

June 2013

NATIVE NEWS



WORKSHOP TO HIGHLIGHT MANAGING STORM WATER WITH GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) are one of the largest sources of pollutants in our waterways. Federal law requires communities to eliminate these discharges. The separation of sanitary and storm sewers is an enormously expensive infrastructure challenge. The town of Speedway was able to accomplish 90% of its Long Term Control Plan through the use of green infrastructure to funnel storm water away from the combined sewer system. Rain gardens and swales containing around 20,000 plants from Spence Restoration Nursery infiltrate a large portion of the runoff. Permeable curbs are also part of the successful control plan.



Watering was vital to plant establishment in the Speedway basins during the summer drought of 2012.

On July 11, a workshop will be held in Speedway to highlight the decision-making process, the engineering, construction, and results of this project. The workshop will be particularly useful for storm water and waste water professionals. The workshop will be held at Fisher Elementary School in the heart of the project area. Participants will be able to hear from those involved in the planning and implementation of this project. A walking tour of the surrounding green infrastructure will also be included. Please see the attached flyer for additional workshop and registration details.

PLANT FEATURE: PENSTEMON HIRSUTUS (HAIRY BEARDTONGUE)



It is often difficult to find plants that thrive in hot dry conditions. However, with the increasing use of green building practices that reduce or eliminate irrigation, these conditions are now more commonly encountered in commercial landscapes. Fortunately, there are many native plants that thrive on dry sites. One of the best is Hairy Beardtongue. As its name indicates, the stem and leaves of this plant are covered with fine hairs. Pale lavender flowers peak in late May and early June on 12 to 18 inch high stems. The attractive flowers and compact habit make this a welcome addition to the landscape. It thrives in full sun or partial shade. The foliage remains attractive throughout the growing season. It does not tolerate wet feet, so it should not be utilized in storm water practices unless they are very free-draining.

In a restoration, *Penstemon hirsutus* should be utilized in dry prairie and savanna situations with associates from our low stature prairie mix.