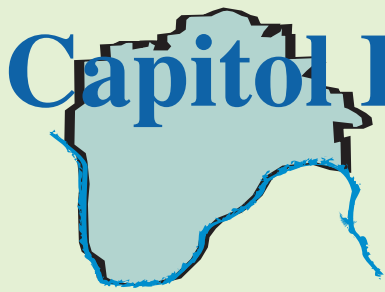


Capitol Region Watershed District



Our mission is to protect, manage and improve the water resources of the Capitol Region Watershed District.

INSIDE

2 Go Native!

3 Blue Thumbs Up

3 CRWD Stewardship Grants

4 CRWD Water Festival

Capitol Region Watershed District Summer 2007

CRWD Winner of Sustainable St. Paul Award

Capitol Region Watershed District was on hand when St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman and the City Council presented the city's first round of Sustainable St. Paul awards to honor efforts to protect and restore the environment in St. Paul. The Arlington Pascal Stormwater Improvement Project won an award for cooperative conservation efforts to fund and construct stormwater facilities in a subwatershed near Como Lake.

Older municipalities in metropolitan areas like the cities within the CRWD have very few stormwater management facilities for water quality treatment. Como Lake and its neighborhood are significantly impacted by runoff from city streets during rain events and snowmelt. Stormwater is the primary water source for the lake and carries along with it anything in the street; sand, salt, yard waste and pesticides are pollutants that enter the lake via storm drains in the watershed. Yard waste and fertilizer in particular are nutrient sources that encourage algae to proliferate. As part of the Arlington Pascal Stormwater Project, the cities of St. Paul, Roseville and Falcon Heights, along with Ramsey County, partnered to address these community issues:

- flooding problems in residential areas west of Como Lake, on Larpenteur Avenue and on Midway Parkway and
- reduction of high levels of phosphorous and sediment entering Como Lake.

These goals can be accomplished through a six-year implementation plan that includes some innovative solutions:



St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman and Council Member Jay Benanav present the award to CRWD board and staff.

- a flood reduction system;
- eight rainwater gardens;
- eight infiltration trenches;
- an underground stormwater storage facility; and
- a regional stormwater pond in Como Park.

The Arlington Pascal project meets both flooding and phosphorus reduction goals. It also shows that water quality improvement and volume reduction can be achieved even in densely developed areas, and in conjunction with redevelopment and street reconstruction, which can save implementation costs.

The project also offers a unique opportunity to improve parkland while improving water quality. While the Arlington Hamline Underground Storage Facility reduces flooding, the area where it was constructed was restored to its original

Older municipalities in metropolitan areas like the cities within the CRWD have very few stormwater management facilities to provide water quality treatment.

condition and continues to be used for park purposes. The 2007 redesign of Como Park Regional Pond will result in improved water quality and reduced flooding at a popular park that receives more than 2 million visitors annually.

This project also met partnership and cost sharing goals, and culminates five years of planning and

implementation to achieve some goals of the CRWD's Watershed Plan. "I want to thank all the partner cities and the staff at St. Paul Public Works as well as Parks and Recreation; we could not have completed the project without their help," said CRWD Administrator Mark Doneux.

Board of Managers: Robert P. Piram, President; Joe Collins; Marylyn Deneen; Mike Thienes; Seitu Jones

Staff: Mark Doneux, Administrator; Bob Fossum, Water Resource Specialist; Katie Huser, Water Resource Technician; Forrest Kelley, Permit Coordinator; John Mason, Water Resource Technician; Dawn Nelson, Administrative Assistant; Sarah Roley, Water Resource Technician; Elizabeth Storey, Education & Outreach Coordinator

Established in 1998, the Capitol Region Watershed District covers 40 square miles and includes portions of the cities of Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Maplewood, Roseville, and St. Paul. Located within Ramsey County, it has a population of 245,000 people. The Mississippi River is the district's predominant water resource and is the water resource to which the watershed district drains. Como Lake, Crosby Lake, Loeb Lake and McCarrons Lake are also located in the District.

Capitol Region Watershed District 1410 Energy Park Drive, Suite 4
St. Paul, MN 55108 • 651-644-8888 • www.capitolregionwd.org

Consider the Source

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources estimates that only traces – less than one percent – of native plant communities remain in a state that was once abundant with prairie and oak savanna. In the urban landscape, we have the opportunity to preserve a piece of natural history when we garden with Minnesota native plants. It's important, however, to make sure that plants making this claim are truly native to Minnesota.

What is native?

Since all plants are native to somewhere, definitions are somewhat arbitrary. But what is usually meant by “native” in landscape or restoration work are those species discovered growing in a particular area at the time of European settlement. Because some of the main benefits of using natives rely on their adaptation to conditions in a particular area, the seed source should be considered. Plants of the same species grow over a wide geographical area. Sub-populations adapted to differences in growing conditions, and thus local “ecotypes” evolved.

For example, seeds from a little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) prairie grass plant that grew in our area of Minnesota will contain genetic material which produces plants that are better adapted to our shorter growing seasons and colder winters than seed from a little bluestem grown in Kansas. Plants also support other organisms that have co-evolved

Ecotypes: Plants of the same species that have adapted to the different environmental conditions of their location.



Plants like this large-flowered bellwort are native to Minnesota, meaning its seed source originated within 200 miles of where it is planted.

with them, including pollinators, insects, birds, mammals and other wildlife that use the plants for food and shelter. Restoring native plants to areas where they are well-suited increases the chances of planting success, helps preserve organisms that are dependent on them and helps preserve their genetic diversity.¹

Shop locally

When Minnesotans use a non-local source of native plants, like Canada milk vetch (*Astragalus canadensis*) shipped here or grown from seed from another state, they introduce the potential for diluting or contaminating the local population. There may also be important genetic differences within native populations that we have not yet discovered. With the news full of stories about the commercial and medical value of native plants, it seems more important than ever to preserve local populations; the next medical breakthrough could spring from a native plant.

The most commonly accepted definition for local ecotype is a seed source that originated within 200 miles of a given location. The best way to assure that the type is still “true” is to get it from a supplier that raised it within that range. A list of local suppliers who honor this use of local ecotype can be found through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources: www.dnr.state.mn.us/gardens/nativeplants/suppliers.html.

Partners in encouraging diversity

While many Blue Thumb Partners (www.bluethumb.org, see sidebar on page 3) support and fund the use of non-native landscape plants, it is a collective goal that Blue Thumb projects using native plants require plant material propagated from sources no further than 200 miles away. Without diverse species of local ecotypes, our vegetated areas will be more homogenous and less diverse – like so much of the landscape.

A Blue Thumbs Up

This winter while we were all longing for green in the landscape, a group of people who care about clean water were thinking blue.

Blue Thumb™ is a collaborative program originally developed by Dawn Pape of Rice Creek Watershed District. The Blue Thumb partners are a group of professionals from local governmental units (watershed and conservation districts, cities, counties); nonprofit and community organizations; the University of Minnesota Extension and nursery and landscape professionals.

Through native plant gardening, rain-gardens and shoreline stabilization, Blue Thumb programs encourage citizens of local watersheds to reduce runoff from their home landscape to improve water quality. Since all the partners have the same goal – clean water – Blue Thumb partnership helps in creating a unified public education message.

Partners may use the Blue Thumb logo on print pieces, purchase promotional materials co-developed by field professionals, and more effectively collaborate with agencies and organizations. A partnership like Blue Thumb minimizes duplication and increases the strength of our reach to watershed residents. Retailers benefit from the increased exposure that results from association with Blue Thumb, and will also receive technical support and opportunities for professional development through trainings and workshops.

One element of the Blue Thumb program is an easy-to-use website for homeowners seeking native plant gardening information. If you're looking for help creating a native plant garden, a raingarden or a shoreline restoration, check out www.bluethumb.org.



Capitol Region Watershed District's Stewardship Grant Program

CRWD values efforts of individuals and organizations that support our mission to improve water resources. Residents of the District are encouraged to apply for cost-share grant funding for projects or programs with goals to improve water quality by decreasing stormwater runoff; create and carry out water quality education programs or preserve native plant and wildlife communities affected by lakes, rivers and wetlands.

Eligibility

The following may apply for a CRWD Stewardship Grant:

- all CRWD residents;
- nonprofit organizations or government agencies serving the District;
- businesses and corporations located within the CRWD; or
- public and private schools located within the CRWD.

Projects completed or in progress prior to approval are not eligible. The project must be located within the CRWD (see map at www.capitolregionwd.org).

Examples of eligible projects are:

- educational materials developed to demonstrate water resource stewardship;
- special events/meetings that educate the public about water resource stewardship;



A CRWD stewardship grant-funded raingarden planted in shrubs.

- volunteer litter clean-up of natural areas connected to water resources;
- green roofs;
- rain barrel installation;
- pervious pavement or other stormwater mitigation projects; or
- raingardens.

CRWD will reimburse approved applications up to 50% of the approved project cost not to exceed \$2,000. Applicants provide a 1:1 match of cash or in-kind services. Grant funding is offered on a reimbursement basis – grantees receive reimbursement after all requirements have been met and the project is complete.

CRWD accepts applications throughout the year. Contact CRWD for a complete application packet by calling 651-644-8888.



This parking lot raingarden receives roof and surface runoff.

Capitol Region Watershed District

1410 Energy Park Drive, Suite 4
St. Paul, MN 55108
651-644-8888
651-644-8894 fax
www.capitolregionwd.org

COMO LAKE water festival

Join us for fun on
Como Lake
Saturday, June 16

Event schedule

Performances take place on the stage near Schiffman Fountain, just south of the Lakeside Pavilion at Como Lake, 1360 North Lexington Parkway.

10:00 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Litter Clean-Up ~ Contact Debbie to volunteer at 651-647-6816

11:15 a.m.

Greg Sletten of Coconut Groove

Noon

Tricia and the Toonies ~ musical puppets

1:15 p.m.

Ceremonia Chalchitlique ~ Aztec dance

1:45 p.m.

The Beguine Brothers Old Time Revue

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Volunteer Litter Clean-up

Spruce up beautiful Como Lake! Trash bags provided; bring your own gloves.

Volunteers receive lunch courtesy of Black Bear Crossings on the Lake.

Sign up to help by contacting Debbie, 651-647-6816 or meisterd@qwest.net.

2:45 p.m.

Prize Drawing

Ongoing activities

Fishing ~ on the dock behind the Lakeside Pavilion

Paddleboating and Canoeing ~ on the steps behind the Lakeside Pavilion

Lead fishing tackle exchange ~ trade in your lead tackle for lead-free replacements

Exhibit Tent ~ experience water games, crafts, live animals, bugs, displays on gardening and environmental topics and more in the large tent near Schiffman Fountain



This event is sponsored by the Capitol Region Watershed District which works to protect and improve our water resources. The District includes portions of St. Paul, Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Maplewood and Roseville. Event co-sponsors include District 10 Community Council, Black Bear Crossings on the Lake, St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.