

# LOW- MAINTENANCE LANDSCAPES



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER  
WATERSHED DISTRICT

Are you looking to spend less time doing yard work while also improving water quality and helping pollinators? You have options!

## Low-Maintenance Landscapes

Traditional turfgrass requires a lot of effort to look its best, including frequent watering, mowing, and fertilizing. But you can have a beautiful lawn with less work that also improves water quality, supports pollinators, and adds vibrant colors to your property.



Photo: Blue Thumb

### Native Gardens

Native gardens use plants that thrive in the soils and climate of their original location. Their deep roots infiltrate water, maintain healthy soils, and reduce soil erosion. The native garden plants are drought-tolerant and disease-resistant. These gardens can be any shape and size to fit your landscape.



Photo: Clean Water MN

### Prairie Plantings

Prairie plantings are best for large areas. They are a mix of native grasses and wildflowers. Turf is removed and converted to prairie. Prairies take about 3 years to fully establish, but are low-maintenance and have huge water quality and habitat benefits.

### Turfgrass Alternatives

Pollinator lawns contain low-growing flowering plants that provide food for pollinators. These lawns can be established by completely removing turf and reseeding or by overseeding an existing lawn. Pollinator lawns can be mowed if desired.



Photo: James Wolfen—UMN

Low-mow or no-mow grasses are cool-season grasses, often fine fescues or tall fescues that are shade and drought-tolerant. These grasses are ideal for areas that have an average amount of foot traffic. They are slow growing and may only need to be mowed twice a season.

Both lawn types will need hand weeding in the first couple of years while the lawn becomes established to get ensure they look their best.



Photo: Young Environmental

The LMRWD has cost-share available for projects that improve water and natural resources. Contact us for more information!

## Installation

New landscaping requires research. If you need to remove turfgrass, there are many options, from sheet mulching to sod cutting. Select native seeds and plants that are right for your soil moisture type and sunlight. Check out the resources below.

## Maintenance

A low-maintenance landscape does not mean *no* maintenance. All landscapes needs tending. Do not forget to weed, water (initially), and possibly mow your new landscaping.

## Remember

Cities have different ordinances around native plant gardens and their locations. Check your city ordinances before starting a project.

## Resources

[Planting for Clean Water](#)—Blue Thumb

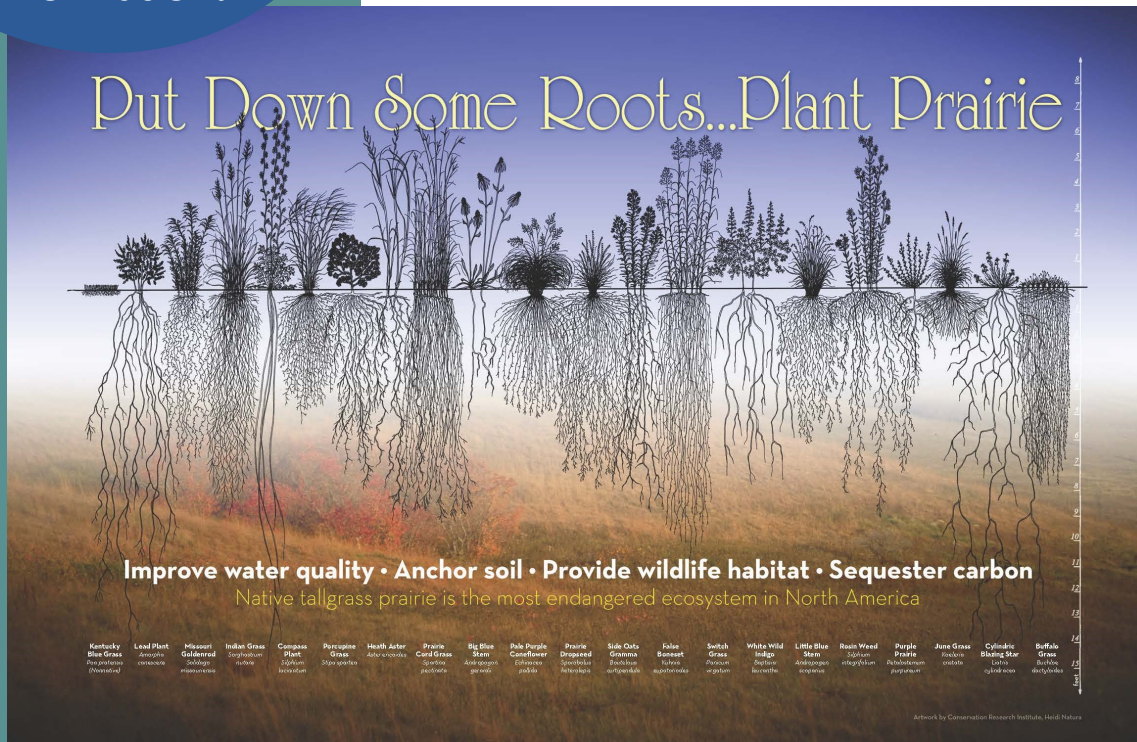
[Environmentally Friendly Landscaping](#)—City of Burnsville

[Landscaping for Clean Water](#)—Dakota County SWCD

[Lawns to Legumes](#)—MN Board of Water and Soil Resources

[Planting for Pollinators](#)—MN Board of Water and Soil Resources

[Bee Lawn](#) | [Fine Fescue Lawn](#) | [Prairie Garden](#) —U of M Extension



The LMRWD is a local, special-purpose unit of government that works to solve and prevent water-related issues. Email us or visit our website for more information!



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www.lowermriverwd.org