

# Big Sky School District Stormwater Conservation Garden Resource Guide

Landscaping tools to protect the health of  
the Gallatin River and its tributaries

## Donate a Plant Program

You can donate a plant or other materials for the Big Sky School District's Stormwater Conservation Garden through our plant donation program. Examples of garden vegetation include:

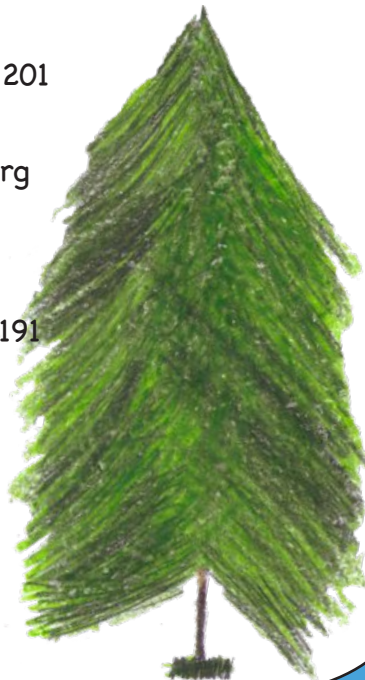
- Mountain Sage
- Karl Forster Reed Grass
- Little Devil Ninebark
- Engelmann Spruce
- Lodgepole Pine
- Rocky Mountain Juniper
- Jackman Potentilla
- Woods Rose
- Drought Tolerant Perennials

## For more information contact:

Blue Water Task Force  
50 Meadow Village Dr, Suite 201  
Big Sky, MT 59716  
(406) 993-2519  
[kristin@bluewatertaskforce.org](mailto:kristin@bluewatertaskforce.org)

## Or stop by Wildwood Nursery:

Wildwood Nursery  
47770 Gallatin Rd, Highway 191  
Gallatin Gateway, MT 59730  
(406) 995-3874  
[www.wildwoodbigsky.com](http://www.wildwoodbigsky.com)

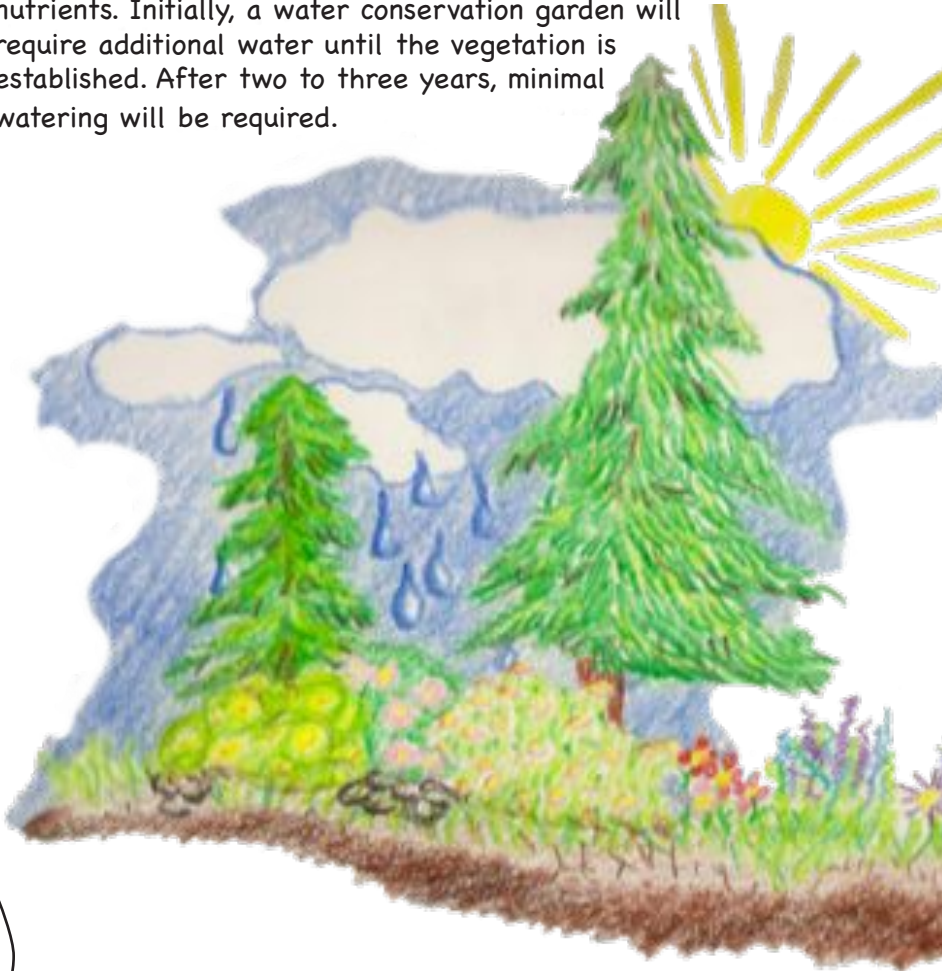


## What is a Water Conservation Garden?

A water conservation garden is a garden that requires little or no irrigation water. These gardens are promoted in regions without easily accessible, plentiful, or reliable fresh water supplies.

## How does a Water Conservation Garden function?

The vegetation selected for a water conservation garden should be types that thrive in the microclimate of the site (temperature, soil types, available sunlight, humidity, and precipitation). Some improvements to the soil may be necessary, like adding organic matter and/or mulch to retain water and provide needed plant nutrients or restoring soil microbiology to help plants absorb nutrients. Initially, a water conservation garden will require additional water until the vegetation is established. After two to three years, minimal watering will be required.



## PARTNERS



## SUPPORTERS



Montana Department of  
**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

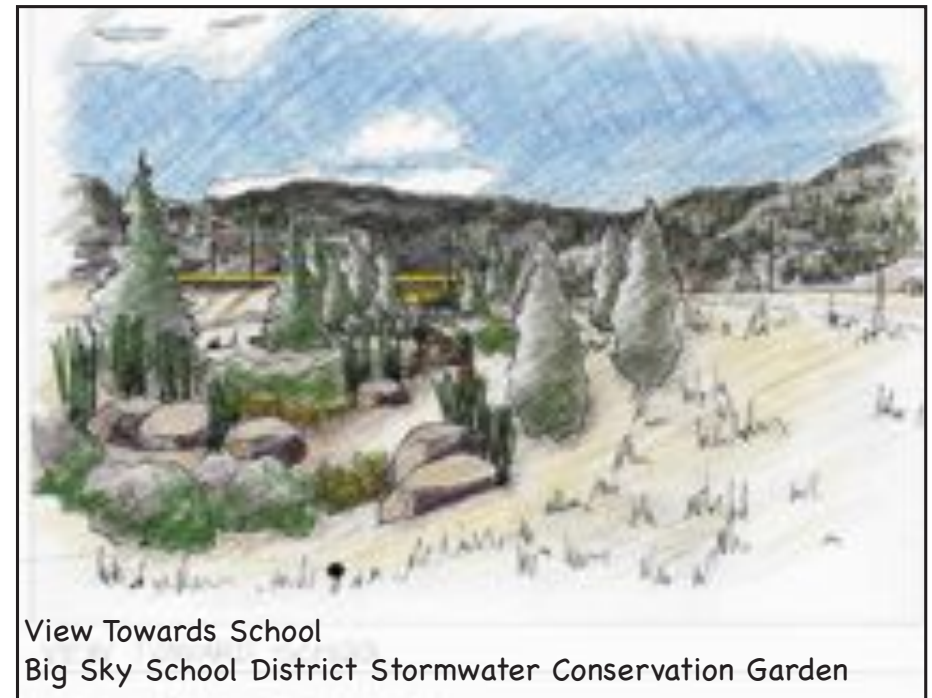


**COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**  
YELLOWSTONECLUBFOUNDATION.ORG



Montana Association of  
Conservation Districts

**NorthWestern  
Energy**



View Towards School  
Big Sky School District Stormwater Conservation Garden

Created by Debb Smith  
at 9barkDESIGN



# RESOURCES

## Local Organizations

Blue Water Task Force  
50 Meadow Village Drive  
Big Sky, MT 50716  
(406) 993-2519  
[www.bluewatertaskforce.org](http://www.bluewatertaskforce.org)

Gallatin Local Water Quality District  
215 West Mendenhall, Suite 300  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
(406) 582-3168  
[www.galatin.mt.gov](http://www.galatin.mt.gov)

Montana State University Extension  
Montana State University  
P.O. Box 172230  
Cubertson Hall  
Bozeman, MT 59717-223  
(406) 884-1750  
[www.msuxextension.org](http://www.msuxextension.org)

Montana Native Plant Society  
608 South 7th Ave.  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
(406) 586-9585  
[www.mtnativeplants.org](http://www.mtnativeplants.org)

## Publications

### Upper Gallatin Water Quality

Blue Water Task Force (2009). "Water Quality in the Gallatin Watershed: What it Means to You". [http://www.bluewatertaskforce.org/documents/WQ\\_in\\_the\\_UpperGallatin\\_pamphlet\\_186.pdf](http://www.bluewatertaskforce.org/documents/WQ_in_the_UpperGallatin_pamphlet_186.pdf)

Gallatin Local Water Quality District (2008). T. Crone (Ed). Gallatin Watershed Sourcebook: A Residents Guide (2nd Edition). [http://mtwatercourse.org/media/downloads/Gallatin\\_Watershed\\_Sourcebook\\_2ndEdition\\_FINAL.pdf](http://mtwatercourse.org/media/downloads/Gallatin_Watershed_Sourcebook_2ndEdition_FINAL.pdf)

### Stormwater

Environmental Protection Agency (2003). "After the Storm". [http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/np/outreach/upload/after\\_the\\_storm.pdf](http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/np/outreach/upload/after_the_storm.pdf)

Montana Department of Environmental Quality. Ten Steps to Ten Simple Steps You Can Prevent Nonpoint Source Pollution

### Water Conservation Gardening

Environmental Protection Agency (2002). Water Efficient Landscaping: Preventing Pollution and Resources Wisely. [http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/docs/waer-efficient\\_landscaping\\_508.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/docs/waer-efficient_landscaping_508.pdf)

Montana Native Plant Society (2008) Landscaping with native plants of south central Montana: An introduction using Montana native plants": <http://www.mtnativeplants.org/filelib/184.pdf>

## What is a Stormwater Garden?

Stormwater Gardens are small depressions, vegetated with shrubs, grasses and flowering perennials, which promote infiltration of rain water.

## How does a Stormwater Garden function?

Lawn fertilizers, pesticides, oil, car fluids, and other harmful substances wash off roofs and paved areas flowing into streams and lakes as stormwater runoff. Nearly 70% of stormwater runoff is polluted.\*

A stormwater garden is designed to "catch" runoff from a roof, driveway, parking lot or other impervious surfaces. It helps to reduce the polluted runoff that would flow directly into a local stream. A stormwater garden filters pollutants before they soak into the ground and it allows about 30% more water to soak into the ground compared to a patch of lawn.\*\* These benefits help to improve water quality and local aquifer recharge.

## The Stormwater Conservation Garden at the Big Sky School District

The Stormwater Conservation Garden at the Big Sky School District will provide tangible outdoor experiential learning opportunities for students and serve as a model for homeowners to learn about landscaping techniques that protect water quality and conserve our precious water resources in the Upper Gallatin Watershed.

**Alone we can do so little;  
together we can do so much  
- Helen Keller**

\* *Rain Gardens of Western Michigan*, <http://www.raingardens.org/FAQ.php>

\*\* *Bannerman, Robert and Ellen Considine. 2003. Rain Gardens: How-to Manual for Homeowners. University of Wisconsin Extension. Learning.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/GWQ037.pdf* NRCS