



Volunteers helped out with the several rain gardens that were planted in Fulda last Thursday. Youngsters were instructed by Clay Steele (PEBC naturalist) and Ross Behrends (SWCD watershed technician).

# Rain gardens planted in Fulda to help with filtration

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Five Fulda landowners recently participated in the planting of rain gardens that will help with rain water absorption and filtration. The gardens minimize runoff of storm water by capturing it in the garden's depression. (A rain garden is a planted depression that allows rainwater runoff from impervious areas to be absorbed into the soil.) This allows pollutants to filter

out and nutrients to be used by the plants in the garden.

Funded through the Environmental Protection Agency Section 319 grant program administered by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, some of the gardens were planted on Thursday, August 15th.

Jack and Carol Tomford, Jim and Lori Stainer, Jerry and Louise Johnson, Howard and Virginia Anderson, and Chuck and Georgia Lursen were the homeowners who are participating in the project.

2,000 plants were planted by a group of volunteers comprised of youth and adults who were interested in learning about rain gardens.

A portion of the group met in Heron Lake at 9:30 a.m. to board the Prairie Ecology Bus. They arrived in Fulda around 10 a.m. and toured two established rain gardens that have been planted in Fulda since 2009. Don and Ann Lubben, who live on the shore of Seven Mile Lake, were the first homeowners in Fulda to plant

a rain garden in an effort to stop erosion of their lake shore. Jim and Rona Brown are the owners of another on-shore rain garden that the group toured.

Following the tours, the group stopped at Seven Mile Park for lunch.

Around 12:30 p.m., they began working on the Tomford rain garden (the first one planted on Thursday). Guided by Ross Behrends, Watershed Technician with the Nobles County Soil and Water Conser-

vation District, Clay Steele, a Naturalist with the Prairie Ecology Bus Center, and Amanda Schultz, an intern with the Heron Lake Watershed District, the young volunteers were taught the proper procedures of planting container plants including ground hole size, loosening of roots, and plant spacing.

Landowners were able to choose the plants that were planted in their rain garden from a list that detailed plant characteristics. The plants were delivered several days prior to the planting date.

For their rain garden, the Tomfords had chosen a fragrant low-growing sumac, red dogwood, coneflowers, cardinal flowers, some native grasses and many other plants that will produce bursting colors as the rain garden matures.

With the Tomford raingarden planted, the group moved on to work in other rain gardens in the city.

The overall goal of this project was to instill a sense of personal responsibility for the two lakes in the Fulda area by engaging students, 4-H members, Master Gardeners, landscapers, and the general public in the awareness of the effect of water pollution to the Fulda Lakes.

The project is part of the Fulda Phosphorus Reduction Initiative.



**Planting the rain gardens will help with filtration of rainwater runoff.**