and wildlife found in coastal wetlands and it is best if a site similar to that which they would find adjacent to their property is chosen. Generally use this opportunity to identify a variety of coastal plants, insects, amphibians/reptiles and other wildlife for participants.

Also show participants the value of the mowing BMP with the following demonstration. This worked very well in our train the trainer workshops and is valuable to do on its own even if the longer wetland tour is not conducted.

Materials:
- 2 five-gallon pails of water or easy access to fill one pail twice
- 1 round-mouth shovel
- 2 two-foot square pieces of Plexiglas
- 1 yard stick

Procedure:
1) Before the wetland tour/demonstration dig two identical 2 foot square holes, one at least 10 feet into a vegetated area, the other in wet or dry, vegetation-free sand (Note: It’s harder to maintain the hole in dry sand, but it does work.)
2) Line one side of each hole with one of the Plexiglas squares.
3) Place the yard stick parallel to and behind the Plexiglas at the vegetation-free site and have the 5-gallon pail of water available.
4) Carefully pour the 5-gallon pail of water along the yard stick, behind the glass. Do not concentrate the water in one, specific location but mimic, as much as possible, wave action. Ask people to note what they observe from the results. Your hole should collapse, the Plexiglas may even fall over. The hole will certainly be much larger and very unstable.
5) Next, move to the vegetated site and place the yard stick parallel to and behind the Plexiglas there; have the 5-gallon pail of water available.
6) Before pouring the water, point out the depth of the vegetation roots through the Plexiglas — note that there are both thick roots (for stability) and very fine roots (that hold the sand in place).
7) Carefully pour the 5-gallon pail of water along the yard stick, behind the glass. Do not concentrate the water in one, specific location but mimic, as much as possible, wave action. Ask people to note what they observe, especially the differences in stability of the sand and the hole.
8) Talk to people about their options in grooming their beach and recommend cutting grass as high as they can tolerate – 20 inches is recommended — in combination with a sand path to the water’s edge. Note that the higher the grass is left, the more habitat value it retains and it will continue to attract wildlife while not impeding their view of the water. Also point out that when lake levels rise again, or even during fall/winter storms, their beach is going to be much more stable if it has this root system to help it stay in place.