

RainScape Rebates Program Landowner Guide

Part of the

Deer Creek Watershed Alliance

a project of  MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

The Deer Creek Watershed Alliance (DCWA) is a project of the Missouri Botanical Garden. The Garden strives to seek and implement plant-based solutions to improve water quality and to reduce stormwater runoff. The most immediate, successful strategy for managing stormwater is to capture it where it falls.

Over the past three years, the work of the DCWA engaged institutional leaders with jurisdictional authority in the watershed, technical experts, and citizen stakeholders who are invested in clean water and storm water management solutions to create a Deer Creek Watershed Management Plan. The management plan provides voluntary, educational guidelines for implementing green infrastructure for improving water quality and reducing storm water run-off. An important component of the management plan is to support constructive, voluntary actions of individual landowners, particularly since at least 80% of the Deer Creek Watershed land is privately owned.

www.deercreekalliance.org

RainScaping@Mobot.org

314.577.0202

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Introduction

RainScape Rebates is a joint program of Missouri Botanical Garden, Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Great Rivers Greenway, Missouri Department of Conservation and participating municipalities. Funds are available to sites within the boundaries of the participating municipalities included in the Deer Creek Watershed of St. Louis, Missouri. The purpose of the program is to improve water quality in Deer Creek and its tributaries by installing “**RainScaping**” - landscaping that helps capture rain where it falls, instead of allowing water to run off-site. RainScaping can also be employed to help solve a drainage problem, increase aesthetic appeal, improve property values, and attract birds and butterflies in addition to other benefits.

Basic RainScape Rebates Program Parameters

Eligible Entities	Landowners may only submit for property WITHIN the participating municipalities that are partially or entirely within Deer Creek Watershed - includes homes, schools, churches, government entities and businesses. Rebates are not eligible for employees of Deer Creek Watershed Alliance, Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District, or Missouri Botanical Garden.
Rebate Periods	There will be three rounds of rebates. See timeline below.
Site Size Limits	Landscaping projects converting established lawns or hardscapes or restoring woodlands must be at least 100 square feet in size. Green roof or rain barrel work projects (non landscaping features) have no size limits.
Project Time Constraints	Only projects to be installed after Rebate Application Notice to Proceed Date and within Rebate Project timeframes will be considered. Landowner agrees to maintain the design feature for a minimum of five years. See timeline below.
Reimbursement Guidelines	Projects are 75% reimbursable up to maximum \$2,000 per landowner for documented design/installation costs. Maintenance costs are the responsibility of the landowner. Paid receipts must be submitted, and a follow-up site visit will be done to verify installation prior to reimbursement. If contractor fees are included in rebate requests they must be from RainScape Rebates Participating Contractors.
Plan Requirements	A Planting Plan is required with information on plant species, container size, number of plants and planting densities, plant material source, soil amendments to be used, and maintenance plan. Native plants are preferred but not required. Native cultivars will be considered equivalent to native plants. A two to three inch mulch layer is required where appropriate to inhibit weed growth, prevent soil loss, and retain moisture.
Eligible Improvements	Features must improve RainScaping functions of the land. See Eligible Improvements List at http://deercreekalliance.org/documents/RainScaping_EligibleImprovements2013.pdf for options. <i>Design goals are to retain stormwater on site</i> - the primary evaluation criteria.
Contractor Involvement – Includes all Professionals assisting land-owners: designers, landscape architects, and installers	Landowners can act as their own contractor. However seeking advice of professionals trained in landscaping and RainScaping options is highly advised. If a landowner uses a contractor in this program that company must be a <i>Participating RainScape Contractor</i> . Rebates are given to the landowner – participating contractors should provide invoicing and receive payment as they do with regular jobs. Those contractors wishing to help landowners by improving their RainScaping and therefore being eligible for these rebates must follow the guidelines in this document and the RainScape Rebates Application to become a <i>Participating RainScape Contractor</i> . <i>Missouri Botanical Garden lists Participating Contractors but DOES NOT certify the technical expertise of contractors participating in the program.</i>

Eligible Improvements

An Eligible Improvements List (separate document) reflects available technologies and measures that are eligible for rebating through the RainScape Rebates Program. In general, projects must retain stormwater on the site and utilize improvements that will enhance the water quality of Deer Creek.

While landowners can act as their own contractor, a site visit and recommendation plan conducted by a RainScape Rebates Participating Contractor is highly recommended.

Rebate Application Process for Landowners

This Program is designed to allow flexibility in options and timing for expanding RainScaping options in the Deer Creek Watershed. The following steps are the *typical* process for a landowner:

- 1. ATTEND OPTIONAL LANDOWNER ORIENTATION:** Landowners can attend an optional landowner orientation to learn of program parameters and requirements. Orientations are two hours long and are held at Frontenac City Hall. **Advanced registration is required.** Go to www.deercreekalliance.org/orientations/ for more details and to register online.
- 2. CONSULT WITH PARTICIPATING CONTRACTORS:** The program suggests getting bids from up to three participating contractor companies – however, competitive bids are not required to participate in the program. To be considered a RainScape Rebates Participating Contractor these companies must comply with certain program requirements such as possession of a business license, proof of insurance, and attendance at a required workshop. Landowners can act as their own contractors but the program strongly suggests using professionals trained to help you accomplish your goals. Consult with the contractors you've chosen to obtain RainScaping options for your land and obtain bids for the services to provide you with your chosen options. *Missouri Botanical Garden lists Participating Contractors but DOES NOT certify the technical expertise of contractors participating in the program.*
- 3. COMPLETE AND SUBMIT REBATE APPLICATION FORM:** Landowners complete the Rebate Application form contained within the RainScape Rebates Program Guidelines. This requires decisions on the following: type of RainScaping features to be installed; plants to be included; tests to conduct; strategies to select; determination of site features; budget; outreach options; and landowners will also have to include a landscape drawing with the potential features, and a photo of the exact future locations of chosen RainScaping features. Decisions are best made in consultation with one or more Participating Contractors for the RainScape Rebates program. Participating Contractors are independent businesses and therefore will charge the landowner fees for their involvement. These fees can be included in the total bids submitted with the application. However, any design fees will only be reimbursed if the project is accepted. Installation fees should not be incurred until after the project has been accepted. Also, landowners are responsible for paying Participating Contractors in a timely manner. Rebates will come after the project is fully completed and evaluated, well after due dates for completed contractor work.
 - a. Participating Contractors are listed on the website with contact information and category of service provided (Designer and/or Installer).
- 4. APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS:** Funds are limited; therefore there is no guarantee that everyone that submits a qualifying application will receive the Rebate. Only completed

applications with appropriately designed projects will be considered. The RainScape Rebates Team will review and score all applications. It is estimated that approximately 60-80 projects will be funded in each round. Evaluations will determine the projects chosen for funding. Every project must meet the primary goal of retaining stormwater on the site and must include a plant-based solution. Projects must also utilize improvements that will enhance the water quality of Deer Creek. Priority will be given to projects that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a. Large amount of stormwater managed
- b. Location accessible for public viewing or available for other outreach efforts
- c. One or more neighbors also participating in the Rebate Program
- d. Site located actually within Deer Creek Watershed boundaries and not just in a related municipality
- e. High percentage of native plants
- f. Appropriate design
- g. Cost effective solutions

- 5. RECEIVE A NOTICE TO PROCEED:** Once evaluations are completed and projects are chosen for funding landowners will receive a Notice to Proceed. See chart on Page 5 for RainScape Rebates Time Frame notice. **NO INSTALLATION WORK SHALL BEGIN UNTIL THE HOMEOWNER HAS RECEIVED A NOTICE TO PROCEED.**
- 6. COMPLETE PROJECT WORK:** Projects must be completed within two growing seasons of Notice to Proceed. This allows time for the variety of project types to be installed and/or implemented.
- 7. SUBMIT PROJECT COMPLETION FORM:** Once work is completed and contractor invoices have been paid or purchases made, the Landowner must submit a signed Project Completion Form, along with copies of paid invoices or receipts. Landowners will receive instructions on completing this form. See RainScape Rebates Time Frame chart for final due dates.
- 8. QUALITY CONTROL (QC)/GROUND TRUTHING WORK:** Once the Project Completion Form is received a site visit will be planned to confirm proper installation of features and to collect final data. Concurrently, the Project Completion Form will be reviewed to ensure all information is included. Landowners should expect to receive a call to schedule the site visit within six weeks of submittal of Project Completion Form.
- 9. REBATE PAYMENT PROCESSED:** Once the QC/Ground Truthing is completed, data has been collected, and the Project Completion Form has been verified, then rebate payments will be issued to landowners. Program estimates are for rebate payments to be mailed approximately twelve weeks from receipt of Project Completion Form.

Quality Control and Ground Truthing

Every project will be monitored for full compliance with proper installation of RainScaping features, with minimum metrics collected and periodically evaluated.

Additionally, all projects are eligible for site visits to gather further data and to pursue ground truthing. Several projects will be promoted in case studies on the website to further promote RainScaping.

To ensure no appearances of conflict of interest, rebates are not eligible for employees of Deer Creek Watershed Alliance, Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District, or Missouri Botanical Garden. All completed projects done for family members or employees of the installing contractor(s) will be flagged for full on-site Quality Control and Ground Truthing inspections.

RainScape Rebates Program Time Frame

	Round One	Round Two	Round Three
Applications Available	1.7.13	5.15.13	11.15.13
Contractor and Landowner Workshops	Feb 2013	June 2013	Jan 2014
Rebate Applications Due	3.1.13	7.15.13	2.12.14
Project Notifications Out	3.18.13	8.15.13	3.14.14
Planting Time	Spring/Fall	Fall/Spring	Spring/Fall
Project Receipts and Completion Forms Due	No later than 12.2.13	No later than 6.15.14	No later than 10.3.14
Quality Control/Ground Truthing/Completion Forms Processed	Within 6 weeks of receipt of Project Completion Forms		
Rebate Funds Dispersed to Landowners	Within 12 weeks of receipt of Project Completion Forms		

Application Assistance

- A. **To obtain a RainScape Rebates application form**, interested applicants can download a form from the Deer Creek Watershed Alliance's website at <http://www.deercreekalliance.org/rainscaperebates.aspx>. Applications are also available at each participating municipality's City Hall.
- B. **To determine which types of RainScaping you wish to install**, visit the Missouri Botanical Garden's RainScaping Guide at www.mobot.org/rainscaping for a list of all options.

- C. **To determine improvements eligible for funding**, visit the Deer Creek Watershed Alliance's RainScape Rebate page (www.deercreekalliance.org/rainscaperebates.aspx) for a link to an Eligible Improvements List.
- D. **To get an idea of types and number of plants you'll need based on the size of your space** visit the Garden's RainScaping page (www.mobot.org/rainscaping). Under the "How to RainScape" section is a link called "**Select Plants**".
- E. Landowners can conduct their own percolation tests. To learn more about how to conduct your own **percolation test**, visit the Deer Creek Watershed Alliance's RainScape Rebates page (www.deercreekalliance.org/rainscaperebates.aspx) for a link to Percolation Test Instructions.
- F. **To calculate the amount of mulch you will need for your project**: go to St. Louis Composting's "cubic yard calculator": <http://www.stlcompost.com/yard-calculator.htm>
- G. **For price estimates of plants**, you'll want to call any or all of the local independent garden centers. A list of local retail garden centers and nurseries (with contact info) can be found at: <http://grownative.org/buyers-guide/retailers/>. More information can also be found at <http://www.gatewaygardener.com/links> and <http://www.hortco-op.org/>.
- H. **To determine the estimated rebate amount requested**, multiply the total budget by 0.75. This will be the estimated amount requested. However, there is a \$2,000 maximum rebate.

Example #1

For a project that costs \$1,000

$$\$1,000 \times 0.75 = \$750$$

\$750 is below the \$2,000 max, so this landowner is eligible for a \$750 Rebate.

Example #2

For a project costs \$4,000:

$$\$4,000 \times 0.75 = \$3,000$$

Note that this amount is higher than the maximum allowable Rebate of \$2,000, therefore the Rebate amount for this project is \$2,000.

- I. **To help design a maintenance plan** visit <http://www.hortco-op.org/> for a list of member organizations that might be able to provide some guidance. Also see rain garden maintenance guidance at <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/sustainability-conservation/sustainable-living/at-home/rainscaping-guide/design-and-build-a-rain-garden/maintain.aspx> or <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/Portals/0/Shaw%20Nature%20Reserve/PDFs/horticulture/NLM%20Ch4.pdf>.

- J. To see an example of a landscape drawing, visit <http://www.deercreekalliance.org/rainscaperebates.aspx> for a link to a sample landscape drawing and also a link to graph paper. You can create your own scale, key, and symbols for your drawing. You may also submit more than one drawing in your application. For example, you may want to provide an overall site map with all the buildings and features on your property, and you may want to provide an additional drawing with more details about your RainScape feature.
- K. To locate underground utility lines on your property (to denote in your landscape drawing) call 1.800.344.7483 (DIG-RITE). Missouri law requires that a location request be placed before beginning any excavation. The utilities should respond to your request within 3 working days by:
- Marking the approximate location of their facilities or
 - Notifying you that they have no facilities in your dig site area.

After confirming utility response, you can then proceed with your excavation avoiding damages. More details can be found at: <http://www.mo1call.com/>.

Additional Resources

To find out more about RainScaping in general including what, exactly, RainScaping is, available options, suggested plant lists and more: www.mobot.org/rainscaping

More rainscaping resources can also be found at:

<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/sustainability-conservation/sustainable-living/at-home/rainscaping-guide/resources.aspx>

To learn more about the RainScape Rebates program: On this site you will find more details on how the program works, optional orientation dates for further information, resources, deadlines etc.: www.deercreekalliance.org/rainscaperebates.aspx

For an online version of the application:

www.deercreekalliance.org/documents/RainScaping_App_Online.pdf

Maps of the Deer Creek Watershed, including by municipality:

<http://www.deercreekalliance.org/maps.aspx>

If you are doing work on trees in your landscape, certified Arborists in the St. Louis area can be found at: <http://www.stlouisarborists.com/> or email info@stlouisarborists.com

An invasive plant species list with native alternatives can be found at:

http://deercreekalliance.org/documents/RainScaping_Invasives-Alternatives.pdf

A great book explaining the benefits of native plants to wildlife is “Bringing Nature Home” by Douglas Tallamy.

Exceptions

RainScape Rebates Program administrators can approve reasonable exceptions to written policies on a rebate-by-rebate basis.

Contact Information

If you have questions regarding the program guidelines, please email RainScaping@Mobot.org. If you need to speak to someone, please call the general program phone number at 314-577-0202. Additional resources are available online at www.deercreekalliance.org.



**MISSOURI
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES**

