

Minnesota Water Stewards

Hennepin County cohorts: 2018–2023 report

This garden is doing good for Robbinsdale lakes, rivers, streams and wildlife.

Rain gardens like this one collect storm water and snow melt from surfaces like roads, sidewalks, and parking lots. The native plants in this garden provide valuable habitat for animals, butterflies, and other insects and absorb rain that would otherwise flow, unfiltered directly to Crystal or Twin Lake carrying with it harmful pollutants and nutrients it gathers along the way. Grass clippings, leaves, and dog waste from our lawns create algae blooms that are detrimental to the health of our lakes, rivers, streams, and their inhabitants.

For more information on the benefits of rain gardens, visit www.freshwater.org



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Freshwater’s Minnesota Water Stewards is coordinated by Kris Meyer, kmyer@freshwater.org, and Alex Van Loh, avanloh@freshwater.org. Learn more about Minnesota Water Stewards: minnesotawaterstewards.org

For more information about Hennepin County’s Minnesota Water Stewards program, contact:

Christina Schmitt, Hennepin County Environment and Energy
701 4th Avenue S, Suite 700
Minneapolis, MN
christina.schmitt@hennepin.us

Overview

Hennepin County: Minnesota Water Steward training program

Minnesota Water Stewards (MWS) is a program to train residents to be water advocates in their communities. Coordinated by Freshwater, the program provides online curriculum and access to training. The stewards then put their new knowledge into practice with a hands-on capstone project and community engagement effort.

For past five years (2018-2023), Hennepin County, in partnership with Freshwater, has trained a cohort of five to eight stewards annually, providing tuition, stipends, and technical support for capstone projects. Starting in 2020, Hennepin County also began supporting Art for Water Stewards. The program equips artists to use their art as outreach tools to inspire others to protect water.

About this report

This report shares the outcomes and reach of 28 stewards' projects—23 steward capstone projects, five Art for Water projects—as well as sharing each capstone's unique story.

Hennepin County's cohort of Minnesota Water Stewards is supported by staff in its Environment and Energy department: Christina Schmitt (coordinator), Patience Caso, and Kris Guentzel.

Additional help compiling this report: Grace Barcelow, Roz Davis, Carol Hoffman, Lily Kingsley, and Emily McDonald.



Installation of rain garden at Community Commons Park, Minneapolis, as part of MWS Christina Perfetti's capstone project. Photo credit: Mississippi Watershed Management Organization.

Community impact

By the numbers

28

certified stewards since 2018: 23 stewards and five Art for Water stewards

1,812

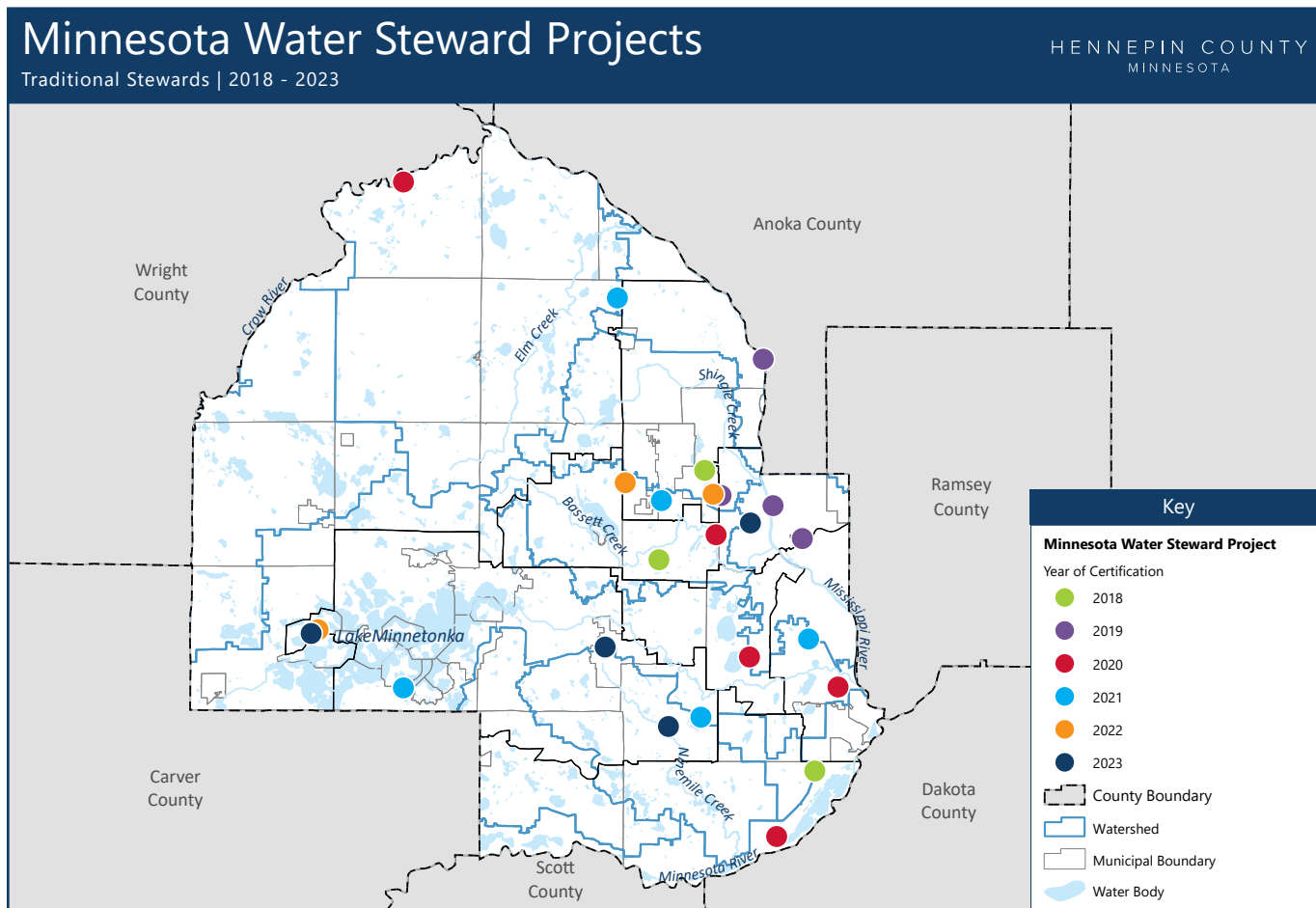
people engaged in person through outreach since 2018: 1,562 by certified stewards and 250 by Art for Water stewards

Why community outreach matters

Community outreach is a proven way to break barriers, build relationships, and lift local voices. Minnesota Water Stewards help neighbors understand pressing water quality issues in their area and empower them to act.

Across Hennepin County

Minnesota Water Stewards have installed best management practices and community outreach projects in all seven Hennepin County Commissioner Districts and in eight watershed management organizations within the county.



Water quality impact



By the numbers

3.15 million

gallons of rain water intercepted since 2018

8

pounds of phosphorus reduction since 2018

1,924

pounds of sediment reduction since 2018

Why capturing and cleaning rain water matters

Rain water that is intercepted, then used for watering plants or infiltrated into the ground, ensures the rain is used as a clean water resource. Unchecked rain water can turn into a pollutant, picking up whatever is in its path and washing it into nearby lakes and rivers.

For instance, rain water can carry excess nutrients such as phosphorus into local waterways. Phosphorus can contribute to algae blooms, which reduce usability of a water body for recreation. It can also lead to oxygen depletion (eutrophication), which harms wildlife.

Rain water can also carry excess sediment into a water body and make the water cloudy. This can harm wildlife and cause oxygen depletion.

Climate considerations

As Minnesota's climate gets warmer and wetter, heavy precipitation events will become more frequent. This means Minnesota will experience more flooding, freeze/thaw cycles, ice storms, rain on snow events and heavy snowstorms. These climate impacts will strain our infrastructure, and the built and natural environment.

In addition to heavier precipitation events, the potential for drought will increase in the coming decades. Residents can take action at home to mitigate the effects of climate change by installing rain barrels to keep water in their yards, designing a rain garden, or redirecting downspouts.

What the stewards say: Survey results

In late 2023, a survey was sent to 47 past participants in Hennepin County’s water steward program and the Art for Water 2020 pilot. Nineteen people (40%) responded to the survey. We asked for their feedback about the training and capstone work. We also wanted to know if they still volunteer or take action to protect water quality.

They rated their experience, on a scale of 1 to 5, an average of 4.3 “thumbs up.” More than 80% of the respondents said the program overall met their expectations, as did the community engagement requirements. The most helpful tools of the program were the orientation meeting with Freshwater, online curriculum, and Freshwater and Hennepin County staff.

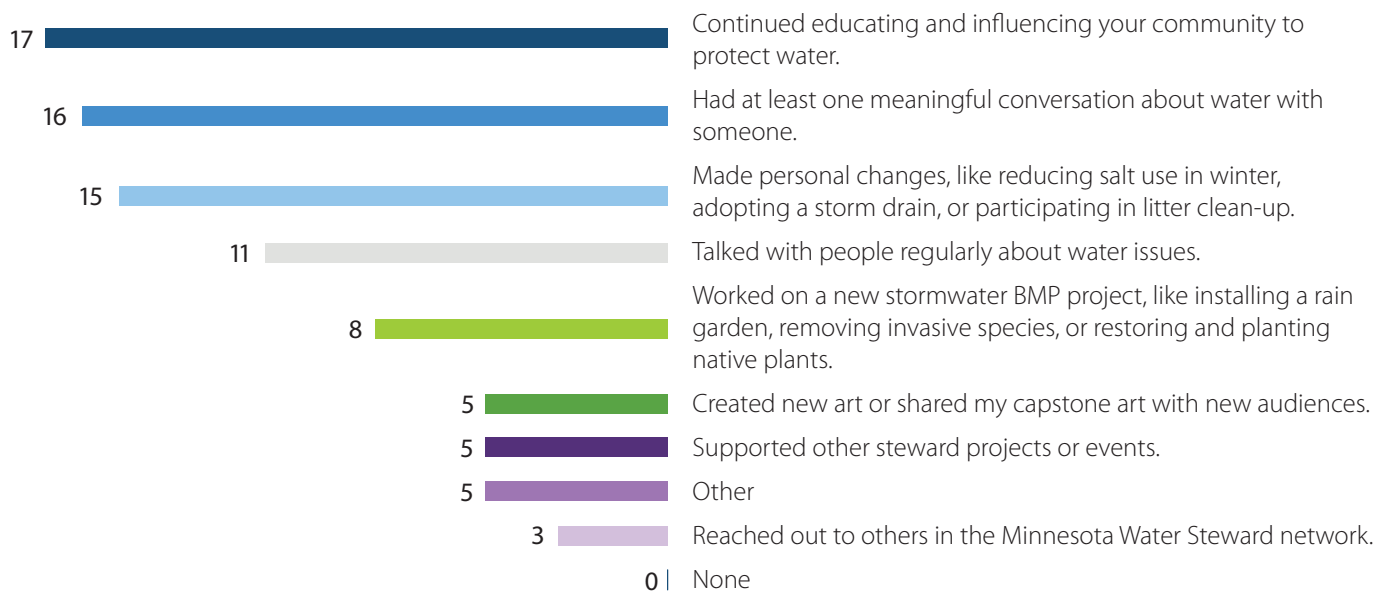
We asked them which types of activities they have participated in that they would not have done before becoming a Minnesota Water Steward. 89% said they continue influencing their community to make changes to protect water. 84% had at least one meaningful conversation about water with someone. 79% made personal changes, like reducing salt use in winter, adopting a storm drain, or participating in a litter clean-up.

Several respondents shared feedback on how to improve the program. Three respondents (16%) said the capstone project timeline felt too abbreviated, and they needed more time for the training and capstone work. Earlier project approval would allow them to take advantage of spring plant sales. Several people enjoyed interacting with their fellow stewards and wished they had more time to interact during class sessions. Five people (26%) expressed some confusion or frustration around reaching consensus with county staff about their project proposals. It was challenging to scope their projects so they would be significant, but still manageable.



2019 Hennepin County stewards at orientation

What types of activities have you participated in since graduating that you would not have done before becoming a Minnesota Water Steward?



Capstone projects 2018-2023

Minnesota Water Stewards complete a capstone project to receive their certification. These include a water-improvement project and an education or outreach campaign. Past projects have included installing practices such as rain gardens, rain barrels, permeable pavement, or cisterns, which reduce polluted water runoff and help more water soak into the ground. Education campaigns help neighbors and community members understand local environmental issues and how they can make a difference.

2018 cohort

Josh Bindewald and Sarah Guse

4525 Grimes Avenue North, and Robbinsdale City Hall, 4100 Lakeview Avenue North, Robbinsdale
Shingle Creek Watershed Management Commission
Hennepin County Commissioner District 3



Josh Bindewald and Sarah Guse collaborated on their capstone project and installed a 175-square-foot rain garden. In addition to the rain garden, they also planted native plants on a strip of land beside their home to maximize rain water filtration. They engaged in community outreach and education by distributing educational flyers at National Night Out, which highlighted various habits that can improve water quality including native plantings, managing pet waste, and keeping storm drains clean. They also designed an educational pollinator wrap artwork that the City of Robbinsdale installed at their City Hall.

Outcomes

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2018: 49,334
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2018: 0.124
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2018: 22.4
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 75

Peter Cartwright

8100 26th Avenue South, Bloomington
Richfield-Bloomington Watershed Management Organization
Hennepin County Commissioner District 5



Peter Cartwright worked on two stormwater basin plantings for his capstone project. These plantings were aimed at revegetating two rain gardens on a public roadway in Bloomington on 26th Avenue and Lindau Lane. In collaboration with Richfield-Bloomington Watershed Management Organization and community volunteers, Cartwright planted 166 native plants, which contributed to the water quality benefits of the city rain gardens.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2018: 13,718
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2018: 0.0192
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2018: 6.2
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 10+

Steven Johnson

7040 Olson Memorial Highway Frontage Road,
Golden Valley
Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission
Hennepin County Commissioner District 3

Steven Johnson installed a 900-square-foot residential rain garden for his capstone project. To engage and educate the community, Johnson hosted a planting event for the rain garden that engaged other water stewards and volunteers.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2018: 106,228
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2018: 0.266
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2018: 48.3
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 5



2019 cohort

Kim Carpenter

River Park, 101 83rd Avenue North, Brooklyn Park
West Mississippi River Watershed Management Commission
Hennepin County Commissioner District 1



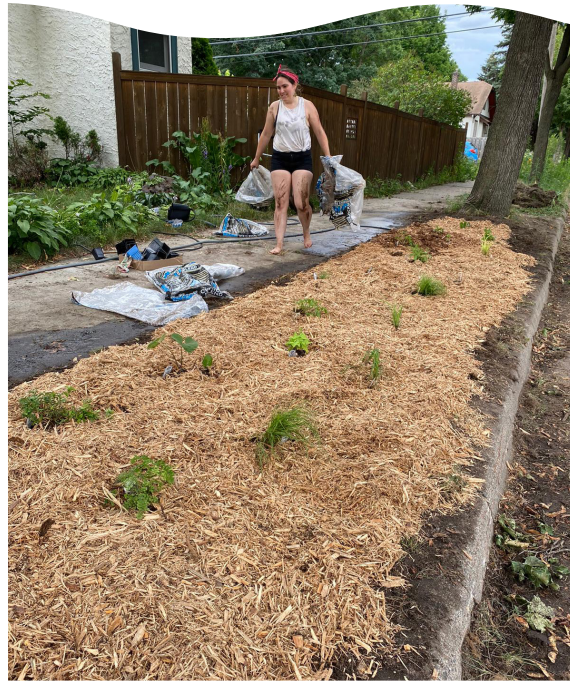
Kim Carpenter coordinated a storm drain mural installation with artist Geno Okok, adopted four storm drains, and removed nearly 100 invasive trees from a wetland in River Park for her capstone project. In collaboration with West Mississippi Watershed Management Commission stakeholders in Brooklyn Park, Carpenter designed her capstone to address city stormwater priorities that were outlined in the River Park Redevelopment Plan.

Outcomes:

- Number storm drains adopted: 4
- Invasive trees removed from a wetland: 100
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 60

Emma Nyquist

3700 Washburn Avenue North, Minneapolis
Shingle Creek Watershed Management Commission
Hennepin County Commissioner District 2



Emma Nyquist installed a rain water diversion system and permeable pavement walkway for her capstone project. With the help of other water stewards and community volunteers, Nyquist was able to accomplish her project goal of diverting rain water from her roof gutters to her garden and newly installed permeable pavement path. A brochure explaining the benefits of permeable walkways, as well as guidance for implementation, was shared with her community. Nyquist also created a coloring book, which is an interactive and creative way for people to engage with topics of water quality and conservation.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2019: 9,710
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2019 0.024
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2019: 4.4
- Number of people engaged with outreach: 10+

Christina Perfetti

Community Commons Park Rain Garden, 1037 Central Avenue Northeast, Minneapolis
Mississippi Watershed Management Organization
Hennepin County Commissioner District 2



Photo credit: Mississippi Watershed Management Organization

Christina Perfetti installed a rain garden at Community Commons Park in Minneapolis for her capstone project as part of a larger St. Anthony East Neighborhood Association project with partner Mississippi Watershed Management Organization. The rain garden addresses water drainage issues and filters stormwater before it reaches the storm drain. In addition to water quality benefits, this project provides educational signage posted near the garden, which outlines how rain gardens contribute to stormwater management and water quality improvements. Perfetti and the association also hosted community meetings, which included rain garden planting, tours and educational content about water quality.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2019: 15,739
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2019: 0.04
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2019: 7.2
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 25

Andy Wattenhofer

648 Marshall Street Northeast, Minneapolis
Mississippi Watershed Management Organization
Hennepin County Commissioner District 2



Andy Wattenhofer installed several shoreline stabilization measures at his home property, which borders the Mississippi River for his capstone project. To reduce shoreline erosion and pollutants entering the river, Wattenhofer stabilized the shoreline with limestone rip rap, reservoir cubes, which slow the flow of water toward the river, and native plantings. This capstone project was the first phase in Wattenhofer's larger shoreline restoration project. He also engaged neighbors and community members to share his project and more information about water quality and conservation.

Outcomes

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2019: 21,474
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2019: 0.111
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2019: 93.8
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 27

2020 cohort

Lauren Salvato

1810 Zephyr Place and 1831 York Avenue North, Golden Valley
Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission
Hennepin County Commissioner District 2



Lauren Salvato's capstone project involved the installation of a 400-square-foot rain garden, two rain barrels, and 50+ feet of tile drain, which captures runoff from three neighboring properties. Salvato also held an event for neighbors, who live on the hilly slopes near Theodore Wirth Parkway, to learn more about the project. Due to COVID-19, the event was scheduled in half hour increments and neighbors were encouraged to sign up for time slots to maintain safe social distancing.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2020: 103,230
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2020: 0.258
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2020: 47
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 15

Helen Schnoes

West 43rd Street and Colfax Avenue South, Minneapolis
Mississippi Watershed Management Organization
Hennepin County Commissioner District 3



Helen Schnoes installed two rain barrels that divert rain water to a native pocket planting. She used the water system to increase community awareness of the benefits of native plants and water quality best practices. Schnoes then shared educational information at National Night Out and hosted a raffle that allowed neighbors to enter to win a rain barrel and 72 pollinator plants. The project also included promoting the Adopt-a- Drain program; Schnoes adopted two drains near her house and promoted the program so that seven additional drains were adopted by neighbors.

Schnoes then coordinated an even larger outreach effort—a community-based storm-drain mural installation, the first in the City of Minneapolis. The mural was a collaboration between Barton Community School, the East Harriet Farmstead Neighborhood Association, with permitting from the City of Minneapolis.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2020: 2,053
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2020: 0.005
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2020: 0.9
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 225

Kate Weinans

24360 141st Avenue, Rogers
Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission
Hennepin County Commissioner District 7

Kate Weinans installed a bioswale, rain garden, and trees on a rural property near Rogers. The stormwater capture mechanism installed near the banks of Crow River intercepts some of the runoff from a nearby farm field. To engage her community, Weinans created magnets to promote various water quality protection habits to practice, including leaf management, winter salting habits, and keeping storm drains clean. She used these magnets at events with the Mississippi River Crew, Open Streets: Broadway Avenue, Minneapolis, and even included them in holiday cards to her community.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2020: 111,930
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2020: 0.28
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2020: 50.9
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 115, plus an additional 50 through a mailing



Ellie Schmidt

5300 39th Avenue South, Minneapolis
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
Hennepin County Commissioner District 4

For her capstone project, Ellie Schmidt installed a boulevard rain garden and 50-gallon rain barrel at her home. Schmidt's outreach and education project included connecting neighbors with resources about smart salting techniques, rain garden maintenance, and water quality. She also surveyed 18 individuals who won a lottery for a rain garden funded through from Metro Blooms and the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association, assessing their needs and connect them with educational resources.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2020: 9,873
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2020: 0.025
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2020: 4.5
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 18

2021 cohort

Megan Holthaus

9835 103rd Avenue North, Maple Grove
Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission
Hennepin County Commissioner District 7



Megan Holthaus worked to divert storm water on her property into a rain garden. To better showcase the rain garden, Holthaus decided to plant her garden in the front yard, which meant she had to change the pitch of her left-side gutters to slope to the front yard. She installed a new downspout and created a dry creek bed to convey the storm water to the garden. Holthaus invited neighbors and friends to plant the garden and had conversations about water quality to motivate them to make changes in their own yards to improve water quality.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2021: 5,735
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2021: 0.014
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2021: 2.6
- Number people engaged through outreach: 9+

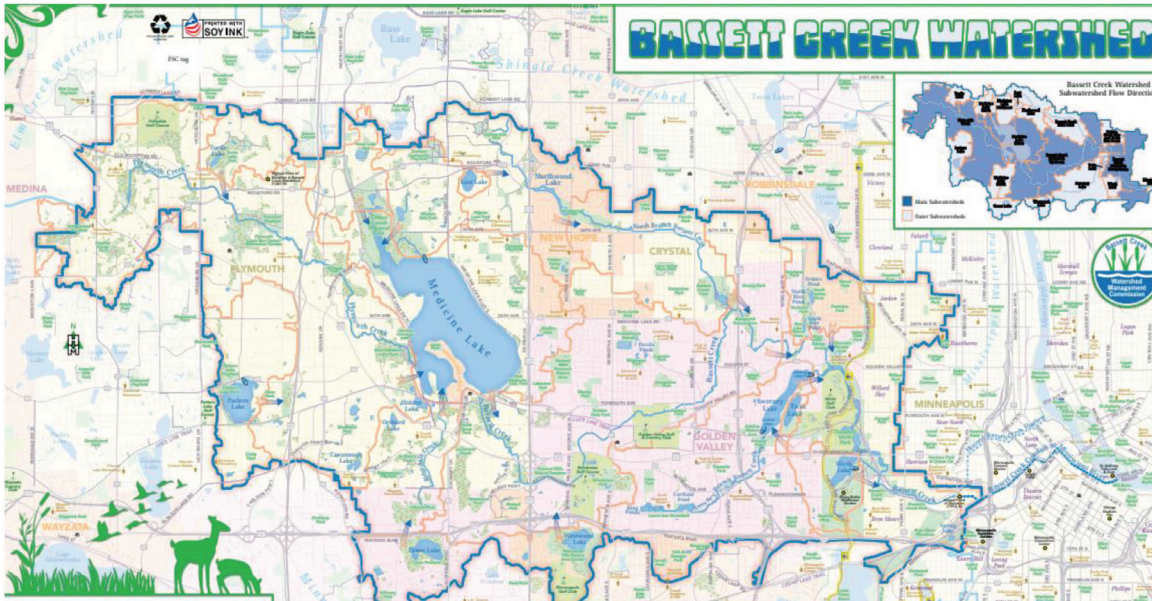
Joan Hauer

3440 Jersey Avenue, Crystal
Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission
Hennepin County Commissioner District 1

Storm water flows from street drains directly to our creeks, streams, wetlands, and lakes, carrying with them any pollutants the water has picked up along the way. Storm water does not get treated at a wastewater treatment plant. Here are some things you can do to help improve water quality.

1. Shovel accumulated snow first, minimize salt applied, then sweep up any excess salt.

2. Keep hard surfaces clear of leaves, branches, & grass clippings by collecting such debris for mulch or compost



3. Lawn & garden chemicals/fertilizers can harm pollinators and enter the storm water system. Minimize their use and follow directions for proper application.

4. Keep grass a minimum of three inches tall for improved health.

5. Pet waste contains bacteria, such as e-coli, and can cause destructive algae blooms. Pick up pet waste and dispose of in the trash

6. Consider adopting a storm drain. Learn more: www.adopt-a-drain.org

7. Capture and reuse rainwater for lawn or garden watering. Examples include: planting a raingarden, installing a rain barrel

8. Replace turf lawn with native plants. Benefits can include less watering, less mowing, among others.

9. Manage storm water from hard surfaces and gutters. Slope patios, walks, downspouts, and other hard surfaces on your property to grass, gardens, or other soft surfaces

Water is a precious finite resource. Treat it like it is your life, because it is.J.Hauer

11. Stop erosion and other sediments from leaving your property during rain. Use plants and other vegetation to minimize exposed soil/dirt.

10. Established lawns only need 1 inch of water a week. Don't over-water and water in the morning before the heat of the day.

Joan Hauer installed a 250-square-foot rain garden in her front yard as her capstone project. Prior to the installation, stormwater runoff from the roof was eroding the soil in the front yard. This rain garden allows for stormwater to filter through native plants before reaching the street and storm drains, decreasing in volume and pollutants in the process. The project's goals were to improve stormwater management and educate community members on the benefits of rain gardens, which Hauer achieved by installing educational signs near the rain garden.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2021: 6,093
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2021: 0.015
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2021: 2.8
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 50

Alex Jack

2116 East 37th Street, Minneapolis
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
Hennepin County Commissioner District 4

Alex Jack installed a bioswale with native plants from Metro Blooms in the boulevard strip in south Minneapolis. Jack's parents helped with the installation. For the outreach portion of the project, Jack installed a little library pamphlet holder, which contains literature to promote what neighbors can do to protect water quality in their own homes.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2021: 35,387
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2021: 0.089
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2021: 16.1
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 5



Colleen Lockovitch

145 Brentwood Avenue, Excelsior
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
Hennepin County Commissioner District 6



Colleen Lockovitch worked to plant woody and herbaceous native plants between her house and garage, near a small creek that runs along the property, which ultimately drains into Lake Minnetonka. The project, designed by Morning Dew Gardens, keeps stormwater on the property instead of going into the creek. Her property lies adjacent to high traffic pedestrian areas for walking/biking, so she posted signage to highlight the project's environmental benefits to passersby. Lockovitch also hosted a planting event with neighbors, as well as several educational workshops to share with families the actions they can take for water quality.

Outcomes

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2021: 165,761
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2021: 0.415
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2021: 75.4
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 77

2022 cohort

Alex Braaten

9309 20 ½ Avenue North, New Hope
Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission
Hennepin County Commissioner District 1



Alex Braaten worked to reduce shoreline erosion on a Northwood Lake shoreline property by installing an upland shoreline buffer with native plants, mulch, an erosion control biolog around the buffer. Braaten also installed two onsite rain barrels to intercept stormwater runoff from the house. To install the shoreline buffer, he recruited members of Friends of Northwood Lake Association, neighbors from New Hope, friends and family, and he later held educational tours of the plantings and rain barrel system. Braaten also canvassed visitors to the city park on the east side of Northwood Lake, sharing information about both his project and the City of New Hope's installation of best management practices during a recent park upgrade.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2022: 10,883
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2022: 0.0687
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2022: 5
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 45

Julie Moore and Sheri Wallace

Between 2135 and 2132 Overland Road, Mound
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
Hennepin County Commissioner District 6

Julie Moore and Sheri Wallace installed two rain gardens to capture stormwater from Overland Road in Mound before it drained into Harrison's Bay of Lake Minnetonka. Working with the City of Mound, Harrison's Bay Association, and volunteers, the stewards installed the rain gardens and hosted a planting event. There, they gave an overview of impact of stormwater on our waterways (particularly Lake Minnetonka). The email and newsletter articles for Harrison's Bay association was sent to about 400 homes. A page was created on the Harrison's Bay Association website. The event was featured in the Lake Pioneer (5,500 subscribers), and an interpretive sign was installed for the rain gardens to educate the public about the project.



Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2022: 99,743
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2022: 0.249
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2022: 103.1
- Number of people reached through outreach: 20 and 5,900 readers

Tamara Valme

3709 Beard Avenue North, Robbinsdale
Shingle Creek Watershed Management Commission
Hennepin County Commissioner District 1



Tamara Valme worked to improve water quality by planting a native garden, installing a rain barrel, and planting fescue on her property. She worked with a designer at Seeds to Site for the creation of the native garden. On the day of planting, Valme invited neighbors over to learn about the installation and gave them treats and pollinator plants. The steward also worked with West Metro Water Alliance to get resources to pass out to neighbors.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2022: 3,650
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2022: 0.009
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2022: 103.1
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 45

2023 cohort

Joanne Lynch

321 12th Avenue North, Hopkins, and Hopkins Farmers Market
Nine Mile Creek Watershed District
Hennepin County Commissioner District 6

During this project, Joanne Lynch engaged people at the Hopkins Farmers Market during five Saturdays in the summer of 2023. Working with staff from Nine Mile Creek Watershed District, she shared with people different actions they would take to protect water quality. Lynch also worked with Metro Blooms on a design for a rain garden system that will be installed in her front yard and the boulevard in 2024.

Outcomes:

- Number of people engaged through outreach: 623
- Rain garden and boulevard planting to come in 2024



Perrie Conin-Cole

6612 Limerick Drive Edina, and Normandale Park, Edina
Nine Mile Creek Watershed District
Hennepin County Commissioner District 6



Perrie Conin-Cole installed a two rain-barrel in-line system, created from repurposed 55-gallon food barrels. The system captures 375 square feet of a house's roof run off. The system also served as an educational demonstration, used to show the design and installation of the system to friends, family, and neighbors. A second outreach effort included a storm drain clean up near Normandale Park with Edina Cub Scout Pack 168 and their parents, and promotion of the Adopt-a-Drain program.

Outcomes

- Gallons of rain water intercepted since 2023: 684
- Pounds of phosphorus removed since 2023: 0.002
- Pounds of sediment captured since 2023: 0.3
- 20 storm drains cleaned up and 11.4 pounds of debris cleaned
- Number of people engaged through outreach 40

Angela Savstrom

Veterans Memorial Park and 5515 Shoreline Drive, Mound
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
Hennepin County Commissioner District 1

At a June 2023 event held in Veterans Memorial Park in Mound, Angela Savstrom distributed 72 rain barrels at a discount in partnership with the City of Mound, Harrisons Bay Association, and Recycling Association of Minnesota. Water conservation education stations were onsite for attendees to learn about personal actions people can take to positively impact water quality. The event also featured rain barrel installation demonstrations and native plant giveaways.

Outcomes:

- Gallons of water intercepted since 2023: 100,000+.
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 72+



Art for Water: 2020 pilot

In 2020, Freshwater Society launched Art for Water with the help of a Hennepin County Green Partners grant.

The artists attended two workshops then created their capstone artwork and outreach pieces to promote water quality.

2020 Art for Water stewards

Kenneth Caldwell

20-30 paintable canvases with pre-drawn images of ways to save the water. 20 people reached through outreach.

Kimberly Carpenter

Rain barrels painted with George Floyd image in a community garden. 1,000 people reached through outreach.

Aaron Dysart

Dysart exhibited an interactive display titled "Byproduct" at Fulton Brewery in collaboration with a University of Minnesota scientist. 1,000 people reached through outreach.

Erika Finne

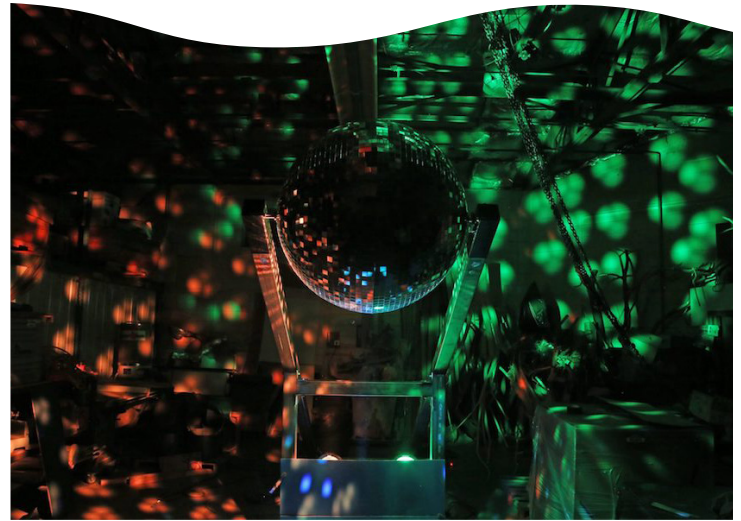
Bassett Creek Watershed coloring book. 100 people reached through outreach.

Marty Harris

A sketchbook exchange with a Minnehaha Watershed theme. 12 people reached through outreach.

Madeline Helling

Hand puppets of Minnesota wildlife. 100 people reached through outreach.



Aaron Dysart's installation, "Byproduct" featuring a disco ball

Presley Martin

Created a booklet, "Field Guide to Plastic of the Mississippi River." 200 people reached through outreach.

Geno Okok

Stormdrain art in Brooklyn Park. 600 people reached through outreach.

Ryan Seibold

Water Table, an outdoor community education series. 100 people reached through outreach.

Ben Weaver

Minneapolis, Mississippi Watershed Management Organization

Bicycle Watershed Concert Clean up and Conversation. 300 people reached through outreach.

Art for Water projects 2021-2023

Starting in 2021, Hennepin County began supporting Art for Water stewards as part of its cohort. The program equips artists to use their art as outreach tools to inspire others protect water.

2021 cohort: Art for Water

Alex Dresdner

Project title: Lyndale Gardens for Water mural
Zion Lutheran Church, 123 West 33rd Street Minneapolis
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
Hennepin County Commissioner District 3



Alex Dresdner's capstone project was a movable mural that was created with the community's help and was installed for a time on the side of the Twisted Hare salon by the Lyndale Neighborhood Association as a replacement for an old mural that was vandalized. The mural's overall theme is the importance of stormwater management in the water cycle.

The design features a woman drinking a glass of water and the water seems to travel through her hair as it becomes the Mississippi River, flowing past downtown and into the lakes and rivers of Minneapolis. The last waterfall turns into a water pipe, showing how the water cycle connects our biology and our society to the water and the land. Dresdner's favorite parts of the mural are the floral border and the buildings of downtown, which were painted by community members. Dresdner also created a zine encouraging people to keep storm drains clean, which she distributed at the event and placed in more than 50 Little Free Libraries in the neighborhood.

Outcomes from outreach

- Community event to paint a movable mural that showcased water quality messages
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 30

Snoti Jappah

Project title: Where Life Flows

West Medicine Lake Park, 1920 West Medicine Lake Drive, Plymouth
Hennepin County Commissioner District 2



Snoti Jappah created a musical and poetic performance for her capstone project. She also used the event to share actions attendees can take to protect water, including adopting a drain by their home, sprinkling less salt in the driveway, and keeping streets clear of leaves and grass clippings. Jappah asked the kids at the event to do a chalk walk and draw animals that live in and need bodies of water to survive. With the gathering directly facing West Medicine Lake, they had access to viewing the lake up close.

Outreach outcomes:

- Musical and poetic performance to highlight actions people can take to protect water
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 25

2022 cohort: Art for Water

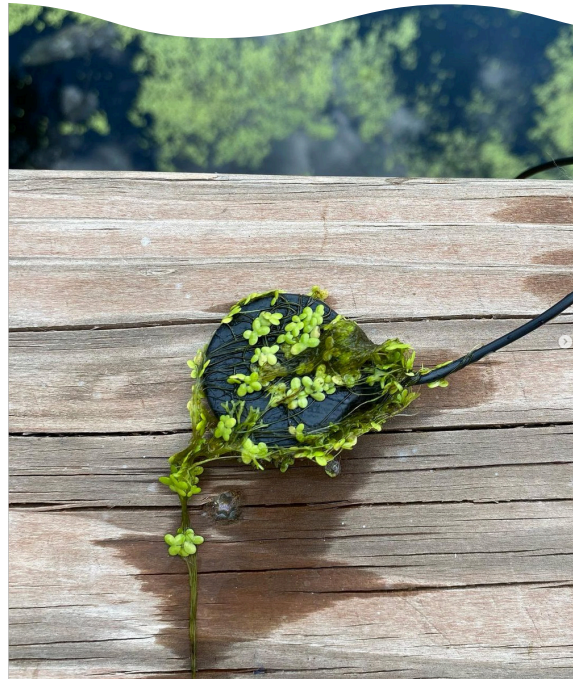
Matthew Himes

Project title: Immersion

Wood Lake Nature Center Amphitheater, 6710 Lake Shore Drive South, Richfield

Richfield-Bloomington Watershed Management Organization
Hennepin County Commissioner District 5

Matthew Himes's capstone project was a site-specific piece entitled Immersion. It used field recordings and underwater hydrophone sounds collected from the Wood Lake Nature Center to form the foundation of an original long-form electro-acoustic composition that premiered at a free public event. The work sought to create personal connections to water and the natural environment by creating a shared public sound-art experience outdoors in a beautiful, natural space. The music uses wooden flutes, brass bowls, and woodwind acoustic instruments in combination with analog synthesis, natural sound, magnetic tape, and electronic pressing, connecting self to space, and telling the timeless story of waters' path, from liquid to vapor, and from the skies to our homes.



Outreach outcomes:

- Live performance of original long-form electro acoustic composition inspired by underwater hydrophone sounds at the Wood Lake Nature Center
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 30+ in person, 137 views of broadcast via live stream

Jess Bergman Tank

Project title: Reflect

Chicago Avenue Fire Arts Center, 3749 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

Hennepin County Commissioner District 5



Jess Bergman Tank created this project in partnership with the Chicago Avenue Fire Arts Center (CAFAC). She organized an art-making workshop, where participants made copper enameled raindrops and learned about the project mission, including an urge to be mindful and to think about how they engage with freshwater in their lives. Participants were encouraged to texture and add stamped messages to the copper pieces, adding their chosen enamel frit colors. After the raindrops were fired and cooled, participants added keyrings and swivel hardware that allowed them to spin freely and attach to their chosen location on the fence. They then placed their pieces in the art installation.

The audience was multigenerational and varied in background, with a focus on the surrounding geographical community of George Floyd Square. This community has fostered personal responsibility and activism as the murder of George Floyd has forced people to think about their personal choices, beliefs, and values acutely in this area in a lasting way.

Outcomes:

- Art making workshop and installation of copper enameled raindrops
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 25

Mary Traxler

Project title: Songs for Water

Powderhorn Park, 3400 South 15th Avenue, Minneapolis

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

Hennepin County Commissioner District 5



Songs for Water was a community music event organized by Mary Traxler for her capstone project. She brought together a variety of organizations to share resources about water quality and environmental justice issues, including MN350, the Bell Museum, Hiawatha for All, StopLine3, Line 3 Legal Defense Fund, Spill Paint not Oil Artist Collective, and the Minnesota Water Stewardship program. A Fruit Bowl Food Truck was onsite. Native plant seeds from Metro Blooms were handed out. Local artist Casper Warren sold prints and handed out free seeds as well.

The main medium of the event was music and storytelling. Puppeteer Felicia Cooper made shadow puppets. Artist Roshan Ganu gave a workshop on collective and interactive storytelling around personal experiences with water. Musical performances were provided by activist Claire Winzenburg, mother and father Jenny Kapernick, and Traxler herself. With the event timed to the Summer Solstice, the lightest and brightest day of the year, Traxler hoped to help the Powderhorn community set collective intentions around water.

Outcomes:

- Music and community event for water quality and environmental justice issues
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 100+

2023 cohort: Art for Water

Stephanie Lindquist

Project title: Peace Garden's Herbal Remedies

Peace Garden near North Colfax and North 26th Avenue, Minneapolis

Mississippi Watershed Management Organization

Hennepin County Commissioner District 2



Stephanie Lindquist partnered with Community Members for Environmental Justice (CMEJ) to host four workshops at Peace Gardens in north Minneapolis to teach participants about the art of using perennial and native plants to create medicine using plants from their garden. They learned how to identify plants, how they affect our bodies, and how to prepare them into medicine. As a gift to the garden and attendees, Lindquist designed and laser cut the signs for the garden beds that summarize some of what was learned about each plant. Everyone who attended left with plant-based medicine to add to their first aid kit.

Outcomes:

- Garden featuring native plants with both water quality and herbal remedy benefits
- Four herbal workshops
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 42+

Mandy Pedigo

Project title: Watershed Moments: Caring for our water and protecting our places
Hopkins Center for the Arts, the Minnesota State Fair Fine Art Exhibition
Nine Mile Creek Watershed District
Hennepin County Commissioner District 6



Mandy Pedigo created a collection of textile artworks to begin conversations and think about themes of connection to nature and water. Pedigo says: "It is a quiet and unexpected pathway into reminding viewers of their own connections and memories." Throughout the project, Pedigo learned about water quality issues and that water that goes into storm drains does not get treated. The artist worked to spread this information and other knowledge learned through the Minnesota Water Steward program.

Outcomes:

- Project was displayed at the Hopkins Center for the Arts, the State Fair Fine Art Exhibition, and on the artists website, mandypedigo.com/art-for-water-mn-water-stewards
- Number of people engaged through outreach: 2,500 attendees at exhibitions