

## Easements and Pond Vegetation Maintenance

On November 5, EMWREP partnered with RWMWD, UM Extension and MPCA to offer the third in a series of workshops on storm pond management for public works staff from local communities. The workshop included a question and answer series with two attorneys who addressed concerns about easements around storm ponds and a case study that highlighted Golden Valley's success in converting the vegetation around their municipal storm ponds from turf grass to native plants. During the workshop, we also spent



Joel Schilling discusses vegetation management along Franklin Pond in North St. Paul

time outside at Franklin Pond in North St. Paul, where we noted the ordinary water level and 10-year flood levels for the pond and discussed vegetation management.

We have chosen to focus on storm pond management for this educational series because it is such a big issue for the public works staff in our communities. Storm ponds can be found in virtually every new housing and business development here in the east metro, and yet many of these ponds have never been dredged or maintained. The first and second workshops in our series focused on Outfalls and Inventories and Visual Inspections. During 2009, we hope to have workshops on dredging and stormwater wetlands, as well as linking storm pond management to water quality in our lakes and rivers. Stay tuned for info about the next workshop.

## Welcome to our newest EMWREP partners!

Beginning in 2009, Comfort-Lake Forest Lake Watershed District, Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District, Rice Creek Watershed District and West Lakeland Township will become official EMWREP partners.

## Blue Thumb workshops coming soon to a city near you!

On November 21, the Blue Thumb program sponsored a train the trainer workshop for 40 Blue Thumb partners to learn and practice giving an introductory presentation for homeowners in their communities.

The brain child of Dawn Pape (RCWD), the Blue Thumb program has now grown to include 55 partners across Minnesota, Wisconsin and even Iowa. Mike Isensee (Dakota SWCD), Dawn Pape and I planned this workshop so that our Blue Thumb partners can help to spread the word about the benefits of native gardens, raingardens and shoreline plantings and to ensure that we are presenting a consistent message when we talk to the general public about water resource issues.

This spring, I would like to host introductory Blue Thumb workshops in Forest Lake, Dellwood/Willernie, Stillwater, Lake Elmo/West Lakeland, Cottage Grove and at the Carpenter Nature Center. WCD staff are currently working with watershed staff to assemble a map of priority areas for BMP's, which we hope to use to target the outreach for the Blue Thumb workshops.

### Congratulations to Blue Thumb!

Blue Thumb was selected as "Program of the Year" by the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts.

### Members of the East Metro Water Resource Education Program:

Brown's Creek Watershed • Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed • Cottage Grove • Dellwood • Forest Lake • Lower St. Croix Watershed • Lake Elmo • Middle St. Croix Watershed • Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed • Rice Creek Watershed • Stillwater • South Washington Watershed • Valley Branch Watershed • Willernie • West Lakeland • Washington Conservation District • Washington County

## MS4 toolkit progress update

This summer the [CleanWaterMN.org](http://CleanWaterMN.org) website underwent a face-lift. The newly designed website contains all of the same resources of the old one - press releases, fact sheets and advertising materials for stormwater professionals to use - but is more attractive and easier to navigate.

During the winter, I will be working with High Monkey (the web design firm) to upload materials for the MS4 toolkit to the website and create a search function that will help MS4 staff to find materials based on topic, audience or minimum control measure.

We also have draft versions available of the parks maintenance and raingarden maintenance training videos we filmed in August. Please let me know if you would like to preview these videos and offer your feedback.



Need a good photo for a pet waste flyer? The MS4 Toolkit, available on the [CleanWaterMN.org](http://CleanWaterMN.org) website in May of 2009 will have brochures, presentations, workshop ideas, training videos and more.

