

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES INVENTORY
OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN

PROJECT: Adler Elementary School Rain

CATEGORY:
Stormwater Management

PRACTICE:
Rain Gardens

CONTACT:
SOCWA Healthy Lawns and Gardens

3910 W Webster Road, Royal Oak, MI 48073

248-288-5150

OWNER: Adler Elementary School and School District staff

PARTNERS:
Adler Elementary School teachers and students, SOCWA, SOCRRA,
City of Southfield Dept. of Public Works, Southfield Public Schools
Grounds and Maintenance, Four Seasons Garden Center
DESIGN: Lillian Dean, Sharon Merchant

CONSTRUCTION: Southfield School District personnel, High school
students, SOCWA volunteers, parents

MAINTENANCE: Adler Elementary School, SOCWA volunteers,
parents,

DATE INITIATED: May 2004

INITIAL COST: (not submitted)

MAINTENANCE COST: (not submitted)/year

PROJECT

Located at 19100 Filmore Ave. in Southfield, the Adler Elementary School "Learning" Garden is 50 feet x 50 feet in size, with a paver stone pathway running through the middle of the garden. The portion of the garden which is a "Rain Garden for the Rouge River" is the front 1/2 of the garden, approximately 25 feet x 50 feet in size. The "core" rain garden area was excavated to a depth of 3 feet. Care was taken to avoid undercutting the sidewalk which adjoins the rain garden. Yard waste compost (provided by SOCWA/SOCRRA) was delivered and placed into the rain garden "hole" by Southfield School District personnel. After the initial "filling" of the rain garden soil, a work day was held to top dress the entire garden with compost (4 inch depth). Planting of the rain garden has occurred in 4 stages: Contribution/planting of plants by SOCWA volunteers - May 2004; Wildflowers and annuals planted by kindergarten students, Late May 2004; Additional native wildflowers from the SOCWA gardens planted by SOCWA volunteers; Native plants purchased from the Native Plant Nursery, Ann Arbor,



Students participate in the initial Rain Garden Planting Day at Morris Adler Elementary School in Southfield. Photo courtesy Lillian Dean, Coordinator, SOCWA Healthy Lawns & Gardens



Adler Elementary School Rain Garden one year post-planting (June 2005). Photo courtesy Lillian Dean, Coordinator, SOCWA Healthy Lawns & Gardens

planted with help from 80 fifth grade students, May 2005. Special features and benefits of the Rain Garden include: Curriculum-based science lessons, especially useful for 4th and 5th grade; Hands-on science and nature exploration for all grade levels (during 2004, 8 elementary school classes made their own compost in the classroom. Some of the classes then added their compost to the rain garden to help absorb water and grow healthy native plants); Enhancement of the school grounds; Reduction of "wet lawn" that needs mowing.