

BMP: Restoration

Arkansas River Coalition

Bank Restoration, Rain Gardens, Outdoor Classrooms, Interpretive Signage

The Arkansas River Coalition has funded and provided many volunteers for several restoration projects along the banks of the River as well as the Little Arkansas, which flows directly into the Arkansas in the heart of Wichita. Detailed information about these projects is attached to this application. Multiple bank stabilization projects have been implemented, educational and interpretive signage has been added, “no mow” zones have been established and are visibly signed, and several demonstration rain gardens have been designed and planted to both educate and improve water quality. One rain garden also functions as an outdoor classroom on the banks of the river!

Little Arkansas River at North High School: Rain Garden

The east bank of the Little Arkansas River was re-planted with native grasses and wildflowers on next to Wichita USD 259 North High School between 13th and 18th streets, including a rain garden. Interpretive signage was placed discussing the project and how rain gardens can improve water quality.



Riverside Park: Bank Restoration

Riverside Park is home to the Kansas Wildlife Exhibit, which features over 25 species of wildlife, including beavers, red fox, porcupine, hawks, owls and more. In 2013, a ½ mile portion of the Little Arkansas River bank was replanted with native grasses and wildflowers to deter damage from the urban goose population, reduce bank erosion, improve water quality and beautify the area for visitors to the park. This planting also functions as a demonstration area to inspire future projects in Wichita as well as other communities.



These photos show a few of our happy, hardworking volunteers and the project's progression as the plantings grew and bloomed.



Rain Garden and outdoor classroom at “The Troll”

A source of local legend and created by local artist Constance Ernatt, “The Troll” is a 7-foot tall goblin viewable from both sidewalk level and from above. In 2007, the installation imprisoned this bronze monster within an unused storm drain. Between the Troll’s prison and the river lies a newly renovated outdoor classroom and rain garden demonstration area installed by the Arkansas River Coalition and several other funding partners. Plantings were done by volunteers from the Wichita Master Gardeners, and interpretive signage was installed. The rain garden and classroom are visible from the walking path around the River in downtown Wichita.



Before the garden was renovated and replanted. “The Troll” is visible from the black grate in the center top of this photo.

Large limestone boulders were placed to arrange seating in the outdoor classroom.



Volunteers from the Arkansas River Coalition and the Master Gardeners installed native plants,

and interpretive signage was installed from both vantage points; from the walking path along the river, and the path that follows above the garden.



Rain Garden: Exploration Place

At Exploration Place, a science museum just downstream, the ARC installed another rain garden display with walking paths and interpretive signage to further connect visitors to the museum with our river and the water cycle.



Bank Restoration and No Mow areas

Approximately one mile of the river bank along a walking path and bike trail near the Lincoln Street access point in downtown Wichita has been replanted with native grasses and wildflowers, and designated as a “no mow” area to decrease erosion, improve water quality, and provide wildlife habitat.



Riverside Erosion Control
Natural Buffer Strip Project

No Mow Zone

Buffer zones of native grasses and vegetation serve as natural pollution filters. These zones soak up storm water run-off, reduce bank erosion, and create habitat for native wildlife.

This restoration project is a cooperative effort of River City WRAPS, the US Environmental Protection Agency, the Wichita Initiative to Renew the Environment and local volunteers. To learn more visit www.rivercitywraps.org and <http://wichita.kumc.edu/care/>

