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## Plans to curb stormwater pollution take root

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On the heels of record rainfall, the town is taking steps to reduce stormwater pollution.

Several major town roadways have been targeted for controlling runoff with the design of raingardens, catch basins, and infiltration devices.

With the help of a \$148,778 grant from the Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Scituate's Conservation Commission and the Department of Public Works are working in cooperation on projects with an engineering firm to maintain water quality and conservation.

"Every little bit helps," said Conservation Commission Chairman Michael Clark, who is working closely on the project as an engineer. "Anything we can do in the watershed to potentially improve the quality of water will make an impact."

According to Massachusetts Riverways community organizer Amy Singler, stormwater pollution and runoff is the biggest threat to the quality of water resources.

Last year, members of the First Herring Brook Watershed Initiative collaborated with the Riverways "Adopt-A-Stream" program to create a natural filtering system, using a buffer of vegetation, on the Hughey Road cul-de-sac. The sloping hill has proved to be a clear example of a pathway for run-off into the adjacent Tan Brook - a tributary to the town's reservoir, Old Oaken Bucket Pond.

Two raingardens featuring a collection of about 35-40 absorbent plants and perennials placed around a catch basin to percolate and purify polluted water are in the works on Hughey Road.

Other projects over the next year include a raingarden adjacent to the water treatment facility, stream bank stabilization along the Herring River, two raingardens and an infiltration device along Country Way, and several leaching catch basins along the Driftway. The projects will use "Low Impact Development" (LID) techniques to maintain the area's natural hydrology and keeps storm water on-site, treating it as a resource and not piped away or kept in detention basins.

Members of the DPW will be donating the use of their equipment and labor for project construction, said Clark.

He expects most of the work to be completed by this fall.

Sally Coyle, a local landscape architect who is working as a consultant to Clark, said they are also working on close to 50 raingardens in Cohasset, and finds that many everyday pollutants can attribute to pollution including car oil, pet waste, and lawn fertilizer.

The grant will also provide funding for the town to take part in the Greenscapes program run by the North and South Rivers Watershed Association, encouraging responsible gardening and landscaping, said Clark.

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