



Garden Club of Ramsey County

Rain Gardens
January 20, 2025



CAPITOL REGION WATERSHED DISTRICT

Agenda

- Acknowledgement
- Personal Introduction
- Watershed Management in MN
- Hydrology and Urban Watersheds
- Rain Gardens

Photo credit: Carolyn Yang Photography 2018.





Lindsay Schwantes
Community Engagement Program Manager

Image source: Harold Fisk Mississippi River Print – sheet 1,



Land Acknowledgement



De Dakota Makóče, this is Dakota Land

CRWD would like to acknowledge the Dakota peoples on whose land we work. We thank the Dakota peoples and their relatives for their care of the land, and we recognize their continuing connection to the land, waters, and community. We pay our respects to Dakota people and their culture; past, present, and future. We pledge to treat this land honorably and respectfully.

Watersheds – what are they?

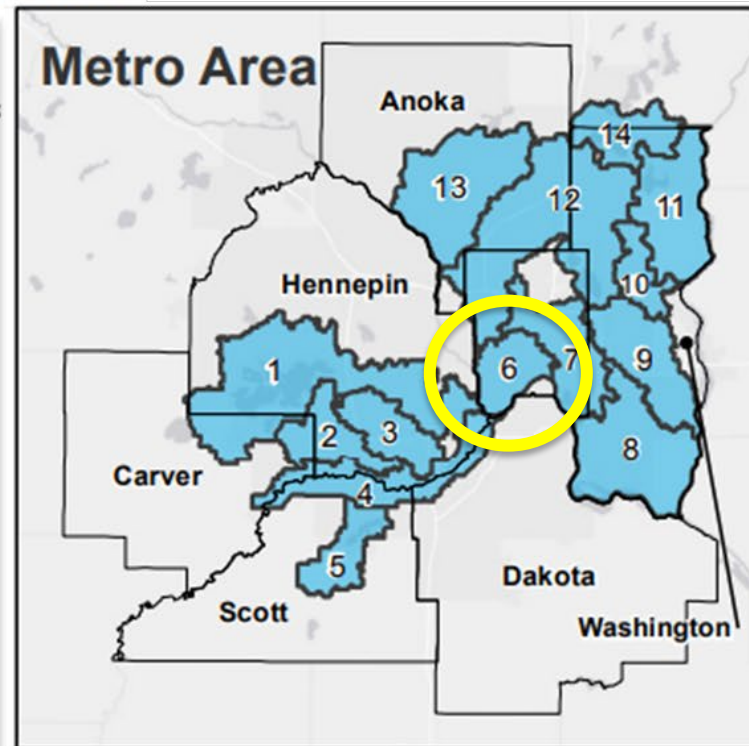
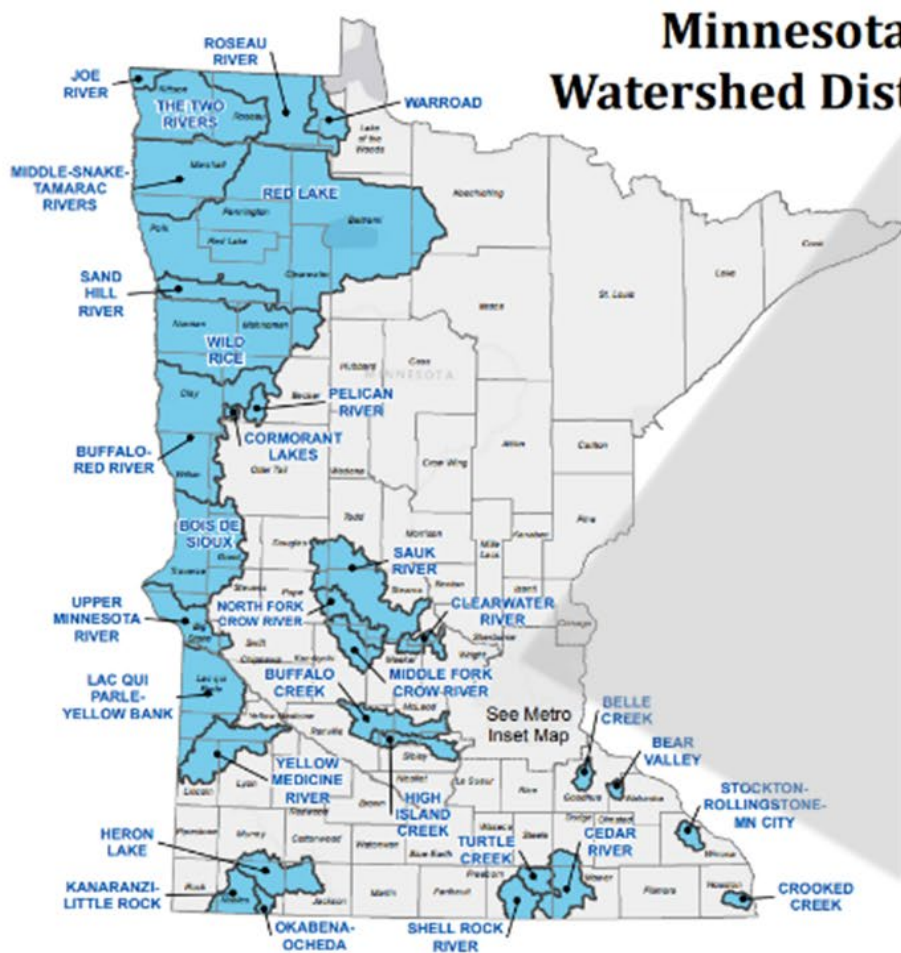


Watershed: An area of land where water and snowmelt flow to a particular water body.

- MN has 80 major watersheds
- MN is a headwaters state – all water flows out via three major watershed basins:
 - Mississippi River to Gulf of Mexico
 - Lake Superior through chain of Great Lakes
 - Red River of the North to Hudson Bay

Resource: Bell Museum's MN Water Stories: <https://www.bellmuseum.umn.edu/minnesota-water-stories/>

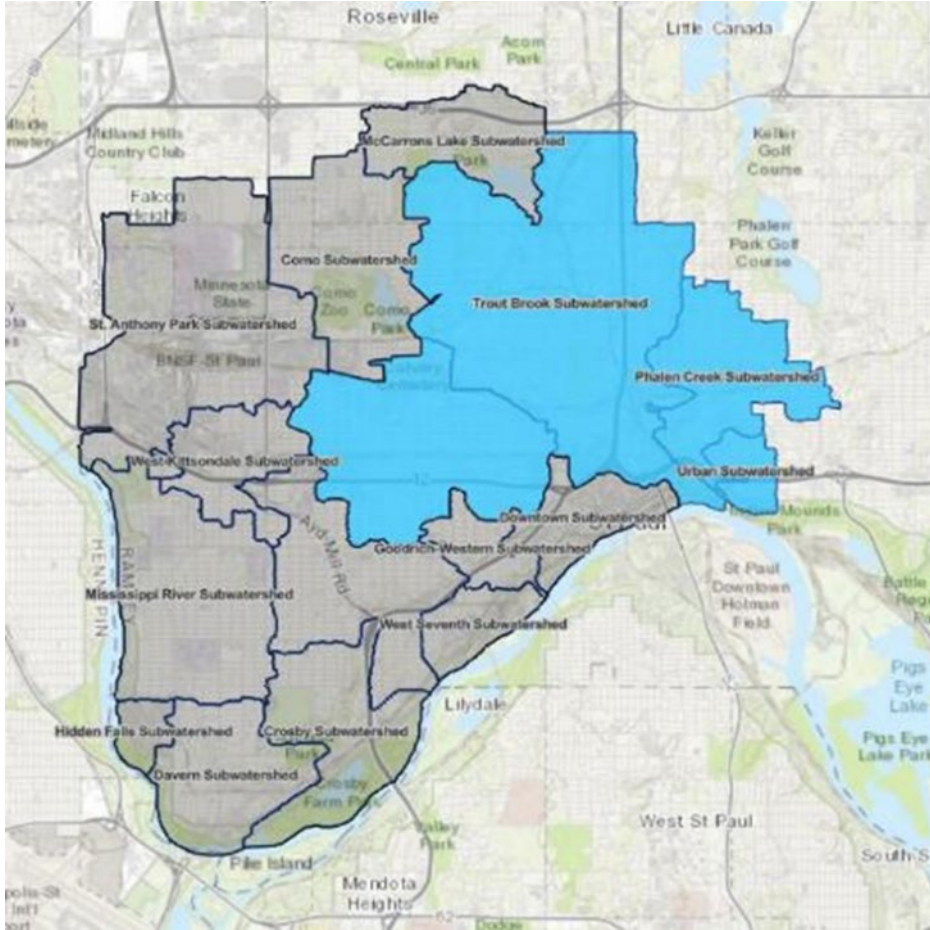
Watershed Management in MN



Metro Watershed Districts

- 1, MINNEHAHA CREEK
- 2, RILEY-PURGATORY-BLUFF CREEK
- 3, NINE MILE CREEK
- 4, LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER
- 5, PRIOR LAKE-SPRING LAKE
- 6, CAPITOL REGION
- 7, RAMSEY-WASHINGTON METRO
- 8, SOUTH WASHINGTON
- 9, VALLEY BRANCH
- 10, BROWNS CREEK
- 11, CARNELIAN-MARINE-ST. CROIX
- 12, RICE CREEK
- 13, COON CREEK
- 14, COMFORT LAKE FOREST LAKE

Capitol Region Watershed



CRWD's mission is to protect, manage and improve the water resources of CRWD.

- 41 square miles
- Portions of 5 cities – Saint Paul, Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Roseville & Maplewood
- 212,000 residents
- 5 Lakes – Como, McCarrons, Loeb, Crosby, Little Crosby
- 40% impervious surfaces

Most densely populated Watershed District with significant impervious surfaces.



Rain gardens

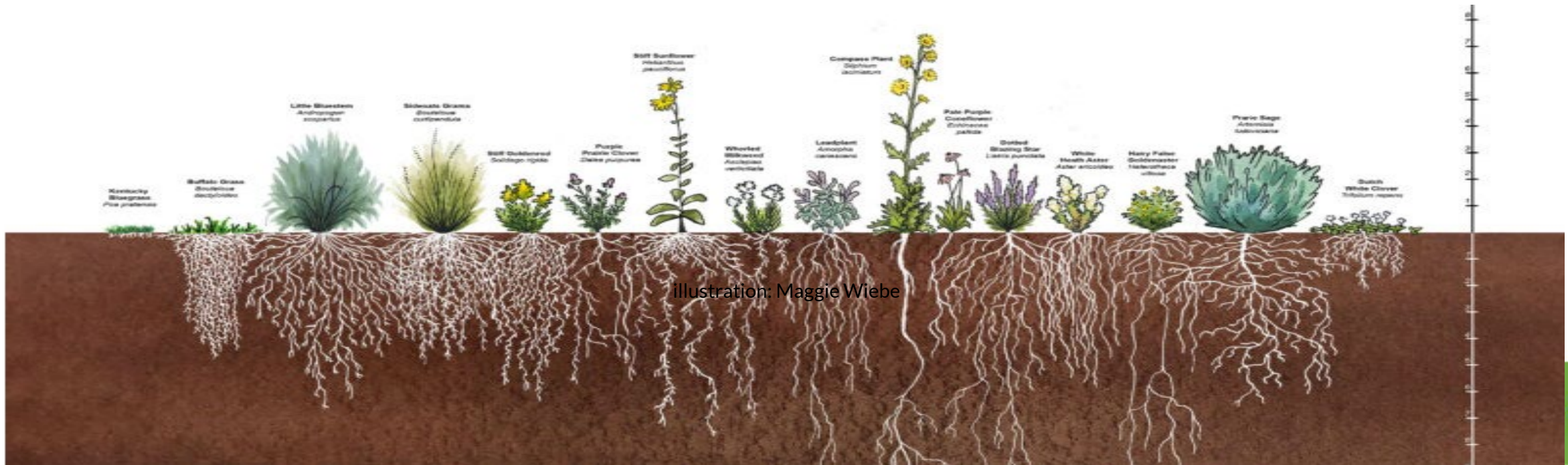


CRWD Water Stewards help plant a curb-cut rain garden

CAPITOL REGION WATERSHED DISTRICT

What is a rain garden?

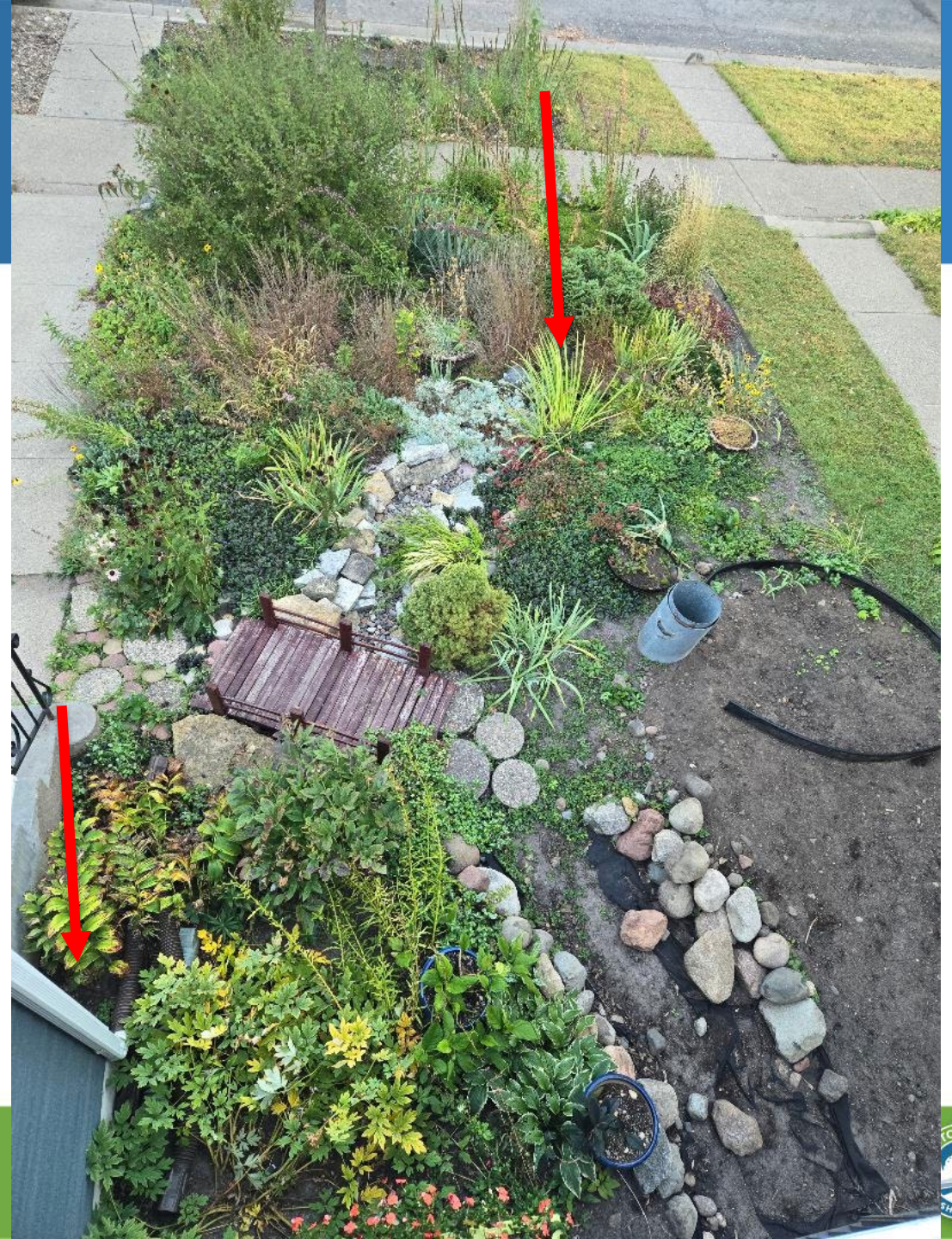
- Slow the flow of stormwater
- Give water some time to sink in rather than run off
- Choose plants with deep root systems
- Not a pond! Water retention >24 hours means that something



Where is a rain garden?

Assess your site:

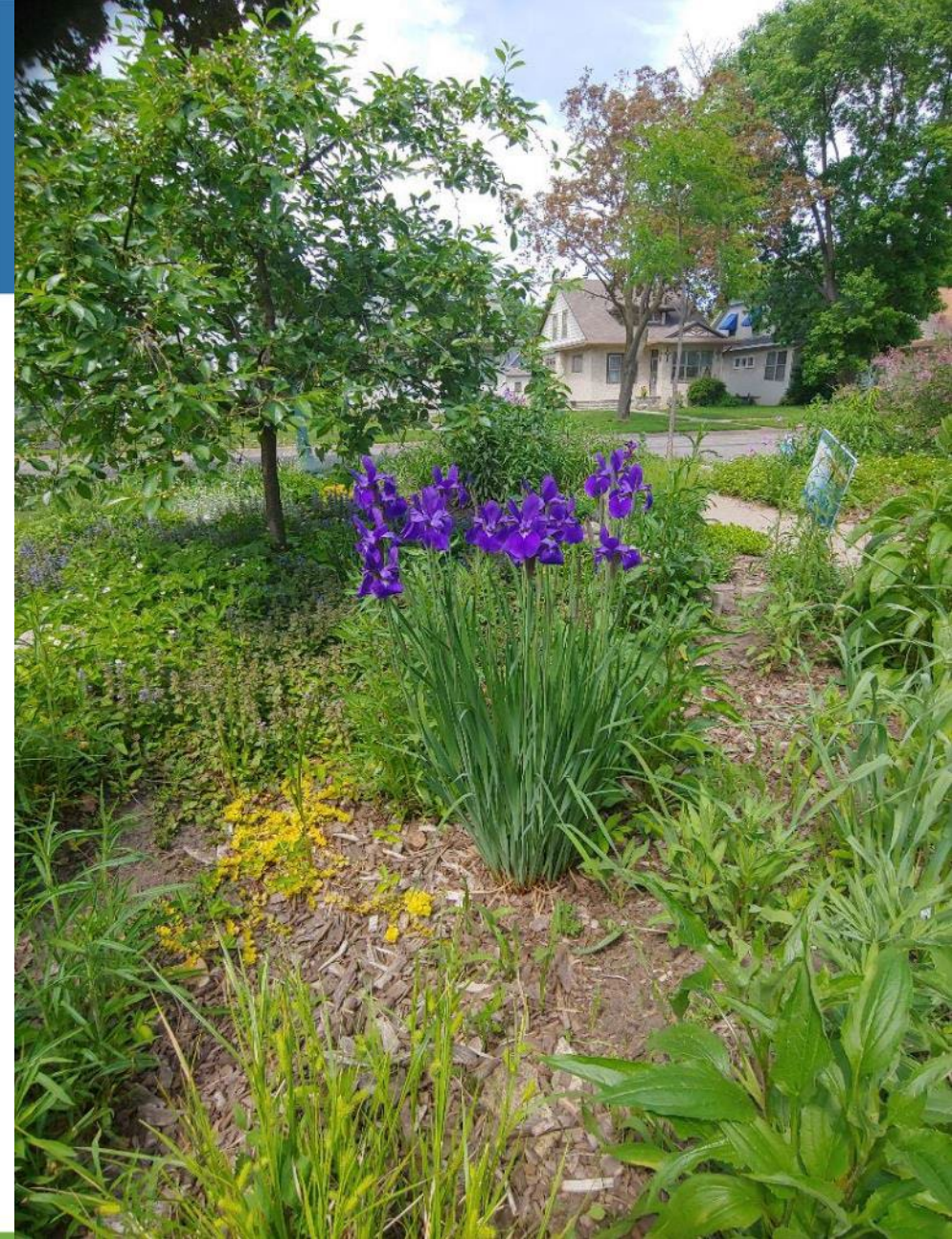
- Over 10' from any foundation
- Water source (downspout, french drain, rain barrel, etc.)
- Evaluate soil infiltration and structure
- Calculate size and depth for a 1" rain event



Rain Garden Design Considerations

Design creatively!

- Look at established rain gardens for inspiration
- Ask around for FREE cuttings, babies, splits
- Plant in multiples to ensure survival
- Use shredded wood to reduce weeds and erosion
- Lower diversity = lower maintenance

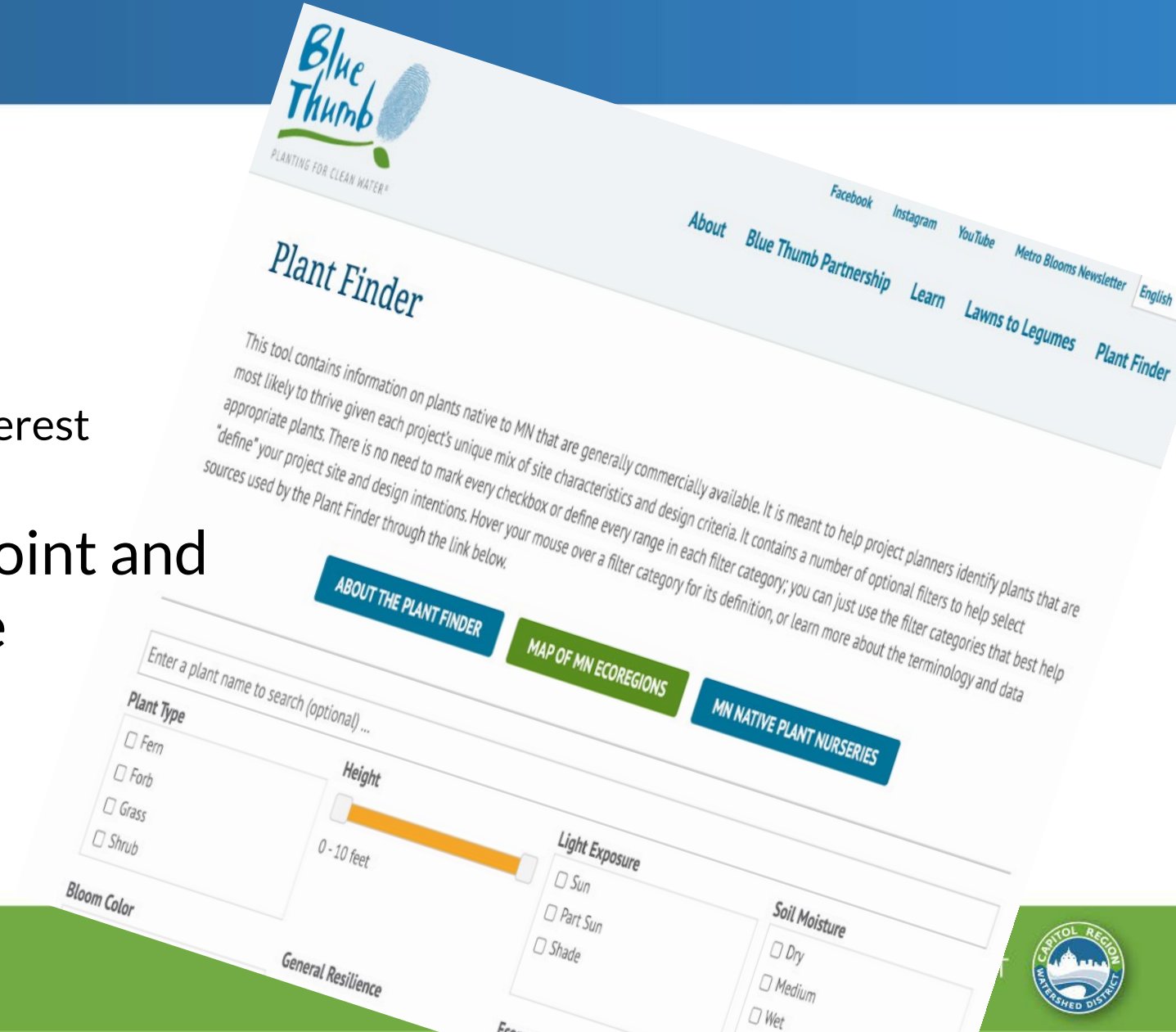


Rain Garden Plants

Plant species within tolerances

- for sun hours on your site
- for survivability in wet soils
- based on year-round bloom and texture interest

Assess from your main vantage point and choose plant heights to frame the raingarden



Rain Garden Plants

- Ornamental plants are not illegal!
- Cross-reference native plants
 - Xerces Society (insects)
 - Audubon Society (birds)
 - Endangered species



Rain Garden Maintenance Considerations

The maturing raingarden

- Keep it weeded
- Thin plants that are crowding
- Fill in bare patches
- Try the Chelsea Chop if getting overgrown





Curb-cut Rain Gardens

Extend your stewardship:
Help clean water from public streets

- Same concepts as residential raingarden
- Placement is critical: utilities, roots, and access
- Start a treatment conversation with municipal planners

Rain Gardens: curb-cut or not

- Choose plants that won't crowd car parking or sidewalks



- More frequent maintenance for sediment buildup



Resources

Find your local Watershed District

- Watershed districts may have technical or financial resources
- Enter your address in CRWD's map: <https://www.capitolregionwd.org/about-crwd/>
- Blue Thumb Plant Finder: <https://bluethumb.org/plantfinder/>

Winter Considerations



Winter Considerations

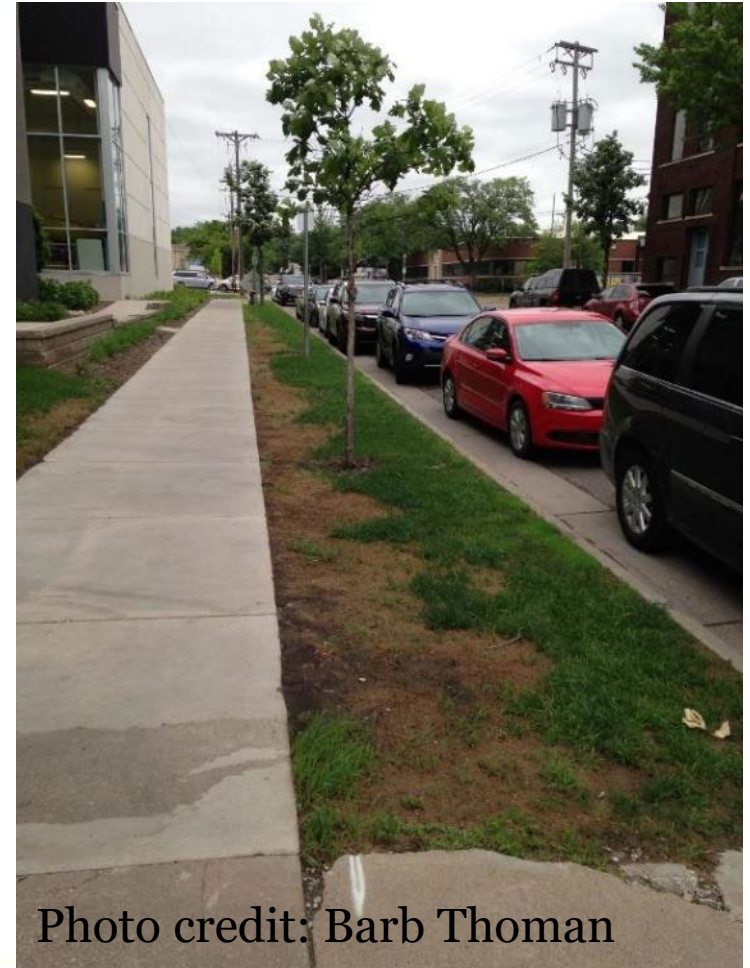


Photo credit: Barb Thoman

Winter Considerations

Read labels, be cautious of marketing, and use best product:



Winter Considerations

Use tools properly:



Photo credit: Barb Thoman



Questions?

Lindsay Schwantes, Community
Engagement Program Manager

lschwantes@capitolregionwd.org

(651) 644-8888

