



PLANTING FOR CLEAN WATER™

2023 Blue Thumb Year End Report



Celebrate this year's outcomes!

Thank you for supporting Metro Blooms' Blue Thumb education and partnership program. In this report, you will find outcomes on our 2023 Resilient Yards workshops, Lawns to Legumes, Sustainable Landcare Training, our website and social media, and more.

Who We Are

Blue Thumb—Planting for Clean Water® is a network of clean water and native plant stewards bridging the gap between knowledge and action by offering resources and programs to Minnesotan residents. Our Finest on Earth™ Blue Thumb Partners include local governmental units, non-profit organizations, and private companies all working toward the same goals. Blue Thumb is coordinated by the non-profit Metro Blooms.

Our Shared Vision

Blue Thumb engages with communities and shares accessible knowledge and resources to protect our environment and create a more sustainable future. We lead the way in changing landscaping norms among professionals, property owners, and renters. We aspire to clean water resources supported by beautiful and sustainable landscapes that minimize runoff and create native habitat in our communities.

Website & Social Media

The Blue Thumb brand is making waves! Below are numbers from our website and social media from the dates January 1, 2023 through Nov 1, 2023.

Page name	Reach			
Blue Thumb homepage bluethumb.org/	80,000 annual users 293,116 total page views			
Partner Finder Tool bluethumb.org/partners	3,555 page views			
Partner Grants bluethumb.org/grants	1,026 page views			
Partner Job Board bluethumb.org/job-board	2,744 page views			
Blue Thumb Resources bluethumb.org/public-resources	7,921 page views 27,187 downloads			
	Followers	Change	Reach	Change
<u>Facebook</u>	4,000	+98.6%	282,697	+435.9%
<u>Instagram</u>	2,367	+46.17%	10,092	+90.3%

Blue Thumb Partnership

2023 Blue Thumb Partners

50 partners	10 new partners	3 events	\$10,800 sponsorships
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Minnesota State Fair

The Eco Experience conservatively estimated 210,000 visitors to the building this year. Staff and volunteers at the Blue Thumb booth handed out over 9,000 printed materials and resources this year!

Fair dates: August 24th - September 4th

10,000 booth visitors	56 staff & volunteers	353 Lawns to Legumes applications	12,156 website visits
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Resilient Yards Workshops

Newly launched this year, the Resilient Yards Online Learning Series was a hit! This online learning series can be accessed at any time, at no cost. It has all the resources needed for a DIY project.

Resilient Yards: Online Learning Series

2,235	2,154	46	44	4,479
registrants	registrants	registrants	registrants	registrants
Resilient Yards	Turf Alternatives	Resilient Shoreline	Seed Saving	Total

This year we had a total of 457 Minnesotans register across our 20 live workshop sessions. Workshop offerings this year included: Resilient Yards, Pollinator Plantings, Turf Alternatives, Resilient Shorelines, and Seed Saving. We had both in-person and online workshops that were hosted by cities and local governments across MN.

Resilient Yards: Live Online Q/A

160	155	65	69	8
registrants	registrants	registrants	registrants	registrants
Resilient Yards	Turf Alternatives	Resilient Shoreline	Pollinator Plantings	Seed Saving



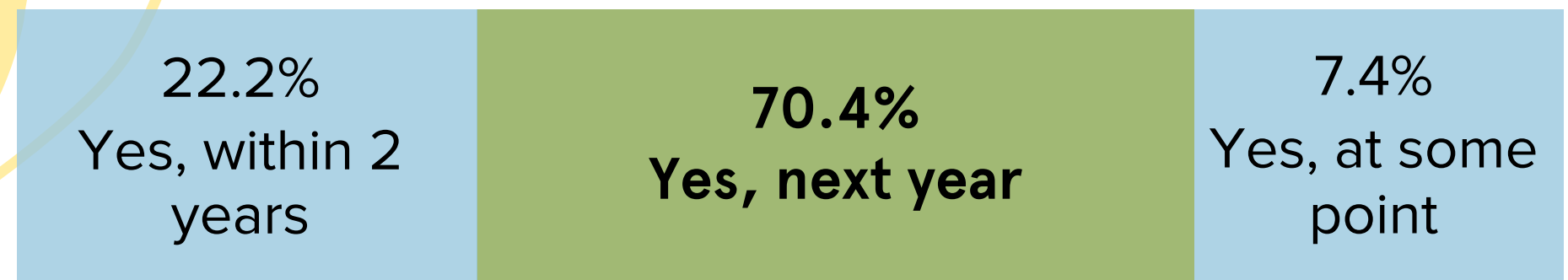
Resilient Yards Workshops



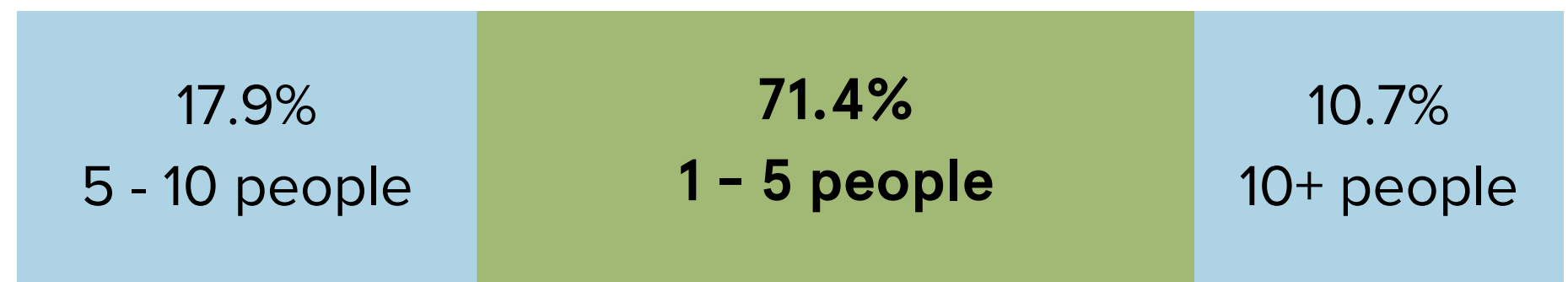
What kind of planting(s) did you install?



Will you install native plants in the future?



Please estimate the number of people with whom you've shared information you learned at the workshop:



Why did you choose not to install a native planting?

Top reasons:

1. Too expensive
2. Not enough time
3. I needed additional design assistance

Resilient Yards Workshops Survey Results

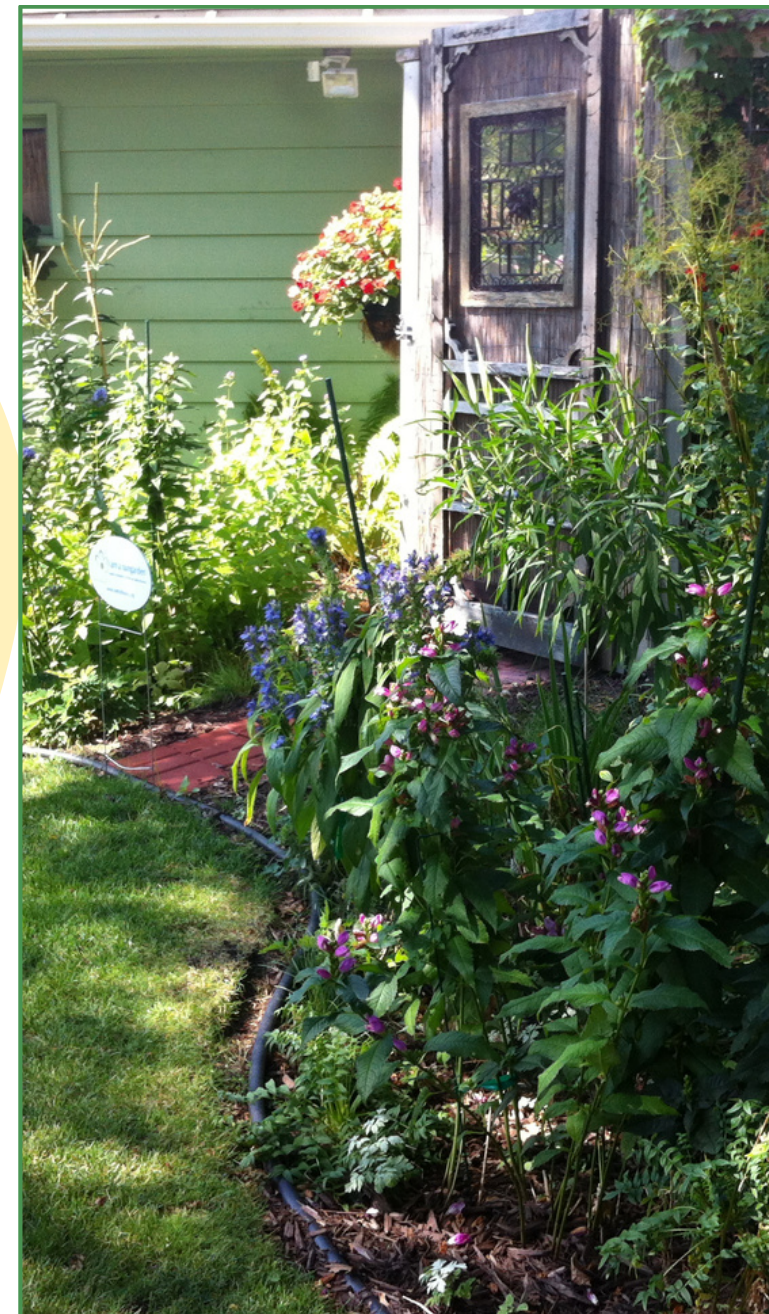
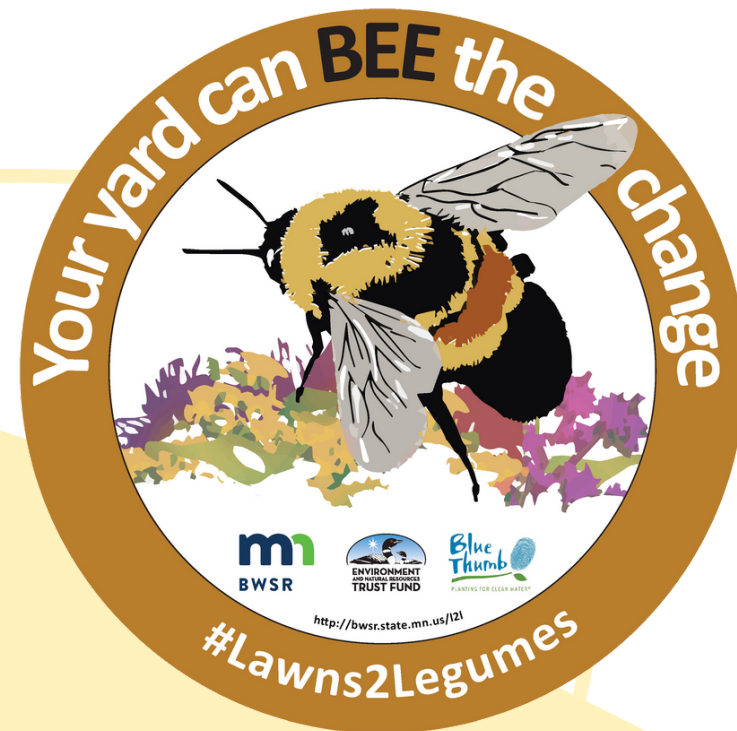
After our workshop season ended, we sent out a survey to all registrants to collect their feedback on how the season went.

Did you install native plants, a bee lawn or some other planting or clean water practice after attending a workshop?



Lawns to Legumes: Spring and Fall 2023 Cohorts

2,653,983.6
square feet of new
pollinator habitat
=
that's equal to 46
football fields!



As you have probably heard, Lawns to Legumes passed through legislation and will be continuing for the next 4 years! Thanks to recent funding from the Minnesota legislature, grant awards are increasing from \$350 to \$400 this upcoming spring 2024. The Lawns to Legumes team is looking forward to sharing program updates and new resources to make the program more accessible for participants.

2,448
grantees
Confirmed

1,835
grantees
Completed Projects

70% project
completion rate
Out of Confirmed

Sustainable Landcare Training

We're growing a local workforce and creating job and education pathways in the environmental field! During this paid 30-hour program, participants learn about stormwater, best management practices (BMPs) in stormwater, rain gardens, caring for native plants, and how to inspect and report on stormwater practices. We also explore environmental justice and how history has shaped our current landscape. The program prepares participants with job-ready skills and can open up pathways to environmental careers.

This year, we offered “graduates” of the Sustainable Landcare Training Program (SLC) the chance to work with us to complete stormwater BMP inspections around Minneapolis!

Looking ahead, we are hoping to identify more job opportunities amongst current and prospective Blue Thumb partners to create a robust network of enthusiastic, passionate, and knowledgeable green infrastructure professionals!

52 participants completed the SLC training this year!

11

SLC trainees
hired

422

Stormwater BMPs
inspected by SLC graduates



“I didn’t have any knowledge to what stormwater was, or stormwater runoff, or a rain garden or any BMP,” said a 2023 SLC trainee. “At the end of the training I had a very good entry point to all that was going on.”

2023 Blue Thumb Partners

Carver County Water Mgmt Org.

City of Champlin

City of Edina

City of Elk River

City of Minneapolis

City of Minnetonka

City of Rochester

City of Shoreview

City of St. Louis Park

Elm Creek WMO

Fountain Creek Watershed District

Hennepin County Environment and Energy

Ramsey-Washington Metro WD

Rice Creek Watershed District

Shingle Creek WMO

VLAWMO

Washington Conservation District

West Mississippi WMO

Minnesota Native Landscapes

Prairie Restorations

Landscape Alternatives, Inc.

Morning Sky Greenery

Minnesota State Horticultural Society

Northern Waters Land Trust

Helping Hand Companies

Ed's Buckthorn Removal

B.E. Landscape Designs

Dogwood Designs

Ecoscapes LLC

Kern Landscape Resources

Landscape Direction, LLC

Light Dark Landscape

Old Tjikko AKA Living Sculpture Tree Care

Metro Blooms D & B

MN Nice Gardens and Landscapes L.L.C.

Morning Dew Gardening

Organic Bob LLC

Pierson Garden and Landscape

Rock Leaf Water Environmental

Sacred Space Gardens

Trio Landscaping

JL Theis, Inc.

Native Resource Preservation

Xylem Designs

Plaisted Companies, Inc.

Mother Earth Gardens

Twin City Seed

Glacial Ridge Growers

Patio Town

Comfort Lake Forrest Lake Watershed District

Duluth-Superior Regional Stormwater Protection Team

Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District