

NATIVE VEGETATION

HOW TO MAINTAIN PLANT LIFE

What is Native Vegetation?

You may have native vegetation in HOA practices like stormwater ponds, raingardens, and vegetated buffers. Native plants are **adapted to the local climate** and **require less maintenance** than non-native alternatives once established. Benefits include:

- **Deep roots** that hold and infiltrate water, improve soil, filter pollutants, and capture carbon.
- **Reduced costs** from less mowing and watering and no fertilizer or pesticides.
- **Habitat** for pollinators and other wildlife.
- **Enhanced beauty** and landscape **resilience**.

Establishing Native Plants

Do the following when establishing native plants:

- **Water:** Water daily the first week of planting, and then 1 to 2 inches of water per week the first growing season unless it rains.
- **Weed:** Remove weeds and invasive plants by their roots and dispose of properly. As the natives establish, they will help crowd out weeds.

Routine Maintenance Activities

Native vegetation requires some maintenance to ensure it does not get overgrown or interfere with the function of the stormwater practice. **Your HOA or landscape contractor should routinely:**

- **Prune:** Leave as overwintering habitats for wildlife, and then prune and remove dead vegetation in the spring.
- **Plant:** Add, replace, or divide plants as needed.
- **Mulch:** Maintain a 3 inch layer of mulch to limit weed growth and reduce the need for watering in rain gardens and bioswales.
- **Mow:** Leave grass above 3 inches but no more than 6 to 8 inches in swales and dry ponds. Leave an un-mowed buffer around wet ponds, wetlands, and streams, but burn or trim as needed.
- **Weed:** Spend an hour a month or at least 3 times during the growing season.



Visit mnwcd.org/planting-for-clean-water for more information and resources.

Work with your HOA board to create
a vegetation maintenance plan.