

ALLIANCE OF  
DOWNRIVER  
WATERSHEDS

## GROW ZONE MINI-GRANT PROJECT PROFILE

### Why native plant gardens?

Native plants have deep, “thirsty” roots that help retain water on your site and filter out the pollutants in runoff. They help stabilize soils and prevent erosion. Native plants are drought tolerant, so you water less. Native plants are disease resistant and rarely require fertilizers, so you save money. Native plants improve soil conditions on their own, so you save time.

Reducing water runoff from hard surfaces and yards is key to protecting water quality. Water that runs off hard surfaces, lawns and gardens contain pollutants like fertilizers, dirt and debris. When polluted runoff enters storm drains and ditches, it is discharged into the river system unfiltered.

**About the Grow Zone Mini-Grant**  
The Grow Zone Mini-Grant program was established in 2008 to find host sites within the Downriver area to implement native planting projects. After issuing a call for proposals, the Alliance of Downriver Watersheds selected a total of 10 host sites, which included several schools, parks and municipal properties.

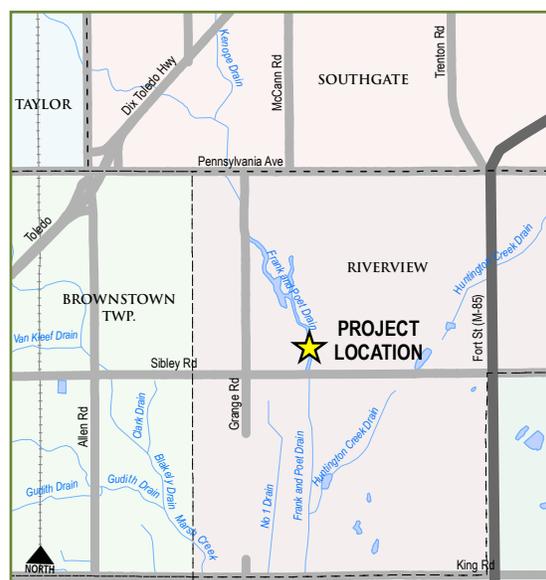


## RIVERVIEW RIPARIAN BUFFER

RIVERVIEW, MICHIGAN

The Frank and Poet Creek, a tributary within the Combined Downriver Watershed, flows through the City of Riverview. The creek is a highly visible environmental feature within the City, as several recreational amenities are located adjacent to it, including the Riverview Highlands Golf Course and Pheasant Run Pool. Presently, most of the existing ground cover along the banks of the creek is mowed grass, which offers minimal stormwater infiltration and affords little protection to the creek from erosion. To moderate these conditions, the City secured funding through the Grow Zone Mini-Grant to create a riparian buffer along the creek.

With planting completed in June of 2009, an approximately 17,000 square foot natural native planting area with over 1,200 feet of creek frontage was created. Incorporating various aesthetic design elements, the natural riparian buffer now serves to intercept and slow stormwater runoff from the existing

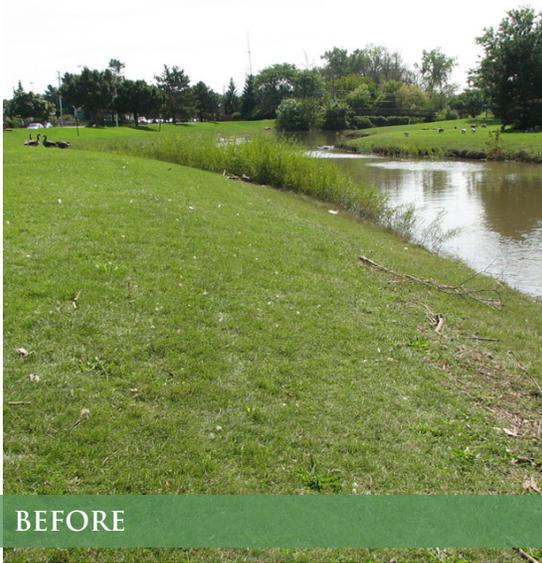


### What's a grow zone?

A “grow zone” is a native planting area that is implemented to improve water quality and wildlife habitat.

Grow zones, which usually replace lawn areas, provide many benefits:

- reduce stormwater going to our rivers
- increase wildlife habitat
- improve water quality, and,
- cost less to maintain than traditional lawn areas



BEFORE



PLANTING DAY - JUNE 2009



AFTER

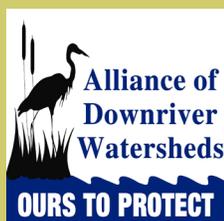
asphalt surface parking lot adjacent to the Pheasant Run Pool. Since planting, infiltration rates have increased by 122 percent in comparison to the previous turf grass ground cover.

The project's highly visible location near the pool and golf course has contributed to increased public awareness concerning the importance of riparian buffers and the effects of stormwater runoff and stream flow caused by imperviousness. Additionally, the grow zone also serves as a bug hunt monitoring location for the Riverview Community High School.

Over the course of the next several years, the Alliance of Downriver Watersheds (ADW) will engage in the monitoring of each grow zone site (10 were completed in 2009) and is committed to implementing additional green infrastructure projects to realize regional water quality and habitat diversity improvements.

**About the Alliance of Downriver Watersheds**

The Alliance of Downriver Watersheds (ADW) is a governing body in southeast Michigan established to carry out stormwater policy and management across the Ecorse Creek, Combined Downriver and Lower Huron River watersheds. The members of the ADW include the Wayne County Airport Authority, Woodhaven-Brownstown School District and 24 units of government in the Downriver Area.



[www.allianceofdownriverwatersheds.com](http://www.allianceofdownriverwatersheds.com)

**Project at a Glance**

Location

Frank and Poet Creek  
North of Sibley Road  
Riverview, MI

Applicant

City of Riverview

Partners

- Riverview School District
- Wayne County

Award Amount

\$2,716

Funding Source

Clean Michigan Initiative  
Nonpoint Source Program

Planting Date

June 2009

Planting Size

17,424 square feet

Estimated Increase in  
Rainwater Infiltration

122 percent

Estimated Maintenance  
Savings

\$1,541 per year

This Nonpoint Source Pollution Control project has been funded, in part, by the Clean Michigan Initiative Nonpoint Source Program to Wayne County for the Grow Zones Across the ADW project. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.