



# Emerson Drive Stormwater Gardens Gallery

Ames, IA

**Location:** Emerson Drive, Ames

**Partners:** Iowa State University Dept. of Landscape Architecture  
City of Ames Public Works  
City of Ames Parks and Recreation Department  
Story County Conservation Board  
City of Ames Water Department

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**Cost:** \$500 per residential yard project

**Funding:** Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Iowa Water Center  
U.S. Geological Survey

**Project Description:** The Emerson Drive Stormwater Gardens Gallery was conceived as a neighborhood stormwater management project to help improve the quality stormwater delivered to College Creek. Stormwater runoff from Emerson Drive flows directly into College Creek via a storm drain inlet, carrying with it pollutants that damage the creek's delicate ecosystem. Homeowners, students and faculty from Iowa State University partnered with officials from the city of Ames and Story County to fund, design, build and maintain this project.

**Residential Projects:** To build the stormwater gardens, dirt was removed from the garden sites and replaced with a mixture of sand, compost and soil. This soil mixture, combined with long-rooted native plants, helps to retain surface water and give it time to infiltrate into the ground.

**Stream Edge Projects:** Infiltration berms were constructed near the stream bank to capture the first 1 ¼ inches of stormwater runoff. The planting areas include a mix of loam, sand and compost and are planted with native sedges and flowers. The project also includes the planting of native trees, shrubs, grasses and flowers to encourage wildlife habitation. Water level readers and groundwater monitoring wells give information on discharge amounts and water quality.

