

Project Summary Report

Rain Gardens



Project Reporting Period: January 2025 - December 2025

Grant number: OTGP-2024-JeCoWS-00046

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Jefferson County
**Marine
Resources
Committee**



PUGET SOUND
PARTNERSHIP



**Northwest
Straits**
INITIATIVE

1. Abstract

The Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee (MRC) has worked this year with community partners to maintain a network of rain gardens in suitable, priority locations across East Jefferson County.

This project is important to the MRC as rain gardens treat stormwater runoff, removing contaminants and improving water quality to benefit nearshore and marine ecosystems.

The MRC is currently focused on providing ongoing maintenance for 19 existing rain gardens. This is accomplished by periodic work parties involving community members, as well as hiring a paid gardener at year end to clean out and mulch gardens.

The results of this work include improved functionality of established rain gardens (reduced flow of contaminated stormwater into surrounding waters of Jefferson County), greater community involvement in rain garden stewardship, and greater awareness of stormwater issues.

A challenge identified is engaging volunteers to assist with work parties. While many people indicate interest in the project, getting actual volunteer time has been problematic. Having some budget flexibility to hire year end help has been key in maintaining the health of gardens, and a long term plan to do some significant restoration in a few gardens may be warranted.

2. Project Goals

- The primary goal for this year has been to maintain existing gardens, specifically weed and grass removal, and to replace lost plantings where needed.
- While the gardens perform their function to treat initial stormwater runoff, an invasion of weeds and grasses has made maintenance particularly difficult, reducing the aesthetic appeal, though not the function. The goal for this year has been to remove as much invasive material as possible and lay down mulch cover to reduce new weed growth.
- The committee has discussed the possible need to enlist paid partners for excavation, regrading, soil import and new planting in several of the gardens, as well as removal and replacement of non-native plants with more native material.

3. Project Engagement

3.1. Partners/Organizations

Volunteers from the WSU Master Gardeners and Stream Stewards programs have assisted with work parties. The City of Port Townsend has also picked up green waste generated during rain garden work parties.

3.2. Participants

Scheduled work parties have typically drawn 2-5 volunteers. Four of the gardens have 1-2 stewards who maintain those specifically.

3.3. Named community(ies) involved

Communities in Port Townsend, Port Hadlock, and Quilcene benefited from this project.

4. Project Methods/Actions

Project Activity Summary	Date	Location(s)
Work Party	1/18/25	Quilcene garden
Work Party	3/1/25	Taylor/Clay + Benton/Clay gardens
Site Visit	3/14/25	Quilcene School District
Work Party	4/12/25	Water Street garden
Work Party	5/23/25	Lincoln/Adams garden
Work Party	6/7/25	Garfield/Adams garden
Paid gardener maintenance	Oct-Dec 2025	All PT gardens

For work party days, email blasts with an Eventbrite signup link were sent to the 300+ MRC volunteer list and the Master Gardener volunteer list. They were also advertised in local Facebook community announcements and via the Northwest Straits Commission newsletter and social media.

5. Results

During the year the maintenance of rain gardens was focused on weed, invasive grass and thistle removal. The burden of this precluded us from attending to the more aesthetic aspect of the gardens, which is what the community sees first. We planted new material at several of the gardens, and will continue to do so next year.

5.1. Outcomes

While the goal of maintaining the rain gardens and reducing the flow of stormwater into the local environment continues to be achieved, there is ample room for improvement. Community recruitment of volunteers for work parties continues to be unsuccessful in any measurable amount, and it has been difficult to find volunteers willing to adopt a rain garden for regular maintenance. Reasons for this have been suggested as: the high retirement age component of the county, as well as individuals' own property maintenance responsibilities reduces the desire of many to participate in active work days.

5.2. Outputs

Five work parties were held between January and June, with a total of 7 MRC members and 7 community members participating in at least one event, with an average of 4 participants per work party. An estimated 70 hours was spent directly maintaining rain gardens during work parties. An additional estimated 80 hours of maintenance was completed by a paid gardener.

5.3. Results in context

As the primary focus of this project at this time is maintenance of existing gardens, further cooperation with Master Gardeners for soil analysis, drainage capability, plant suitability, and invasive grass/weed treatment would be useful going forward. We found a core group of volunteers participated more regularly in maintenance, and the general participation of community members remains limited. As long as the gardens perform their environmental function, doing the hard work of digging out grasses, invasive thistle, etc. is less desirable. Based on the issues addressed this project year, several gardens are candidates for renovation of base material and plantings.

6. Project Highlights, Innovations & Stories

Community members have shared that they appreciate the work of the MRC in providing these rain gardens and the importance of them for capturing stormwater runoff before it enters the Sound.

7. Lessons Learned

Taking care of these gardens is a lot of work, physically demanding and time consuming. While there are a number of locations we'd like to install new gardens, the effort of maintenance for existing ones makes that impossible. Many of the plants initially installed are non-native and aggressive, creating a high maintenance situation which we would like to resolve. In many cases the invasion of grasses would be best handled by equipment entirely removing sections of a garden and replanting those areas.

8. Next Steps

Recommendation would be to use future budget to contract for heavy grading work to remove/replace problematic sections of gardens so that the ongoing maintenance can be more readily achieved.

Images



Figure 1.

Franklin/Adams work party, thistle removal by stewards.

Spring 2025

Photo Credit: unknown



Figure 2.

Franklin/Adams garden post cleanup and mulching.

Spring 2025

Photo credit: unknown



Figure 3.

Franklin/Adams
before cleanup

September 2025
Photo credit:
Janette Mestre



Figure 4.

Franklin/Adams mid-cleanup.

November 2025
Photo credit: Janette Mestre



Figure 5.

Quilcene work party.

January 2025
Photo credit:
Sarah Fisken



Figure 6.

Quilcene work party.

January 2025
Photo credit:
Sarah Fisken



Figure 7.

Taylor/Clay garden
cleanup.

March 2025

Photo credit: Sarah Fisken



Figure 8.

Benton/Clay.

May 2025

Photo Credit:
Janette Mestre



Figure 9.

Garfield/Adams before cleanup.

September 2025

Photo credit: Janette Mestre



Figure 10.

Lincoln/Adams garden,
mid-cleanup, before mulching.

October 2025

Photo credit: Janette Mestre

Appendix A – Plant Log

The following table lists which plants were purchased, when they were planted, and which rain garden they were planted in.

PLANTS PURCHASED FOR RAIN GARDENS						
QUANTITY	SIZE	COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	WHERE PLANTED	DATE PLANTED	
2	6"	HAIRY GOLDEN ASTER	HETEROTHECA VILLOSA	Garfield/Adams	November	2024
2	6"	GREAT NORTHERN ASTER	CANDANTHUS MODESTRUS	Garfield/Adams	November	2024
1	1 GAL	PACIFIC NINEBARK	PHSOCARPUS CAPITATUS	Garfield/Adams	November	2024
3	4" POTS	OREGON GRAPE	MAHONIA AQUIFOLIUM	Garfield/Adams	November	2024
3	1 GAL	MERTENS SEDGE	CAREX MERTENSII	Taylor/Clay	May	2025
2	6"	SEASIDE DAISY	ERIGERON GLAUCUS	Benton/Clay	March	2025
3	1 GAL	EVERGREEN HUCKLEBERRY	VACCINIUM OVATUM	Chetzemoka Park	March	2025
2	6"	GREAT NORTHERN ASTER	CANDANTHUS MODESTRUS	Franklin/Adams	March	2025
3	6"	BROAD LEAF PENSTEMON	PENSTEMON OVATUS	Benton/Clay	March	2025
3	4" POTS	OREGON GRAPE	MAHONIA AQUIFOLIUM	Franklin/Adams	March	2025
Many - dug up from Chetzemoka Park RG overgrowth	CLUMPS	IRIS	IRIS SPECIES	Garfield/Adams	March	2025
	CLUMPS	IRIS	IRIS SPECIES	Franklin/Adams	March	2025
3	bareroot	RED FLOWERING CURRANT	RIBES SANGUINEUM	Franklin/Adams	March	2025
4	bareroot	EVERGREEN HUCKLEBERRY	VACCINIUM OVATUM	Chetzemoka Park	March	2025
4	bareroot	EVERGREEN HUCKLEBERRY	VACCINIUM OVATUM	Water/Monroe	April	2025
3	bareroot	RED FLOWERING CURRANT	RIBES SANGUINEUM	Water/Monroe	April	2025
3	bareroot	RED FLOWERING CURRANT	RIBES SANGUINEUM	TBD	Waiting to plant 2026	
1	bareroot	RED FLOWERING CURRANT	RIBES SANGUINEUM	Never leafed out	-	

Appendix B – Rain Garden Work Party advertisements

Rain Garden Work Party Volunteers needed!

Join us Saturday, January 18, 2025, at the Quilcene Rain Garden for a morning of weeding and mulching maintenance!

Maintenance keeps our rain gardens in good shape to filter stormwater and protect local water quality.

Tools and gloves provided!

Date: January 18, 2025

Time: 9am-12pm

Location: Quilcene Rain Garden (meet in US Bank parking lot)

To register to attend, please use the following link:
bit.ly/QuilceneRGWP



Jefferson County
Marine Resources
Committee



WSU EXTENSION
Jefferson County

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EVENT ENDED

January MRC Quilcene Rain Garden Work Party!

By Jefferson Marine Resources Committee Follow

U.S. Bank Branch
Jan 18 from 9am to 12pm PST

Overview

Join the Jefferson MRC in stewarding one of Quilcene's rain gardens!

Join the Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee weeding and refreshing one of our Quilcene rain gardens. Volunteers will help to remove weeds and cut back overgrowth to ensure rain gardens are in good shape for collection and treating stormwater. Meet us location is at the US Bank parking lot in

Sales Ended
Jan 18 - 9:00 AM PST

Explore similar events

For more information on rain gardens, see <https://www.jeffersonmrc.org/projects/rain-gardens/>



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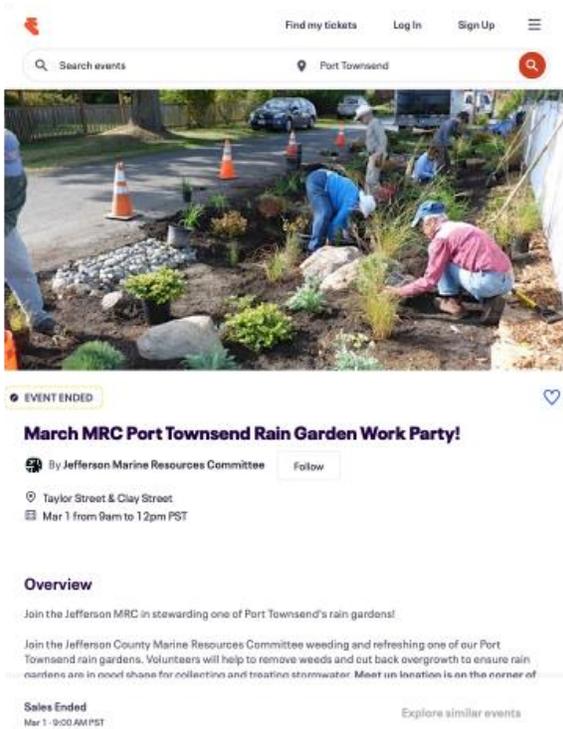
Category: Other

Good to know

Highlights

- In person

Sales Ended
Jan 18 - 9:00 AM PST



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EVENT ENDED

March MRC Port Townsend Rain Garden Work Party!

By Jefferson Marine Resources Committee Follow

Taylor Street & Clay Street
Mar 1 from 9am to 12pm PST

Overview

Join the Jefferson MRC in stewarding one of Port Townsend's rain gardens!

Join the Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee weeding and refreshing one of our Port Townsend rain gardens. Volunteers will help to remove weeds and cut back overgrowth to ensure rain gardens are in good shape for collecting and treating stormwater. Meet in location is on the corner of

Sales Ended Mar 1 - 9:00 AM PST Explore similar events

For more information on rain gardens, see <https://www.jeffersonmrc.org/projects/rain-gardens/>



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Category: Other

Good to know

Highlights

- In person

Sales Ended Mar 1 - 9:00 AM PST

Rain Garden Work Party

Volunteers needed!

Join us Saturday, April 12, 2025, at one of the MRC Rain Garden's for a morning of weeding and mulching maintenance!

Maintenance keeps our rain gardens in good shape to filter stormwater and protect local water quality.

Tools and gloves provided!

Date: April 12, 2025

Time: 9am-12pm

Location: Port Townsend, corner of Water and Monroe Streets

To register to attend, please use the following link:
<https://bit.ly/AprilRQWP>



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EVENT ENDED

April MRC Port Townsend Rain Garden Work Party!

By Jefferson Marine Resources Committee Follow

Water Street & Monroe Street
Apr 12 from 9am to 12pm PDT

Overview

Join the Jefferson MRC in stewarding one of Port Townsend's rain gardens!

Join the Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee weeding and refreshing one of our Port Townsend rain gardens. Volunteers will help to remove weeds and cut back overgrowth to ensure rain gardens are in good shape for collecting and treating stormwater. Meet in location is on the corner of

Sales Ended Apr 12 - 9:00 AM PDT Explore similar events

For more information on rain gardens, see <https://www.jeffersonmrc.org/projects/rain-gardens/>



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Category: Other

Good to know

Highlights

- In person

Sales Ended Apr 12 - 9:00 AM PDT

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EVENT ENDED

May MRC Port Townsend Rain Garden Work Party!

By Jefferson Marine Resources Committee Follow

Lincoln Street & Adams Street
May 23 from 9am to 12pm PDT

Overview

Join the Jefferson MRC in stewarding one of Port Townsend's rain gardens!

Join the Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee weeding and refreshing one of our Port Townsend rain gardens. Volunteers will help to remove weeds and cut back overgrowth to ensure rain gardens are in good shape for collecting and treating stormwater. Meet in location is on the corner of

Sales Ended May 23 - 9:00 AM PDT Explore similar events

For more information on rain gardens, see <https://www.jeffersonmrc.org/projects/rain-gardens/>



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Category: Other

Good to know

Highlights

- In person

Sales Ended May 23 - 9:00 AM PDT

Rain Garden Work Party Volunteers needed!

Join us Saturday, June 7, 2025, at a Port Townsend Rain Garden for a morning of weeding and mulching maintenance!

Maintenance keeps our rain gardens in good shape to filter stormwater and protect local water quality.

Tools and gloves provided!

Date: June 7, 2025

Time: 9am-12pm

Location: Corner of
Adams and Garfield St,
Port Townsend, WA

To register to attend, please
use the following link:
<https://bit.ly/4kriQwy>



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EVENT ENDED

June MRC Port Townsend Rain Garden Work Party!

By Jefferson Marine Resources Committee Follow

Garfield Street & Adams Street
Jun 7 from 9am to 12pm PDT

Overview

Join the Jefferson MRC in stewarding one of Port Townsend's rain gardens!

Join the Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee weeding and refreshing one of our Port Townsend rain gardens. Volunteers will help to remove weeds and cut back overgrowth to ensure rain gardens are in good shape for collecting and treating stormwater. Meet us location is on the corner of

Sales Ended Jun 7 - 9:05 AM PDT Explore similar events

For more information on rain gardens, see <https://www.jeffersonmrc.org/projects/rain-gardens/>.



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Category: Other

Good to know

Highlights

- In person

Sales Ended Jun 7 - 9:05 AM PDT

Appendix C – Rain Garden Handbook for Western Washington (2024)

Reference material. Pg 1-2 of 98 below. Full document can be accessed at:
<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/2510059.html>

