



Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts
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2018 MAWD Convention – Education and Outreach Table

Native Plant Root Display Rice Creek Watershed District

Rice Creek Watershed District recently re-developed its roots display in cooperation with Blue Thumb and its partners. The display is a great resource for demonstrating the value of native plants and their long roots and the impact on water quality. Minnesota's native plants are adapted to local growing conditions. Their long roots require less water, improve soil health and water quality, and provide important habitat to pollinators and wildlife. They are also beautiful additions to yards.

The display highlights a number of native plants. Individuals are able to pull a string assigned to each plant that extends to the length of that plant's roots. The string for the lead plant is nearly 16 feet long. Other plants include coneflower, little bluestem, and aster, and butterfly weed.

The new display is interactive, easy to carry, and fits on a tabletop. It's engaging for a variety of audiences and easy for a volunteer to use at an event; it doesn't require an "expert." Blue Thumb is a public/private partnership that promotes ecologically functional landscapes – like native plants, raingardens, and restored shorelines – to reduce runoff and improve water quality. Blue Thumb partners can borrow the display or are able to purchase their own. Individuals can learn more about the display or Blue Thumb partnership by visiting www.bluethumb.org or contacting Beth Carreno at Rice Creek Watershed District bcarreno@ricecreek.org or 763-398-3073.

