



Silver Valley Rain Garden is an outdoor classroom area that surrounds the North Wing at Walt Morey Middle School. It was constructed in 2008 in order to manage stormwater run-off and is maintained by students and volunteers.

Silver Valley Rain Garden

September 2011

Silver Valley History

Silver Valley Rain Garden begins its history when the North Wing was built.

In 2008, the district decided to add on to Walt Morey. In order for this addition to be built, there needed to be a plan in place to take care of the stormwater that would run off the building's roof. Instead of connecting to existing dry wells, the District decided to build a rain garden. Not only would this

rain garden recycle the stormwater, it would serve as an outdoor classroom area for students.



Retired Assistant Principal Curt Anderson helped construct and plant the rain garden.

Beautification Committee

We are forming a Beautification Committee. In addition to maintaining the front of the building and the rain garden, we will work on getting students into these areas for outdoor classroom activities. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Michele O'Brien.



What is a Rain Garden?

You may have been hearing a lot about rain gardens lately as they are being planted all over the Portland area. Rain gardens are shallow depressions that collect, absorb, and filter water that flows from impervious surfaces.

In the bottom of a rain garden, wetland and water tolerant plants are planted in order to help absorb the water that collects in the basin. Along the sloped sides and top, drought tolerant plants are planted to help provide plant diversity and ground cover. Mulch that covers the garden helps hold in moisture, replace organic material, and prevent weeds.

Building a rain garden requires planning. Size, shape, design, location and water flow into the garden are just some of the considerations when designing a rain garden. Soil drainage is also important. Water needs to be absorbed into the soil in 1-2 days so insects, like mosquitoes, can't breed.

Rain gardens provide a creative and beautiful way to manage storm water runoff.



Outdoor Classroom Ideas

Silver Valley Rain Garden is an outdoor classroom for all staff and students. Before you take your students into the rain garden, please ask them to practice environmental manners.

Please

*do not sit on the fence railing.

*take care to not step on plants.

*do not break the leaves or stems of the plants.

*leave the rocks in their place.



Volunteer Sally Mackey

Outdoor Classroom Happenings

In fall of last year, students in Mrs. O'Brien's class planted sword ferns. Throughout the year, students observed and monitored their ferns. As spring arrived, many students saw new fiddleheads on their ferns; they had survived the winter. Unfortunately, not all the sword ferns survived, however if you walk through the rain garden, you will see many of these sword ferns thriving.