

Shepherdstown Middle School



Students Plant a Rain Garden to Decrease Runoff and Erosion

Shepherdstown Middle School, Shepherdstown, WV, participated in Cacapon Institute's Potomac Headwaters Leaders of Watersheds Grow-a-Garden project under the direction of Principal Rebecca Horn and teachers Paula Laverick, Christy Kessler, and Chasity Plaza. The Grow-a-Garden project links classroom lessons with real-world problems.



Students then made a positive impact for the environment by planting a rain garden on campus.

7th grade students participated in four one-hour education sessions discussing topics of watershed,

topography, water hydrology, and the harmful affects of stormwater runoff pollution on our river systems. Students discovered the connection between human land use and the health of our waterways. Students contributed over 400 educational contact hours before rain garden installation.

On April 19th, students installed native plants in the school rain garden. The rain garden is located near the main entrance, collects stormwater from a rooftop downspout, and blends into existing landscaping at the school. The water deposited from the rooftop gutter collects in the rain garden which allows the water to absorb into the ground rather than traveling across land carrying harmful pollutants to the local stream. The area was suffering from erosion and soggy conditions following rainstorms before installation.

Nearly one-hundred students and three teachers contributed over one-hundred hours to the project that led to it's success. The rain garden is an



asset to the school, environment, and is a demonstration project for homeowners. The native plants will provide food and habitat to wildlife and insects. When the students return in the fall they will see their hard work in full bloom.

