

2016 program highlights

In 2016 the program engaged 79 stewards in seven watershed organizations and one municipality, and is now expanding statewide. By 2018, we hope to see many of Minnesota's 46 watershed districts implementing the MWS program.

“My goal is for local community members to become personally involved and invested in water conservation, through understanding the critical role it plays for our environment, and act one-person-at-a-time to impact water quality.”
— Arun



In the pipeline Dorothy, Janine & Glenn

Project

Two projects at Greensboro Square Condominiums in St. Louis Park:

- Two 1,700-gallon cisterns with an irrigation system, collecting water to feed sprinklers
- Rain garden, to infiltrate water on-site

Impact

79,050 gal/year in water savings from cistern/irrigation system
116,250 gal/year water infiltrated through rain gardens and cistern/irrigation system

“The ultimate goal is building awareness of watersheds and how we can use our resources wisely and cost-effectively in a sustainable model.”
— Janine



Master Water Stewards

Annual Report | 2013-2016

Freshwater Society developed the Master Water Stewards (MWS) program in 2013 to equip citizens with the knowledge and skills needed to help improve water quality at the grassroots level.

Stewards are certified by participating in a broad training curriculum led by experts in the fields of hydrology, stormwater management, water policy, community-based social marketing, landscape assessment, and installation of clean water practices. They must complete a capstone project that

captures rainfall and allows more water to soak into the ground, and lead a community outreach event. Stewards then become a point of knowledge and influence in their communities.

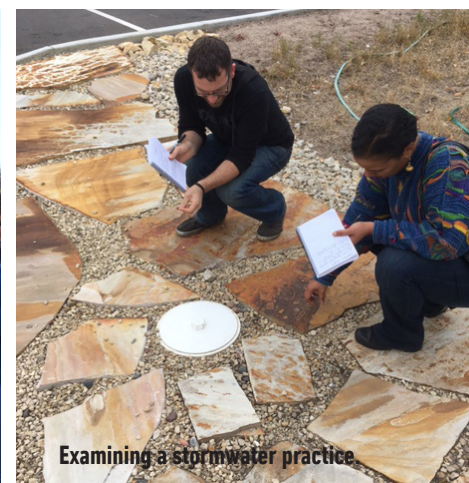
Master Water Stewards are volunteering their time for watershed districts and environmental groups, participating on city and local government boards, influencing policy, and changing the health of our waters.



Leaning about water.



Getting a tour.



Examining a stormwater practice.



Community Leadership for Clean Water

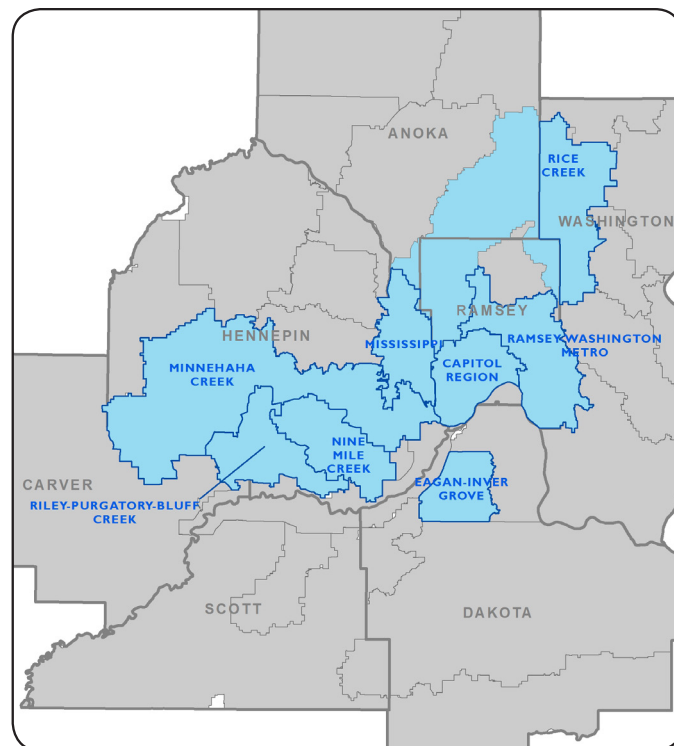
Program impact

Master Water Stewards volunteer 50 hours of community service in their initial year of certification, at least 25 hours each subsequent year, and attend eight hours of continuing education to maintain their certification. To date, stewards have accomplished a tremendous amount through their service.

They have:

- Connected with thousands of people through outreach and educational events
- Installed rain gardens, rain barrels, cisterns, a dry creek bed, and a permeable driveway
- Prevented more than 1.2 million gallons of polluted stormwater runoff from entering our lakes, rivers, and creeks each year!

Going forward, hundreds of pounds of silt, leaves and plant material, animal waste, automobile gas and oil spillage, excess salt, and other debris will be removed from our neighborhoods annually.



Managing urban runoff

Roxanne, Sue & Erika

Project

Rain garden (capturing water from 1076 sq. ft. of surface) containing more than 100 native plants and two berms to reduce runoff

Impact

672.5 gal of rainwater captured for every inch of rain. Downspout redirection and permeable pavers also promote more infiltration into the water garden

Project

Water cistern with holding capacity of 1,700 gallons

Impact

Cistern with accompanying rain garden collectively captures 424-572 gallons of water for every inch of rain



Community leadership

Terry

Project

Rain garden (250 sq. ft., 9 in. deep)

Motivation

The 22 properties in Terry's local townhome complex were paying nearly \$10,000 in stormwater fees. Reducing runoff lowers this cost and also keeps lakes and rivers clean.

Impact

- 27,500 gallons/year stormwater captured
- 45 local residents better understand the value of stormwater management, after attending a community outreach coffeehouse event

“ [This capstone] is really a big deal because to the best of our knowledge it's the first townhome that has done such a major retrofit. ”
— Terry



Outreach

Sue & Randy

Project

Three projects at Union Congregational Church in St. Louis Park:

- Connected rain gardens (900 total sq. ft.)
- Permeable paver patio, adjacent to the gardens
- 275-gallon cistern

Impact

- Gardens drain and filter water from parking lot, host pollinators, and provide education to community
- Daycare children use water from cistern for vegetable garden
- Patio created community gathering space

“ The monarchs have invaded! A corner that was so quiet and lifeless has come alive with movement. ”
— Sue

2013-2016

81

projects installed or planned

2,542

volunteer hours served

79

stewards certified and 64 in current class

ANNUALLY

1,162,084 543 2.96

gallons of water infiltrated

lbs of sediment removed

lbs of phosphorus removed