

FINAL REPORT

City of Bellingham
Natural Yard Care Training
Post-Program Participant Survey

July 2020



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INTRODUCTION AND KEY FINDINGS

For nine years the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County have co-sponsored a natural yard care workshop program called the Gardening Green: Sustainable Landscaping workshop series, in contract with WSU Extension. The workshops trained Bellingham and Whatcom County residents to understand and adopt natural yard care practices that protect water quality (e.g., lawn care, sustainable landscaping, pesticide use, etc.). The series has been offered 16 times in nine years (2009-2018) to a total of 225 people. In addition, 125 Whatcom County Master Gardeners have been trained on natural yard care principles as part of their curriculum.

The Gardening Green workshops have relied on two WSU Master Gardeners and one WSU staff member for teaching the class; all three recently retired, necessitating a change in the program structure. The City and County would like to make use of this opportunity to study the workshop and the needs of the community so they can consider best options for a revised plan for the natural yard care program.

Permit Requirements

The City and County are required by the NPDES permit to conduct a new evaluation of the effectiveness of an ongoing behavior change campaign no later than July 1, 2020, documenting lessons learned and recommendations for whether to develop a strategy to (1) more effectively implement the existing campaign; or (2) expand the existing campaign to a new target audience or best management practice (BMP); or (3) develop a strategy for a new target audience and BMP behavior change campaign. Based on these recommendations, the City and County are required to follow social marketing practices and methods, similar to community-based social marketing, to develop a campaign that is tailored to the community. The campaign must include development of a program evaluation plan by February 1, 2021 and begin implementing that strategy no later than April 1, 2021. By March 31, 2024, the City and County must evaluate and report on (1) changes in understanding and adoption of targeted behaviors resulting from the implementation of the strategy; and (2) any planned or recommended changes to the campaign in order to be more effective.

For the first task related to this project, Applied Research Northwest (ARN) undertook the review of a set of fourteen technical reports from the workshop evaluations as well as a collection of nine reports from jurisdictions around the Puget Sound that have engaged in related watershed-protective programming. The highlights from that literature review and technical report analysis are available under separate cover. Those findings were used to design and implement interviews with 10 graduates of the Gardening

Green program. The interview findings guided the design of an online survey, which was fielded with all of the graduates.

The survey consisted of roughly 30 questions, including six open ended items. The majority of the survey focused on recollection of pledges to implement green gardening practices, actual implementation of the pledged practices, modeling of practices to friends and neighbors, and discussion of what got in the way of implementation. The complete list of gardening practices is included for reference in Appendix B. The full survey instrument is included in Appendix C.

Outreach included an email from the course leaders, followed by individualized invitations to participate sent by ARN. Three reminders were sent as well as a post card from the City. In the end, 108 of the 225 workshop participants completed the survey for a response rate of 48%.

We were hopeful for a higher response rate, given the relatively clean contact list and personal relationships established in the class. However, a response rate of nearly half would be considered excellent under most circumstances. Program leaders should feel confident making decisions based on the information that they have collected as supplement to their existing personal knowledge and experience. For more details on the research methods see Appendix A.

The findings from the survey are presented in this report.

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Key findings regarding program outcomes, barriers, and recommendations are summarized here.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

A review of the detailed findings identified four program outcomes that can be called out as important for program decision-making.

Implementation and maintenance of practices is pervasive among the past participants who responded to the survey.

- Pledging to implement in a large variety of categories was common; 74% of participants *pledged* to implement practices in 7 of 8 categories of natural yard care.
- 96% of the participants *implemented* natural yard care practices after the course was completed.
- 95% of practices pledged were implemented

Moving was not a deterrent to continuing practices they had learned.

Sixteen of the participants reported moving since taking the course. All but those who had no yard at their new residence had implemented Green Gardening practices at their new residence.

“Right plant, right place, right techniques” was the easiest set of practices to implement

Every class participant who pledged to use “right plant, right place, right techniques” said they were successful in following through with that pledge (100%). Strong implementation was also seen in “protect healthy soil function” (98%) and “low impact maintenance and integrated pest management” (96%) practices.

Diffusion of information from participants was common.

Nearly all respondents (91%) had talked to one or more friends about the practices they implemented *three or more times*, with 68% of those also *always* or *often* describing the reason they were implementing them. Not only that, most (63%) had helped a friend or neighbor implement a practice on their own property -- most who did so, did it more than once.

BARRIERS

While initial implementation went very well, nearly a third (28%) of participants had some difficulty maintaining the practices they implemented. Stormwater management and energy conservation were the least adopted and most challenging categories.

Combined, the lack of pledging and difficulty implementing resulted in just 60% of participants being able to implement stormwater management practices (77% of those who pledged to implement). Energy conservation went better with 68% able to implement (which was 94% of those who pledged implementation). Further exploration is needed to determine why these categories of behaviors were least likely to be adopted and suffer the most troubles in implementation and maintenance.

Broad findings about barriers are discussed in the Recommendations below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Green Gardening program is a good model for reaching dedicated citizens and educating them about sustainable yard care practices that protect water quality. Not only did participants execute most practices at home, many also told others, helped others, and took practices with them when they moved. The program demonstrated development of resilient behaviors with diffusion that reached many others.

That said, there were some issues that arose for participants. They included:

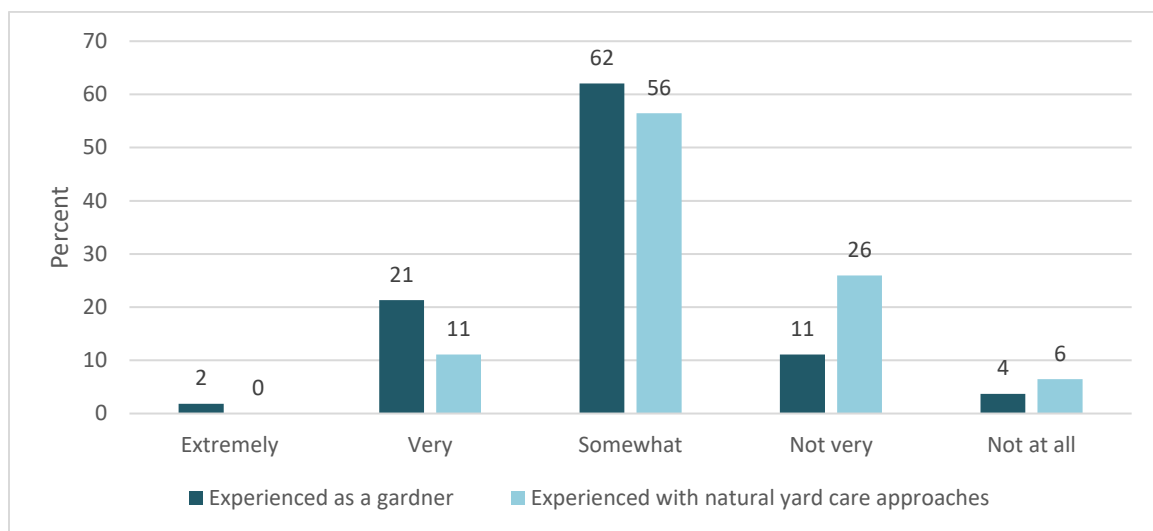
- Needing assistance finding supplies and supporting implementation after the course was through
- Having unrealistic expectations. The volume of work required, particularly with regard to hand pulling weeds and more generally the time and money to implement some practices surprised and negatively impacted some participants.
- Physically demanding work. Many of the participants mentioned the labor intensiveness and time it takes to implement and maintain practices as a barrier to maintaining those practices.

Participants had many specific suggestions about how to move forward with the program. In addition to their suggestions, we recommend a review of social science theory that informs informal environmental education programs for behavior change. Those theories should point to meaningful options for continuing the program under a new model. Any planning should involve co-design with people from the potential participant population.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Respondents were asked about their experience as a gardener or with natural yard care before they took the Gardening Green class. Twenty-three percent said they were *extremely* or *very experienced* gardeners before taking the class; a smaller portion (11%) said they were *very experienced* with natural yard care approaches. About a third (32%) said they were *not very* or *not at all experienced* with natural yard care.

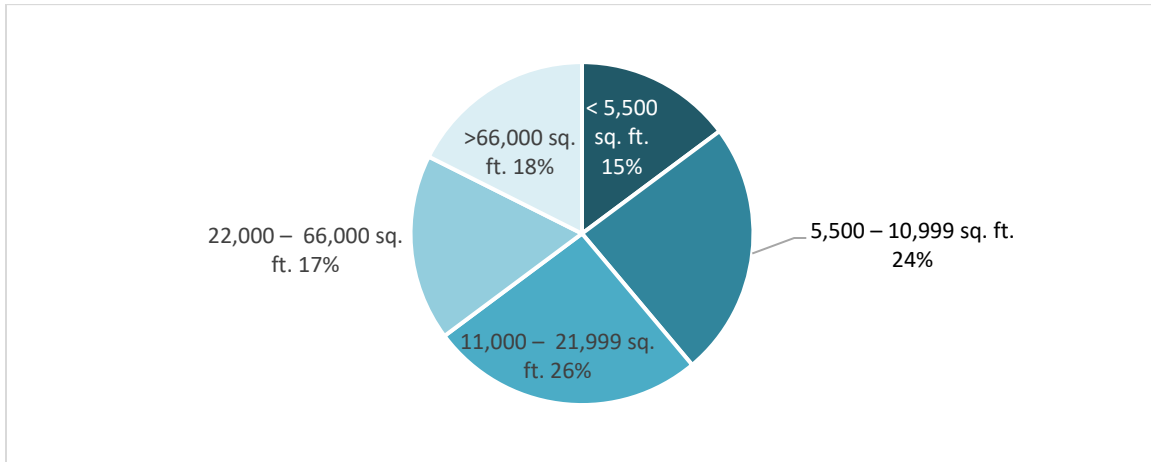
Figure 1. Prior to taking the Gardening Green class, how experienced were you as a gardener? How experienced were you with natural yard care approaches to gardening?



n=108

Respondents were asked about the size of their property where they lived when they took the class. Figure 2 shows that participants were working with a wide range of property sizes, with half (50%) describing property between 5,500 and 22,000 square feet (an average or medium-sized city lot). Only 15% (16 respondents) were working with property less than 5,500 square feet (small city lot), and the remainder (35%) were on property of 22,000 (half an acre) or more.

Figure 2. What size was the property where you lived when you took the Gardening Green class?

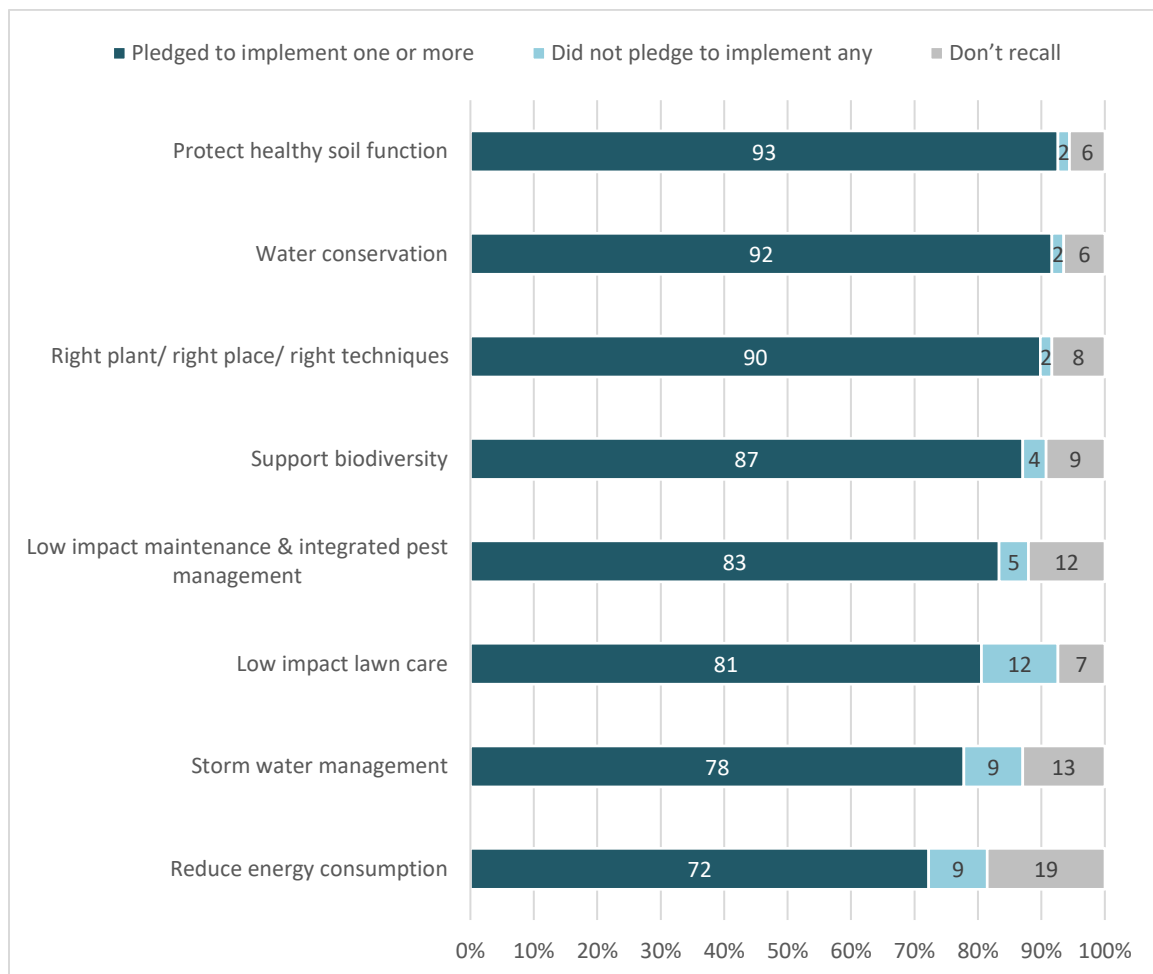


PRACTICES PLEDGED, IMPLEMENTED, AND MAINTAINED

Respondents were presented with the list of eight categories of natural yard care practices and asked if they remember pledging to implement any of the practices. Respondents recalled pledging most categories; 74% of the respondents identified seven of the eight categories as areas that they recall pledging to make changes (56% identified all eight).

Over 90% of the respondents said they pledged to use strategies to protect healthy soil function. A similar proportion pledged to implement strategies to conserve water. The areas that respondents were least likely to remember pledging to change was storm water management and reducing energy consumption.

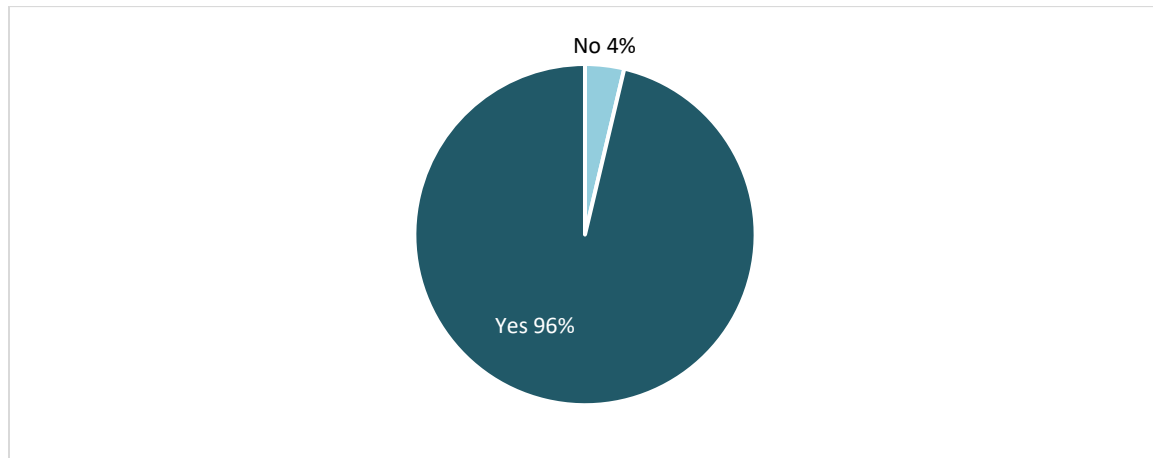
Figure 3. Do you remember pledging to implement any of the practices?



n=108

The vast majority of respondents (96%) said they were able to implement at least some of the natural yard care practices that they pledged; four respondents were unable to implement any practices.

Figure 4. Were you able to implement any of the natural yard care practices?



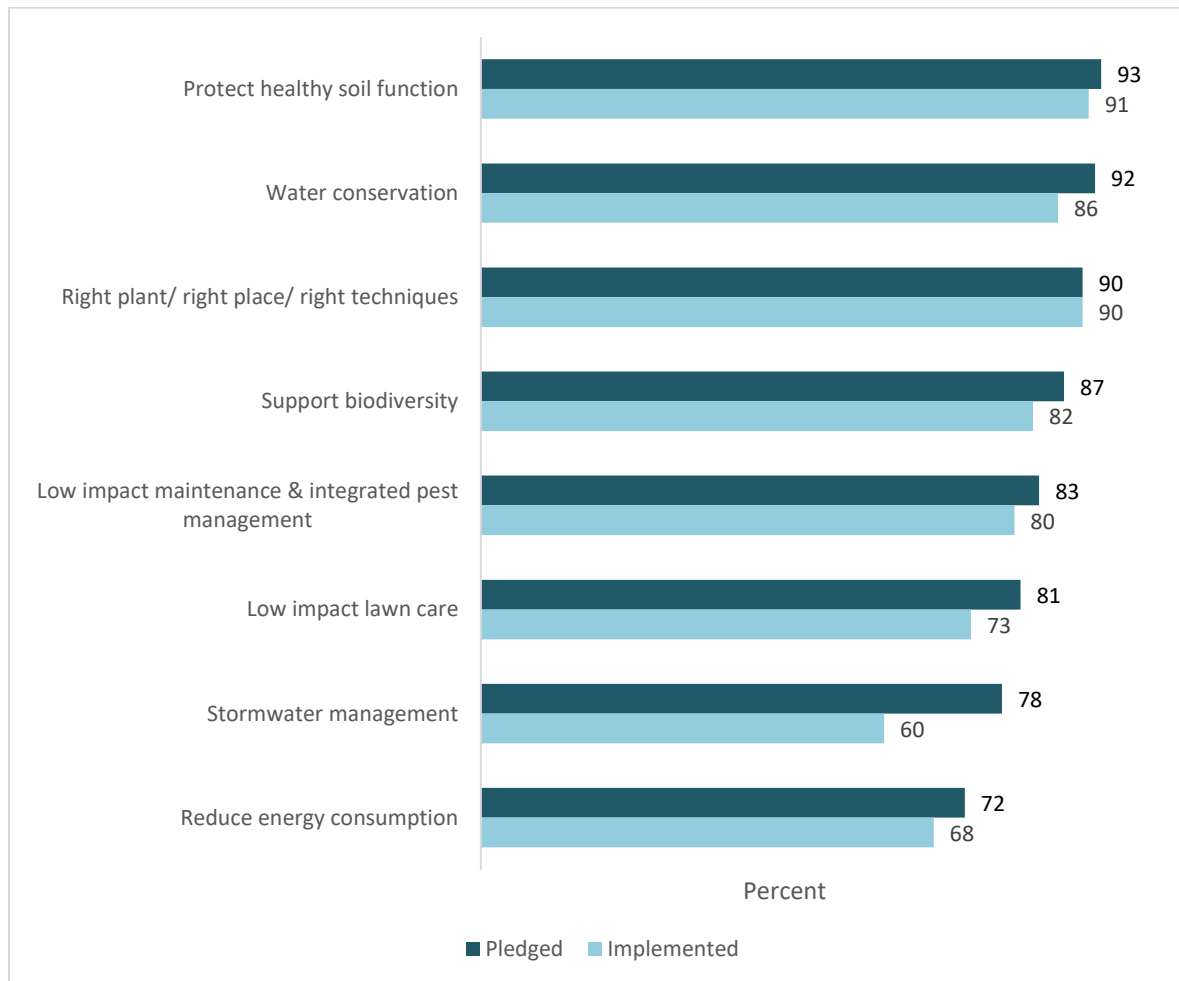
n=108

Analysis did not find anything to indicate that how long ago they took the class would make an impact on how they answered this question, though with such a high rate of implementation this would be difficult to detect statistically. Every respondent who took the workshop in the first five years it was offered (2009-2014) said that they were able to implement at least some of the practices.

There was no pattern among the four who responded they were unable to implement the practices. One moved to an apartment shortly after completing the class. Another shares the yard work with their spouse whose interests may have prohibited implementation. One mentioned health problems interfering, but also mentioned “being overwhelmed with the information in the class.” Although this is a single response, it suggests that the volume of information may be more than some participants can navigate. There may be an audience for a shorter, more focused class. Similarly, there may be a need for some follow up to help participants to plan and execute their implementation.

Figure 5 shows which types of natural yard care practices were implemented, alongside which ones were pledged. Note that the same proportion of respondents pledged and implemented right plant/right place techniques (90%). Stormwater management yielded the biggest discrepancy between pledging (78%) and implementation (60%).

Figure 5. Categories of practices pledged and implemented



n=108

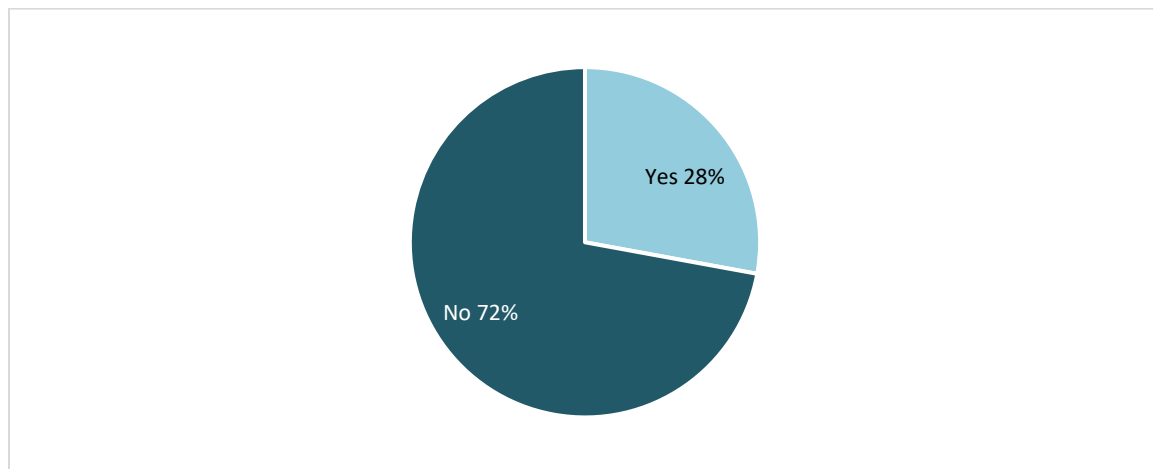
Table 1 shows a summary of how successful the workshop participants were in implementing the practices by dividing the number of implemented categories by the number of pledged categories. Participants said they implemented anywhere from zero to four times the number of categories that they pledged. On average, they implemented 95% of their pledged categories.

Table 1. Success metric: percent of pledged categories that were implemented

	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Implemented practices	95%	100%	0%	400%

About one-quarter of the participants said that they have had some difficulties maintaining at least some of the practices they implemented (28%).

Figure 6. Have you had any difficulty maintaining any of the practices you implemented?



n=104 participants who implemented changes

Analysis did not find indication that the time that has passed since taking the class has made an impact on how they answered this question. The proportion of respondents who had difficulty maintaining practices has been very consistent across the years.

Respondents were asked to describe the barriers they have faced. The most common challenge described by respondents was weeding and the problem of invasive plants. Hand pulling weeds was noted as being time and labor intensive. There is a note of discouragement in some of their responses:

“I garden on a site that was abandoned for a couple of decades after being a pasture for many years. The perennial weed problem is extremely difficult to control using any method, particularly hand weeding.”

Despite the popularity and ease of “right plant right place,” several described running into problems with native plants. Two mentioned having difficulty finding native plants; two mentioned preferring some non-native plants. One noted that the native itself is invasive and squeezing out other natives.

“It’s a challenge balancing the desire for a “pretty” plant that may not be native or best fit. Also fear of not doing the best thing has often kept me from doing anything (I.e. finishing plantings for good coverage and weed control).”

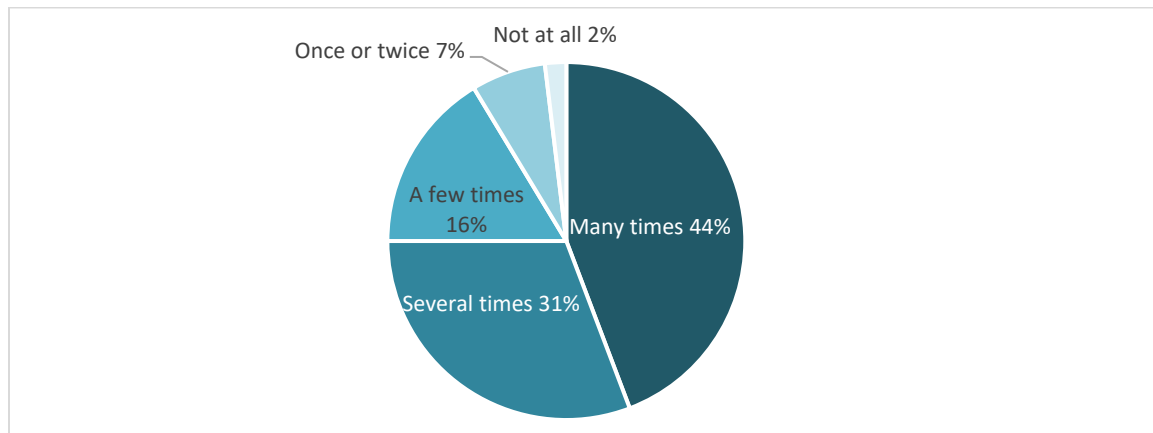
Other themes included:

- **Pests** Deer destroyed a number of participants’ plantings. Slugs, rats, and carpenter ants were also mentioned.
- **Labor** was mentioned with regard to hand weeding but also mulching.
- **Difficulty finding products** Two mentioned difficulty finding supplies like rain barrels, native/non-invasive plants, environmentally friendly products. One also mentioned difficulty finding landscapers who were well-versed in natural care practices.
- **Co-habitants** two mentioned the challenge of having a spouse who was differently motivated.

DIFFUSION OF INFORMATION

An important facet of the Gardening Green class was the expectation that participants would serve as a conduit to the larger community, sharing what they learned to friend and neighbors. Figure 7 shows that most of the participants surveyed spoke with friends or neighbors at least a few times (91%).

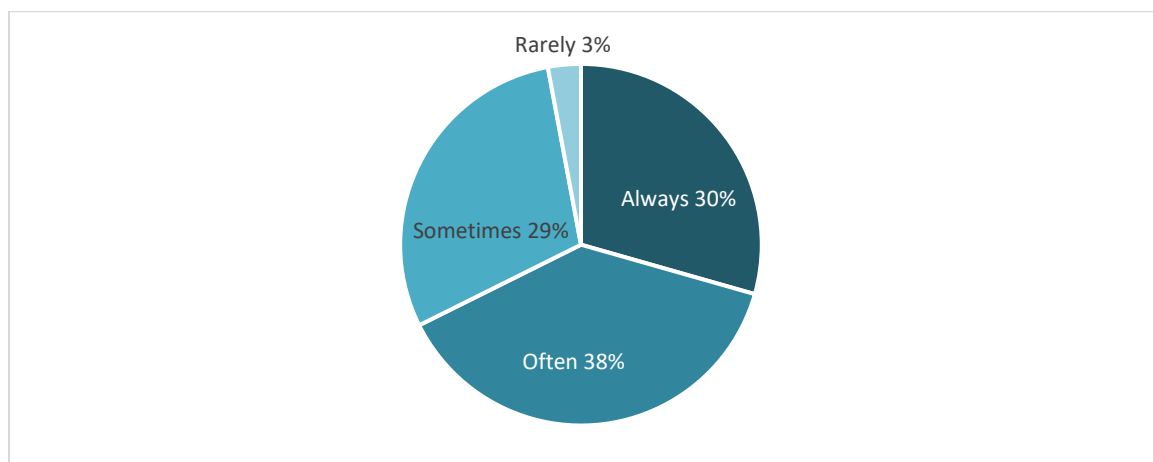
Figure 7. How many times, if at all, did you talk to one or more friends or neighbors about the practices you implemented?



n=104 participants who implemented changes

When participants did share information with friends or neighbors about the yard care practices they were implementing, about two thirds (68%) said they *often* or *always* described why they were implementing these practices (e.g. to conserve water, reduce energy consumption, etc.).

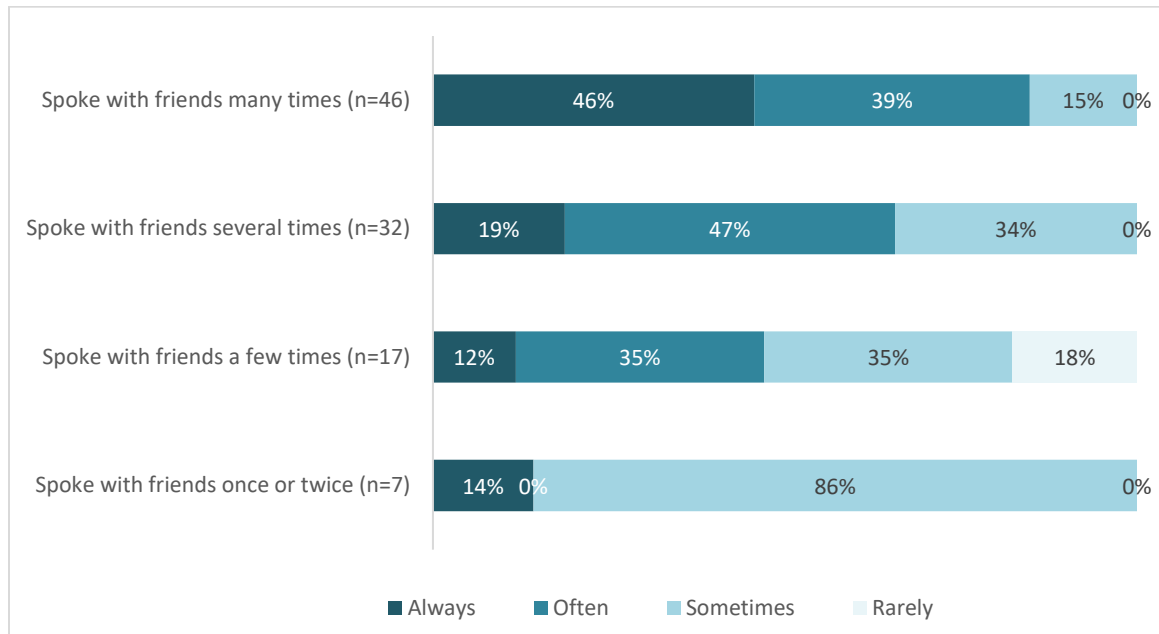
Figure 8. When you talked with friends or neighbors about the practices you implemented, how often, if at all, did you describe why you were implementing them?



n=102 participants who talked with friends about practices implemented

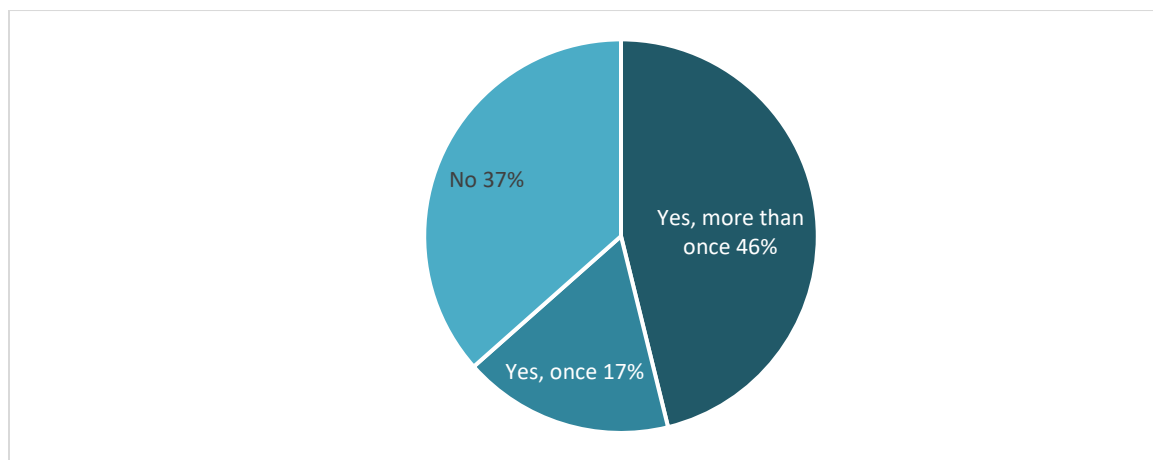
Participants who spoke the most frequently with friends or neighbors about the practices they implemented tended to be the ones to explain why they were implementing.

Figure 9. Consistency of explaining environmental purpose, grouped by frequency of speaking with friends about new gardening practices



Since finishing the class, almost half (46%) had demonstrated a practice for a friend or neighbor or helped someone else implement the practice on their own property.

Figure 10. Since completing the Gardening Green class, have you ever demonstrated the practice for a friend or neighbor or helped them implement the practice on their own property?

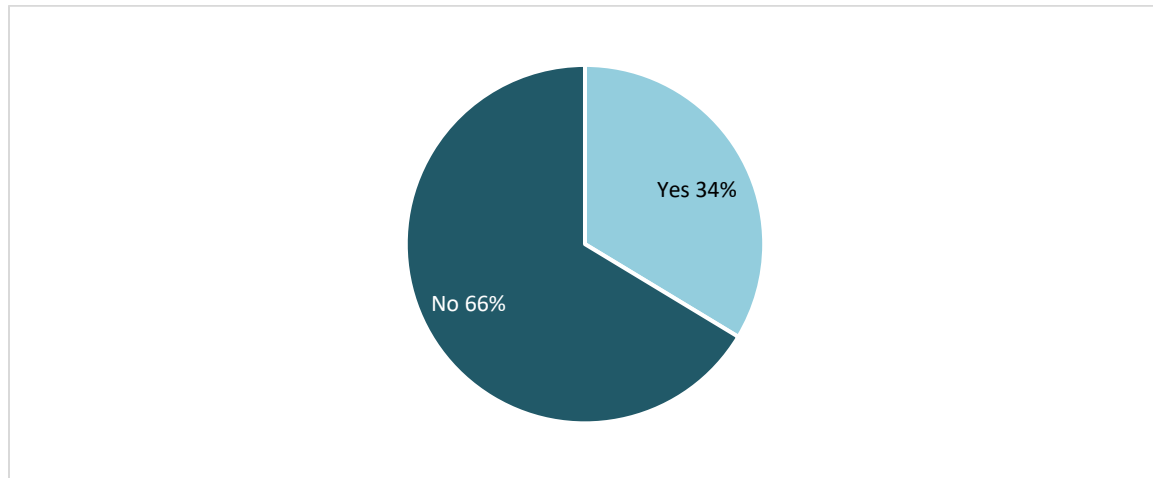


n=104 participants who implemented changes

BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

About one-third said there were practices that they pledged to do but were unable to implement.

Figure 11. Were there any practices that you had pledged to do but were unable to implement?



n=104 participants who implemented changes

This question did not work as intended but revealed several useful bits of information about the program. Many mentioned what they were unable to implement but did not describe what got in their way. This could be an opportunity for more exploration in subsequent research.

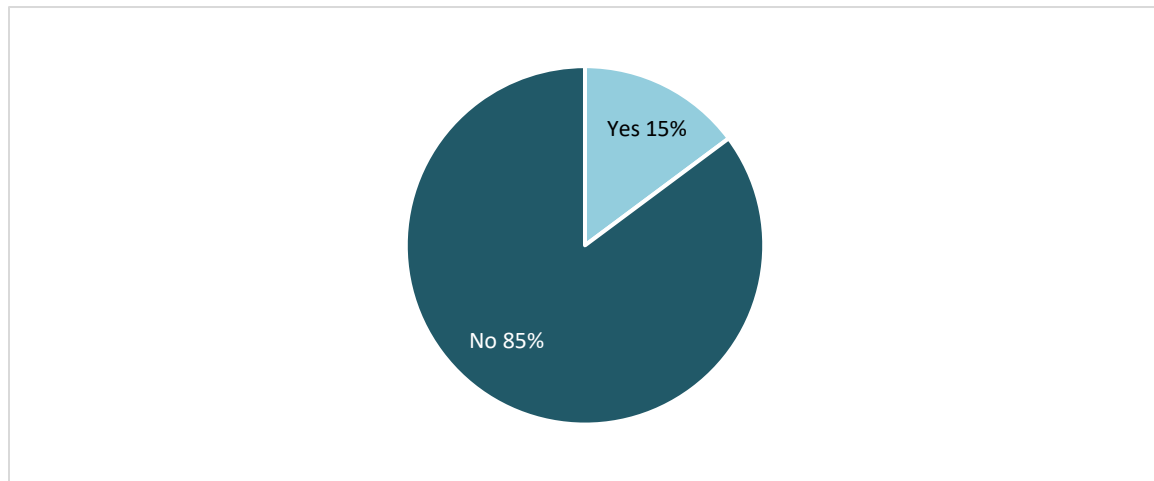
Several people mentioned here that they did not remember taking the pledge or what they pledged.

A lack of time was the most common reason people cited for not implementing changes (eight mentioned it) followed by cost (mentioned by three). Other issues related to other people (family, landlord) or health issues. Trees were a challenge for two.

PERSISTENCE OF PRACTICES AFTER MOVING

Fifteen percent of the respondents (sixteen people) said that they have moved since completing the class.

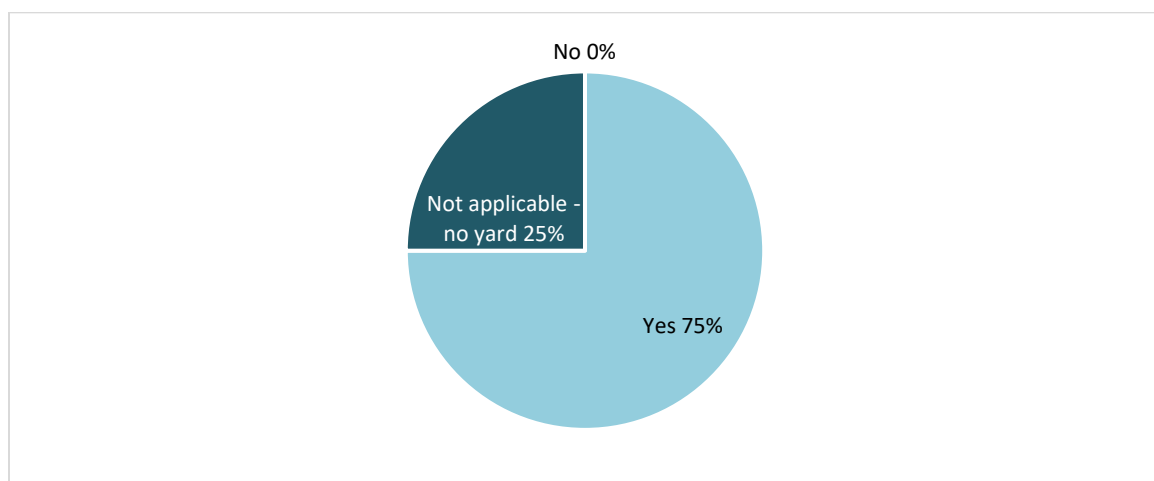
Figure 12. Have you moved since you completed the Gardening Green class?



n=108

All the participants who moved said they implemented natural yard care practices at their current residence, except for those who had no yard (four people).

Figure 13. Have you implemented any natural yard care practices at your current residence?

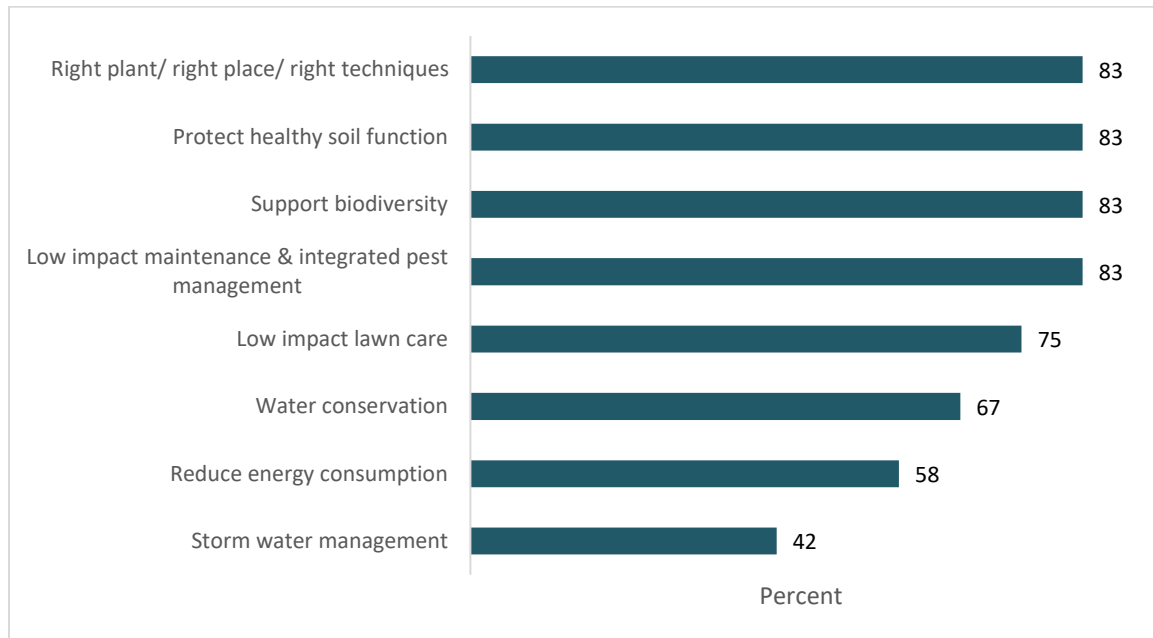


n=16 participants who moved since completing the class

Respondents who moved were asked to identify the categories of natural yard care practices that they have implemented at their current residence. The distribution is very

similar to that of the original pledges, though storm water management practices fell to the bottom with just 42% implementing.

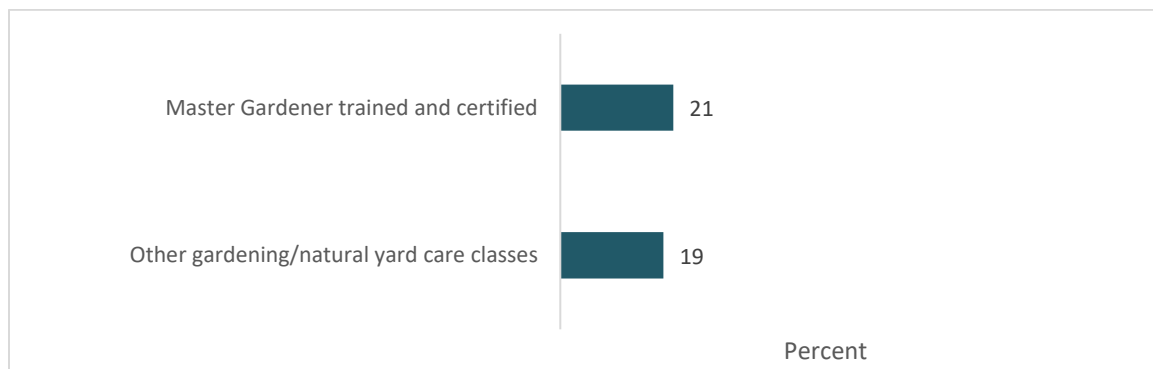
Figure 14. In which category/categories did you implement natural yard care practices at your current residence?



n=12 participants who moved since completing the class and implemented natural yard care practices at new residence

Persistence might also be measured in participants' predilections for seeking out new learning. Roughly one in five participants went on to become trained and certified as Master Gardeners, and about the same proportion continued learning through other gardening and natural yard care classes.

Figure 15. Taken any other classes since completing Gardening Green?



n=108

PARTICIPANT RECOMMENDATIONS

Survey participants were asked to reflect on their most immediate community (friends and neighbors) and to consider what parts of the Gardening Green class would be best for those who may be less experienced with gardening. The most frequent topic was **native plants or right plant/right place techniques**. Nearly half of the comments (51 out of 108) touched on that component. **Chemicals** (pesticides and fertilizers) were also mentioned frequently by about 25 respondents. Water conservation, soil management, and lawn reduction were also popular mentions.

“Organic practices, local native plants and their value, water conservation, soil maintenance, pretty much all of the topics covered. It was an excellent class.”

Eight respondents mentioned the **site visits/ field trips** as useful.

“Field trips to successful, mature native yards are very helpful because folks can look around and ask questions.”

A handful commented on how important it is to teach all of the course content, and that the basic natural yard care practices are interconnected and less impactful in isolation. However, there was some mention about how it might be appealing to more people if the course was not such a big investment in terms of time.

“The length of the program may be prohibitive for people who work. Maybe a shortened version or on a Saturday morning for several months would work for them. I have several friends who would be interested if it was more accessible.”

“Some less experienced may want a shorter class, less days. Hard to commit to that many hours. Maybe record some of the classes so people can view online.”

Respondents were also asked if there were topics that should be left out. The few comments that specified content to leave out mentioned landscape design, soil classifications, and site mapping. Rain gardens, French drains, cisterns were mentioned as too complicated or expensive.

“I would not change the curriculum at all as each student had particular goals and objectives in mind. I thought the overview from A-Z was quite appropriate and presented very well. I refer to my course reference materials and notes often.”

Participants were asked if there was anything else they recommend to make learning about natural yard care more attractive to more people. Some respondents focused on how to make the class more appealing. Several mentioned increased publicity, different locations for advertising, and using social media to get the word out. Others mentioned keeping the class free/low cost.

Some participants offered other useful suggestions:

- Show people that it is easier and more cost effective than traditional yard care practices
- Use library sessions to cover key essentials
- Offer a shortened, online version of the class
- Community groups/clubs to work in each other's yards; connect high schoolers to seniors who need gardening assistance.
- Contests for gardening green practices; promote it on the City of Bellingham website
- Add mentoring component as follow up to the classes

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

NPDES Permitting activities are intended to help mitigate problems of pollution carried to Lake Whatcom and other waterways in Whatcom County through stormwater. The Green Gardening Program made substantial inroads by helping property owners around the county learn impactful techniques for avoiding the use of chemicals and nutrients that harm water quality and for managing stormwater on their property by establishing and maintaining resilient landscapes.

As program managers look to the future several approaches would be beneficial to consider during the planning process.

HUMAN NATURE AND PROGRAM DESIGN

Using social science theory to support program redesign will enable program managers to avoid missteps into decisions that may inhibit the success of the programming. Here we lay out a brief discussion of applicable portions of Marc Stern's new book Social Science Theory for Environmental Sustainability.

Cognitive biases

Despite what many people think, humans have a good deal of non-rational processes that impact our learning, decision making and behavior. For example, there are three cognitive limitations that together can influence people's willingness and ability to take on new behaviors:

1. We tend to give more weight to ideas that we can easily recall having seen before (*availability heuristic*).
2. We tend to notice things that align with our existing thinking and experiences (*confirmation bias*), which when combined with the availability heuristic, can make marketing, messaging and promotion more challenging.
3. We tend to follow the behavior of others who are important to us (*normative bias*). Establishing oneself as part of a group that engages in specific behaviors is very influential.

Creating experiences and offering compelling examples of the kinds of behaviors and results they create can help combat more familiar or normative but less beneficial yard care practices. People also tend to prefer stories to statistics. While numbers are necessary, a compelling story that "captures attention" and conveys emotions will

produce more resilient memories and understanding, and hence, motivation and follow through.

Setting course material up for learning success

A second group of cognitive biases also is relevant to this programming, and that has to do with how people remember information. People have limited ability to remember more than a few “chunks” of information at a time, and the more complex the information the fewer chunks that can be part of our working memory. Prioritizing key ideas is critical, as is building context around those ideas that provides more memorable connections (e.g. using a compelling story to engage people in understanding the ideas).

Related to *chunking* memory is the limits involved in *choice overload*. “Offering people too many choices may be paralyzing,” writes Stern, particularly where there is uncertainty. “Offering fewer options can lead to greater sales and higher levels of enrollment.” (Stern, p. 15).

Each of these characteristics suggests that a less comprehensive program could produce stronger outcomes.

Emotions play a role

Finally, it is important to remember that emotions are a part of people’s decision making. Program pieces should not shy away from acknowledging that feelings may drive people toward or away from certain actions. For example, some participants reluctantly admitted to their preference for ornamental plants over native plants, their sense of burden in completing or starting projects, or their need to negotiate and compromise with others in their household over how the yard would be cared for. This can be powerful information if these emotional aspects of managing change in the yard are well addressed in the new incarnation of Gardening Green.

Specific theories to inform program design

Stern groups a set of social science theories under the heading Theories of Motivation, Cognition and Reasoning. Among them are five that are particularly pertinent to Gardening Green and its goals.

Self-determination theory

Self-determination theory posits that people are motivated by their personal interests and values. Motivation derived by extrinsic factors (rewards, punishments, rules) is less resilient. Intrinsic motivation can be enhanced by increasing people’s sense of

competence, providing autonomy, and creating a sense of connection to others in a community.

What are the intrinsic motivators for potential participants? This is likely different depending on the characteristics of the participants, so segmenting participant groups will be helpful. Identifying intrinsic motivations should be followed by development of some strategies to enhance participants' sense of connection to those motivators by deliberately linking them to the participants' personal interests and values. Intrinsic motivation is also enhanced when people feel competent, autonomous (which can be achieved by offering them choices), and connected – for example to other people in their reference group.

Social norm theory & Norm activation theory

These two theories focus on people's tendency to do what others are doing, particularly those who are in the subject's reference group (friends, family, community members) or who they deem important (such as celebrities and other leaders). Social norms come from either *prescriptive* ideas about things that we should be doing or thinking or simply *descriptive* observations of what others are actually doing. Following norms usually results in overt rewards or the absence of punishment.

Making sure that program promotion and content does not violate norms of the groups who are being recruited is critical to getting their buy-in to the learning process. Aligning outreach and program materials with common behaviors that are generally met with approval is helpful. It is beneficial to spend some time with the intended audience to identify relevant norms that should be taken under consideration in the program design.

Norm activation takes our understanding of norms a step further. In order to move people toward pro-environmental behavior, they first must hold altruistic values regarding the environment (or toward the *biosphere* as Stern states). That is, they must first be interested in engaging in behavior that provides a benefit to more people than just themselves. Self-interest can certainly be addressed, but people who primarily value their own benefit, whether or not it's at the expense of others, generally do not engage in pro-environmental behaviors.

Beginning with people who have program-aligned, altruistic values is important in order to move them toward adopting new sustainable behaviors. One way to identify these people is to look for common shared behaviors, such as park visitation and outdoor recreation or other pro-environmental practices they may already use. Once they become aware of consequences of specific practices, they will decide whether or not

they want to take responsibility for their contribution to the problem/solution. If they do, it becomes a “personal norm,” which is especially useful for hard-to-observe behaviors such as recycling, conserving water, or picking up dog waste at home.

How can the program design take advantage of norm activation and social norm theory? First, Stern recommends being bold in your communications. “Provide an unequivocal description of the problem and its consequences,” he begins. “Communicate what the person can do to solve the problem and provide an argument that their actions will make a difference on an outcome they care about.” (p. 33).

The compliment to norm activation is Cognitive Dissonance theory, which can be used to highlight problematic behaviors that are in conflict with the values and interests of the group. As long as the messenger is a trusted source and the audience is motivated, these communications can be very effective. Used together, norm activation and cognitive dissonance can produce very persuasive programming.

Other recommendations:

1. Have participants sign or make verbal commitments, particularly those that will be made public, to enhance their sense of identity and commitment.
2. Use “you” in communications to increase the recipients’ sense of responsibility.
3. Cultivate feelings of pride in people for following through and maintaining their practices (this ties to the cognitive bias for emotional motivators).
4. Craft messages that align strongly with norms of environmental stewardships, the more local, the better.
5. Recruit people from participants’ reference groups to act as spokespeople, mentors, and role models to take advantage of norm activation traits. For example, parents of young children, retirees, or people from ethnic and religious cultures may help others with similar traits aspire to the practices.

Elaboration likelihood model

This theoretical model is useful in planning how messages and curriculum are laid out. The direct argument for engaging in a behavior may or may not make sense to people. However, if there are also “peripheral cues” present, people may pick up a behavior in spite of their inability or unwillingness to attend to the direct argument.

For example, people may not understand that dog waste pollutes the watershed, but if they see dog waste bags available in many areas and posted signs reminding people to pick up after their dogs and furthermore they see others engaging in this behavior, they are much more likely to pick up their dog’s waste than if there were not peripheral cues.

Similarly, the Green Gardening program can support participants by providing peripheral cues, particularly for difficult or complex behaviors. Advertising watershed-friendly yard care materials, posting signs regarding restrictions on the use of watershed damaging practices, providing interviews for radio listeners, op-eds/articles for local newspapers and bus billboards to reinforce the messages of what to do/not do and why will support the likelihood that people familiar with your program's content will adopt and persist in their behaviors. A comprehensive, ongoing marketing plan will support your program participants and probably entice new participants to find out what is going on!

Theory of planned behavior

The theory of planned behavior considers that people come to a new set of ideas with pre-existing beliefs. They have beliefs about norms, beliefs about behaviors and beliefs about the amount of control they have over the outcomes of their behaviors. When these beliefs combine to create positive attitudes (this is normal/good, it's effective, I am able to do it) they are more likely to engage in specific ways. Building a program that enhances people's positive beliefs is essential. However, the best programs also take into account *intervening factors* which might prevent an otherwise motivated person from executing the desired practices.

This may sound familiar. Intervening factors might be called *barriers*. Social Marketing practices are helpful in this realm – for example by providing reminders and products to remove barriers of forgetting or being unprepared.

Diffusion theory

Gardening Green has already shown a strong propensity for diffusion of practices with most participants talking with others about their projects, demonstrating them and in some cases helping others to implement projects. Participants in the program might be classified as “early adopters” who enjoy learning about novel information from expert sources. Those who are less likely to show up for a program are more likely to be influenced by the interpersonal engagement of a friend, neighbor or relative, so taking into account the potential for diffusion of information from participants to others is very important in the program design process.

As the Gardening Green program looks at segments, consider that each segment may have leaders who show up to learn. If those leaders are connected to disparate social circles, then diffusion of the program will span diverse sectors of the community. If they are further connected to one another, the practices can be reinforced across sectors.

What kinds of behaviors lead to stronger diffusion effects? Ones that are easy to understand and implement, that look “normal”, with few barriers, low cost, and clear benefits.

In the program redesign, managers might opt to focus on one thing that is likely to produce strong diffusion, and for that we can look to the results of this study: plantings (right plant/right place/right technique) had the greatest success with this group, which indicates it is most likely easier to do with plenty of intrinsic benefits.

Anchoring the class around that topic would be beneficial for all the reasons discussed above. For participants there can be added practices addressed – use of trees, lawn removal, integrated pest management etc., but the key is right plant/right place/right technique that pulls it all together.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Participant recommendations were specific and clear and ought to be taken into consideration as the program is remodeled. Time, cost (both in terms of expense and physical difficulty) and complexity were key drivers inhibiting participants from implementing and maintaining natural yard care practices. Past participants recommendations suggest:

1. Shorter course
2. Tighter focus
3. Varied delivery methods

Additional research could yield some beneficial findings and elaboration of limitations of the class. The response rate for this study leaves a fairly large pool of people's experiences unexplored. Following up with a set of them to examine prevalence and perhaps undocumented barriers could be fruitful. We recommend reaching out to non-respondents to check our estimates of the prevalence of specific practices and the problems people may have encountered.

Changing the content of the course to match the needs of homeowners at different times of year is likely to be helpful. Seasonality can be a draw as people look for information when they are near the time of implementing a behavior. For example, watering gets demanding mid-summer – a great time to talk about water conservation techniques including lawn removal and a focus on drought resistant plants. Spring coursework could help people identify weeds, discuss how to use hand weeding to manage them, how to effectively manage native plants that become invasive. Fall could look at planting and clean up practices that benefit birds and insects.

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA QUALITY

Table A.1 shows how survey respondents were well distributed across the nine years of workshops, with slightly heavier representation from the most recent years. All together 48% of participants contacted responded to the request for information.

A.1

Year	# of classes	All class participants		Survey respondents	
		<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
2009	2	13	6%	3	3%
2010	3	25	11%	9	8%
2012	1	15	7%	6	6%
2013	2	23	10%	7	6%
2014	2	27	12%	13	12%
2015	2	28	12%	13	12%
2016	3	30	13%	17	16%
2017	2	32	14%	17	16%
2018	2	33	15%	19	18%
Missing				4	4%
Total		226		108	

72% of the class participants were living in Bellingham at the time of the class; 68% of those participants responded to the survey.

A.2

City	All class participants		Survey respondents	
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Bellingham	162	72%	73	68%
Blaine	20	9%	13	12%
Ferndale	18	8%	7	6%
Sedro Woolley	3	1%	3	3%
Custer	4	2%	2	2%
Lynden	3	1%	2	2%
Anacortes	1	0%	1	1%
Bow	1	0%	1	1%
Everson	1	0%	1	1%
Mt Vernon	2	1%	1	1%
Acme	2	1%	0	0%
Birch Bay	1	0%	0	0%
Deming	2	1%	0	0%
Maple Falls	1	0%	0	0%
Samish Island	1	0%	0	0%
Lummi Island	2	1%	0	0%
Missing	2	1%	4	4%
Total	226		108	

Respondents were identified by which entity provided the class set which they took.
Shown below:

A.3

Missing	10
City	46
County	52
Total	108

The distribution of respondents by parcel size is provided below.

A.4

Roughly the size of a small city lot (1/8 acre or less, under 5,500 sq. ft.)	16	14.8
Roughly the size of an average city lot (1/8 to 1/4 acre, 5,500 –under 11,000 sq. ft.)	26	24.1
Roughly the size of a medium city lot (1/4 to 1/2 acre, 11,000 – under 22,000 sq. ft.)	28	25.9
Roughly the size of a large city lot (1/2 to 1.5 acres, 22,000 – under 66,000 sq. ft.)	19	17.6
1.5 acres or more (over 66,000 sq. ft.)	19	17.6
Total	108	100.0

APPENDIX B: BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES PLEDGES

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

Maintain 3 or more layers of canopy cover in landscape beds.
Plant more trees including conifers.
Locate landscape beds or French drains to intercept runoff at the base of slopes.
Locate landscape beds to capture runoff from lawn areas.
Locate landscape beds (can be on mounded soil) around the property perimeter to create a final barrier to run-off.
Direct run-off from impervious surfaces to densely vegetated landscape beds with healthy soil that can infiltrate it.
Remove impervious surfaces & replace them with pervious ones.
Moderate steep slopes with terracing to slow down run-off & allow the soil to absorb it & prevent erosion.
Put French drains under your paths, especially in established landscapes or lawns to enhance infiltration.
Put curves in paths that go downhill to slow rainwater runoff so it can be absorbed into the soil.
Expand the size of densely vegetated landscape beds to reduce lawn area.
Create native plant buffers near all water resources.
Create a woodland area.
Infiltrate run-off from vegetable gardens, covered compost piles & dog kennels to capture nutrients in run-off.
Install a dry well, dispersion trench, French drain, seasonal pond or rain garden to infiltrate rooftop storm water.
Reduce or eliminate your lawn.
Install a rain barrel or cistern for storm water reuse in landscape.

PROTECT HEALTHY SOIL FUNCTION

Compost yard wastes for reuse on landscape beds.
Mimic nature by leaving plant litter where it falls for self-sustaining soil health in permanent landscape beds.
Top-dress soil with compost covered by woody mulch to improve soil function.
Till in 2-3" compost (depth of 8") in areas of <i>severely damaged</i> soil from compaction
Inoculate native plant beds with mycorrhizae.
Maintain a woody mulch cover on all landscape beds to protect soil.
Create pervious paths that are separate from planting areas even through lawn areas to prevent soil compaction.
Feed the soil, not the plants. Reduce/eliminate fertilizer use.

RIGHT PLANT / RIGHT PLACE / RIGHT TECHNIQUES

Group plants by sun exposure and watering needs to reduce plant stress & maintenance.
Use native plants as the backbone of the landscape.
Inspect plants for diseases, pests, & root problems before purchase.
Use the right planting techniques.
Select plants adapted to your climatic zone for hardiness.
Plan for mature size of plants to reduce pruning.

LOW IMPACT LAWN CARE

Establish pathways through lawn areas to reduce soil compaction.
Allow lawns to go dormant in the dry season.
Use eco-lawn as turf alternative.
Use only phosphorus-free fertilizer.
Hand weed lawn or tolerate a few weeds (no weed & feed).
Aerate compacted lawns & add a little compost.
Limit lawn watering to 1" per week including rainwater or less

WATER CONSERVATION

Separate lawn irrigation system from irrigation for trees and shrubs, which need much less frequent watering.
Use smart watering techniques – water in the mornings, water deeply and infrequently to encourage root growth.
Use drip irrigation to water only landscape plants, not weeds.
Use soaker hoses instead of overhead sprinklers.
Plant drought tolerant plants.
Inspect automatic irrigation systems for leaks and adjust sprinkler head direction each monthly. Use a moisture sensor rather than a timer to operate the system.
Reduce need for irrigation by using 3" of mulch and planting 3 or more layers of canopy cover in all landscape beds.

LOW IMPACT MAINTENANCE & INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

Eliminate the use of cosmetic pesticides such as herbicides used for appearance not plant needs.
Reduce the use of all pesticides. Select pest and disease resistant native or plants that are well adapted to region.
Do not fertilize woody plants unless they have been diagnosed as deficient. Use phosphorus-free fertilizer.
Regularly monitor landscape for pests. Hand pick while infestations are small.
Have pests & diseases correctly identified by Master Gardeners at WSU Extension.
Only use slug bait that is safe for pets & wildlife.
Practice tolerance for minor infestations that cover less than 30% of the plant.
Manage not control of pests and diseases. Practice I.P.M.
Remove diseased plants (Clean Green) rather than using pesticides.
Pay attention to "signal words" on pesticides. Use and dispose of according to manufacturer's directions.
Hand weed and mulch to reduce weed seed germination.

SUPPORT BIODIVERSITY

Create a wildlife habitat sanctuary to address the decline in bird, amphibian, and beneficial insect species.
Grow a species rich landscape of regional native plants to address the loss of local flora.
Do not grow noxious weeds or aggressive exotic plants that can escape and crowd out native species.

REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Use hand tools or electric power tools whenever possible and reduce use of gas powered equipment.
Use motion detectors to activate outdoor lights rather than timers.
Plant buffers to block northeast winds in the winter to lower heating needs.
Plant deciduous shade trees on the south & west sides to cool the house & impervious surfaces.

APPENDIX C: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Gardening Green Survey

Thank you for your interest in the Gardening Green program evaluation. Your responses are confidential. They will be used to help the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County make decisions about the program going forward. This survey also helps fulfill a state requirement for our stormwater permit.

1. Prior to taking the Gardening Green class, how experienced were you as a gardener?
☐ Extremely
☐ Very
☐ Somewhat
☐ Not very
☐ Not at all
2. Prior to taking the Gardening Green class, how experienced were you with natural yard care approaches to gardening?
☐ Extremely
☐ Very
☐ Somewhat
☐ Not very
☐ Not at all
3. Have you completed Master Gardener training and certification?
☐ Yes
☐ No
4. Have you taken any other gardening/natural yard care classes since you completed the Gardening Green class?
☐ No
☐ Yes → what class(es) did you take? _____

At the close of the Gardening Green class, participants were asked to take a pledge that they would implement some of the Best Management Practices that they'd learned about. For each of the eight categories of practices listed below, we will ask you if you remember pledging to implement any of the practices, or not. On the following pages, some examples of the practices are listed to help remind you of what you might have pledged to do.

If you have moved since completing the class, please answer the question for the property where you lived when you completed the class.

These are the eight categories of Best Practices:

- Right plant/ right place/ right techniques
- Protect healthy soil function
- Support biodiversity
- Low impact lawn care
- Water conservation
- Reduce energy consumption
- Low impact maintenance & integrated pest management
- Stormwater management

5. RIGHT PLANT / RIGHT PLACE / RIGHT TECHNIQUES

- ☐ Pledged to implement one or more
- ☐ Did not pledge to implement any
- ☐ Don't recall

Examples of Best Management Practices - Right Plant / Right Place / Right Techniques :

- *Use native plants as the backbone of the landscape.*
 - *Select plants adapted to your climatic zone for hardiness, inspect plants for diseases, pests, & root problems before purchase and plan for mature size of plants to reduce pruning.*
 - *Group plants by sun exposure and watering.*
-

6. PROTECT HEALTHY SOIL FUNCTION

- ☐ Pledged to implement one or more
- ☐ Did not pledge to implement any
- ☐ Don't recall

Examples of Best Management Practices - Protect Healthy Soil Function:

- *Compost yard waste and top-dress soil with compost covered by woody mulch to improve soil function.*
 - *Leave plant litter where it falls for self-sustaining soil health in permanent landscape beds.*
Inoculate native plant beds with mycorrhizae.
 - *Limit soil compaction by creating pervious paths*
 - *Feed the soil, not the plants. Reduce/eliminate fertilizer use.*
-

7. SUPPORT BIODIVERSITY

- ☐ Pledged to implement one or more
- ☐ Did not pledge to implement any
- ☐ Don't recall

Examples of Best Management Practices – Support Biodiversity:

- *Create a wildlife habitat sanctuary to address the decline in bird, amphibian, and beneficial insect species.*
 - *Grow a species rich landscape of regional native plants to address the loss of local flora.*
 - *Do not grow noxious weeds or aggressive exotic plants that can escape and crowd out native species.*
-

8. LOW IMPACT LAWN CARE

- ☐ Pledged to implement one or more
- ☐ Did not pledge to implement any
- ☐ Don't recall

Examples of Best Management Practices – Low Impact Lawn Care:

- *Allow lawns to go dormant in the dry season.*
 - *Hand weed lawn or tolerate a few weeds (no weed & feed).*
 - *Aerate compacted lawns and add a little compost.*
-

9. WATER CONSERVATION

- ☐ Pledged to implement one or more
- ☐ Did not pledge to implement any
- ☐ Don't recall

Examples of Best Management Practices – Water Conservation:

- *Separate lawn irrigation system from irrigation for trees and shrubs, which need much less frequent watering.*
 - *Water in the mornings. Water deeply and infrequently to encourage root growth.*
 - *Use drip irrigation to water only landscape plants, not weeds.*
 - *Plant drought tolerant plants.*
-

10. REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION

- ☐ Pledged to implement one or more
- ☐ Did not pledge to implement any
- ☐ Don't recall

Examples of Best Management Practices – Reduce Energy Consumption:

- *Use hand tools or electric power tools whenever possible and reduce use of gas powered equipment.*
 - *Use motion detectors to activate outdoor lights rather than timers.*
 - *Plant buffers to block northeast winds in the winter to lower heating needs.*
 - *Plant deciduous shade trees on the south & west sides to cool the house & impervious surfaces.*
-

11. LOW IMPACT MAINTENANCE & INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

- ☐ Pledged to implement one or more
- ☐ Did not pledge to implement any
- ☐ Don't recall

Examples of Best Management Practices – Low Impact Maintenance & IPM:

- *Select pest and disease resistant plants that are well adapted to the region.*
 - *Regularly monitor landscape for pests. Hand pick while infestations are small.*
 - *Have pests & diseases correctly identified by Master Gardeners at WSU Extension.*
 - *Reduce pesticide use by tolerating minor infestations that cover less than 30% of the plant, removing diseased plants, hand weeding.*
 - *When using pesticides, follow directions for use and disposal carefully.*
-

12. STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

- ☐ Pledged to implement one or more
- ☐ Did not pledge to implement any
- ☐ Don't recall

Examples of Best Management Practices – Stormwater Management:

- *Create 3 or more layers of canopy cover in landscape beds.*
 - *Plant more trees including conifers.*
 - *Remove impervious surfaces & replace them with pervious ones.*
 - *Create a woodland area.*
 - *Reduce or eliminate your lawn by expanding landscape beds.*
 - *Capture or slow runoff from lawns and hard surfaces and direct it to landscape beds, French drains, or rain gardens to allow it to infiltrate.*
-

13. Were you able to implement any of the natural yard care practices?

☐ Yes

☐ No → Please describe barriers to being able to implement any practices:
Then skip to next section (“All Respondents”, question 22)

14. In which category/categories of practices did you implement changes? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Right plant/ right place/ right techniques
- ☐ Protect healthy soil function
- ☐ Support biodiversity
- ☐ Low impact lawn care
- ☐ Water conservation
- ☐ Reduce energy consumption
- ☐ Low impact maintenance & integrated pest management
- ☐ Stormwater management

15. Have you had any difficulty maintaining any of the practices you implemented?

☐ No

☐ Yes → What practices have been difficult to maintain? Please describe the challenges you’ve encountered.

16. The goals of the Green Gardening program are to empower people to conserve water, reduce nutrient loading in Lake Whatcom, and manage stormwater from their property. Of the practices you implemented, which do you think had the greatest impact on these goals?

17. Of the natural yard care practices you implemented, which have you most enjoyed?

18. How many times, if at all, did you talk to one or more friends or neighbors about the practices you implemented?
- ☐ Many times
 - ☐ Several times
 - ☐ A few times
 - ☐ Once or twice
 - ☐ Not at all → skip to question 20
19. (if more than *not at all*) When you talked with friends or neighbors about the practices you implemented, how often, if at all, did you describe *why* you were implementing them (e.g. to conserve water, to reduce energy consumption, to protect soil, etc.)?
- ☐ Always
 - ☐ Often
 - ☐ Sometimes
 - ☐ Rarely
 - ☐ Never
20. Since completing the Gardening Green class, have you ever demonstrated the practice for a friend or neighbor or helped them implement the practice on their own property?
- ☐ Yes, more than once
 - ☐ Yes, once
 - ☐ No
21. Were there any practices that you had pledged to do but were unable to implement?
- ☐ No
 - ☐ Yes → Which practice(s)? And what prevented you from being able to implement it/them?

ALL RESPONDENTS

22. Have you moved since you completed the Gardening Green class?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No → skip to “what size ...” question 26
23. Have you implemented any natural yard care practices at your current residence?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No → skip to “what size ...” question 26
 - ☐ Not applicable - no yard → skip to “what size ...” question 26

24. In which category/categories did you implement natural yard care practices at your current residence? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Right plant/ right place/ right techniques
- ☐ Protect healthy soil function
- ☐ Support biodiversity
- ☐ Low impact lawn care
- ☐ Water conservation
- ☐ Reduce energy consumption
- ☐ Support biodiversity
- ☐ Low impact maintenance & integrated pest management
- ☐ Storm water management

25. Please describe the specific practices you've used at your current residence.

26. What size was the property where you lived when you took the Gardening Green class?

- ☐ Roughly the size of a small city lot (1/8 acre or less, under 5,500 sq. ft.)
- ☐ Roughly the size of an average city lot (1/8 to 1/4 acre, 5,500 –under 11,000 sq. ft.)
- ☐ Roughly the size of a medium city lot (1/4 to 1/2 acre, 11,000 – under 22,000 sq. ft.)
- ☐ Roughly the size of a large city lot (1/2 to 1.5 acres, 22,000 – under 66,000 sq. ft.)
- ☐ 1.5 acres or more (over 66,000 sq. ft.)

27. Thinking about people who you know – your friends and neighbors - what part(s) of the Gardening Green course would be best for those who may be less experienced with gardening?

28. What parts of the Gardening Green course should we avoid including for friends or neighbors who may be less experienced with gardening?

29. Is there anything else you'd recommend we do to make learning about natural yard care more attractive to more people?

30. How interested would you be willing to helping be a mentor in the new program, for example: to teach the new class, be a guest speaker, or let people visit your gardens?

☐ Very interested

☐ Somewhat interested

☐ Not very/not at all interested → skip to end of survey

31. May we let the City and County program managers know about your interest, so they can contact you? All your previous answers will be kept confidential.

☐ Yes

☐ No → skip to end of survey

32. Please enter your name, email, and phone, and then indicate which is your first choice of method to be contacted.

☐ No

☐ Yes →

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Preferred method:

☐ Email

☐ Phone

☐ No preference, either is fine

APPENDIX D: VERBATIM OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS

Q4. Have you taken any other gardening/natural yard care classes since you completed the Gardening Green class? If yes, what class(es) did you take?

- Backyard Conservation Stewardship Program, Skagit Conservation District, classes from nurseries
- Cloud Mountain farm, Color Spot nursery
- composting class by master gardeners
- Cut flower growing WSU Skagit
- Fruit tree pruning and care
- Garden Spot - container planting
- General things, bee keeping, compost, etc
- HIP HOMEOWNER, DESIGNER, CONTRACTOR
- HIP program 3 hour class
- Interested in native plants in my yard, took a native plant steward course through WNPS and city
- intro to permaculture at WCC
- I've taken two classes. One was with Sue and focused on native plants, etc to protect the watershed and local environment. Then a year ago, I took the class on HIP project for using native plants.
- Landscaping
- local community classes, Trainings & Workshops through the Master Gardener Program
- Numerous workshops offered at Cloud Mountain Farm for fruit and vegetable gardening; a workshop on pruning fruit bushes held at WCC
- Permaculture Design Course
- Pruning trees
- Rivers and Forests of Whatcom County, native plant stewardship training thru the WNPS
- some know and grow classes that are bases in natural gardening
- various on line gardening webinars
- Winter gardening at Blaine Library

Q13. Were you able to implement any of the natural yard care practices? If no, Please describe barriers to being able to implement any practices:

- After taking this survey I have been amazed to see how much I actually implemented. Every point I was able to change the way I previously did things. Well done Class! I have also been sharing what I learned with people in the community.
- Health along with being overwhelmed with the information in the class
- I moved from my house with a lawn to an apartment very shortly after completing the course, so I haven't been able to implement any of the practices directly. However, I do direct people to the course and to learning about these yard care practices as I found the information to be highly valuable.
- Some areas belong to my husbands interests or work

Q15. Have you had any difficulty maintaining any of the practices you implemented? If yes, What practices have been difficult to maintain? Please describe the challenges you've encountered.

- Deer deer deer deer deer deer
- finding enough cheap mulch to cover/create all the garden beds i wanted
- I am restoring a disturbed wetland on our 1+ acre property. There is every invasive plant imaginable, and it takes LOTS of hard work, time, and \$\$ to try to restore to a healthy, diverse wildlife habitat. But its a labor of love.
- I did the HIP program in June 2019. I had my big lawn replaced with native plants and mulch. Also had drainage filter project. The plants required extensive watering first summer and less this spring. But lots of weeds to keep down by hand. Plants are growing, but deer and winter and drought has killed about a third of them.
- I garden on a site that was abandoned for a couple of decades after being a pasture for many years. The perennial weed problem is extremely difficult to control using any method, particularly hand weeding.
- I have a large garden (20' perimeter around my home plus a 2nd lot that is a woodland garden). It is challenging to keep a 3" layer of mulch throughout (so depth varies from 1-3"). I haven't found a source of supply for 1-2 water barrels.
- I separated from my spouse after the class (took class in fall 2013, separated summer 2014), so all plans had to come to screeching halt. I got the house, but had extreme difficulty finding help from someone who knew anything about gardening green. Most claim to know, but not really. Would be nice if city could have gardening green certification program for landscaping companies so I (and others) could find someone to help. It's been 6-1/2 years and I'm still struggling to do myself. I could easily and cheaply hire a conventional lawn care company, but that's not what I want.
- I was a tenent in an apt. Complex in Ferndale, where the owner had to develop a wetland mitigation area and storm water settlement pond as part of some new construction. I offered to help plant, water, weed, and maintain these sites. He had me oversee the areas for two years. Then he hired a landscaping company. No more daily care, weed control, pest management, or regular layers of hog fuel support. The blackberry bushes and binding knot weed encroached the mitigation area. Poison hemlock and Scottish broom prospered around the settlement pond. Heart breaking! Last November, I moved in with my son and "dil", on their 5 acre home west of Ferndale. This year I am doing container gardening. The Master Gardener training I had was in Mesa, AZ in early 2000. Very different climate, etc than PNW. :-)
- Increasing over and above current use of native plants along with pest and weed control
- It's a challenge balancing the desire for a "pretty" plant that may not be native or best fit. Also fear of not doing the best thing has often kept me from doing anything (I.e. finishing plantings for good coverage and weed control).
- Managing invasions from my native plantings. They may have been the right plant in the right place at one point, but they tend to take off and squeeze out other natives and overrun paths.
- Mature trees and roots make clean-up very high maintenance. If I take them out, the canopy will be greatly reduced and the cost is prohibitive.
- Most have been successful and we qualified for and successfully completed the first HIP project. The biggest challenge is that some of the things we've been adding to our garden

are not native. We have a straw bale garden project that is supposed to help enrich the soil, so this sort of balances out our love for some non-native plants. Darrell is becoming a sort of do it yourself "master gardener". He works out in the yard and garden at least 4 hrs/day and is studying soil revitalization and permaculture. Indoors, I work with sprouting and microgreens for healthier natural foods.

- Most nurseries and big box stores don't sell native plants but do sell invasive plants. I try to select natives and have to go to special nurseries for that. Finding environmentally friendly options for plans and for weed and mold suppression, fertilizers, etc. is difficult. Suggest that you work with Costco, Home Depot, Ace Hardware, Lowes, Hardware Sales, etc. to suggest they offer less toxic alternatives. Most people will grab what they see and don't have time for special research.
- My husband is my main challenge. He will do things his own way and everything has to be done as quickly as possible instead of the right way. Otherwise most of the things I committed to would have been done as learned. But I am learning to go ahead and do.
- New plantings devoured by deer
- Ones where more costs were involved.
- Primarily age. I've always hand-pulled weeds, for example, but the older I get the harder it is on my back. Chronic health conditions. I have mental illness and often mustering the strength to get things done is difficult to impossible.
- Problem with neighbor draining run-off water over our land. Our rain water is supposed to be contained (Sudden Valley). I would like to get a rain barrel system to conserve. Neighbors and birds and deer are bringing in invasive plants.
- Rats in compost pile! Keeping large gravel areas weed free without chemicals.
- Removing lawn and sheet mulching under an old fir tree introduced problem insects that led to tree removal.
- Removing weeds
- Right plant right place Reducing lawn area
- sheep sorrel weeding, managing spreading of nooka rose and tall oregon grape. keeping the grass from returning.
- Some issues with pests (mainly slugs) and weed control.
- we have carpenter ants to get rid of and must spray. Our soil is a lot of clay so I add mulch every spring. We have no grass in front and mostly Rhodes and azaelas . We water as little as possible but not always in the morning. No ROUNDUP at our home garden and lawn. Natural stuff.
- We have so many deer through our 2 acres daily EXTREMELY hard to grow plants unless fenced in - the rest have been working on since the wealth of knowledge gleaned from these two amazing women. Tho k it should be required for everyone living in the watershed. HUGE responsibility-
- Weed management, especially resilient sheep sorrel and lawn, which we still work to eliminate.
- Weeds get ahead of me, so hand weeding has not been as complete as Id'd like. This year with "staying home" I'm getting caught up!

Q16. The goals of the Green Gardening program are to empower people to conserve water, reduce nutrient loading in Lake Whatcom, and manage stormwater from their property. Of the practices you implemented, which do you think had the greatest impact on these goals?

- 1- added drip irrigation system 2- disconnected drainage from roof to ditch so that rain water will water garden down hill side before getting to ditch
- Aside from the fact that we don't live in the Lk Whatcom area, I would say that it's an overall awareness of all the practices and our long term goals that has the most impact.
- Awareness and commitment. I have since moved but at EVERY SINGLE property I have maintained the goals outlined in this class. I'm a believer, a follower, and am committed to keeping in practice these goals. This class MUST be continued. It's saving our little part of the earth. After this class I understood so much better the language of plants and trees and their communication, MYCORRHIZAE is so important to my life, I can't think of a day that I don't mention it to someone. I know you asked which of the practices implemented had the greatest impact on the goals, it has to be said, awareness which breeds commitment and in turn, causes all of the goals to be fulfilled.
- Completely switched watering system from pop-up sprinklers to drip irrigation. Had my soil tested and was able to improve soil condition.
- Compost
- Conservation of water.
- Conserve water
- conserving water
- Conserving water through right planting.
- Conserving water use, when possible. Keeping toxins out of run-off water. (I'm on a slope.) Exs: washing cars at carwash, using county or commercial disposal opportunities, separating garbage and composting....
- Conserving water.
- Converted very large lawn area to planting beds. Strip mulched to remove grass. Planted new trees and native plants. Started these projects in 2013. We continue to maintain the landscaping, tweak as necessary, and renew mulching as needed. We never would have made such big changes without the Green Gardening class. We did participate in the HIP program and are thankful for the financial support. It would have taken much longer without it.
- digging rain garden, heavy mulching.
- Don't live in L Whatcom watershed. Runoff from here would probably get to Baker Creek. I have planted mostly natives with goal to minimize watering and fertilizing. Use only bagged cow manure or compost. Only water "newly plants".
- Drip irrigation, rainwater collection, use of mulch, creating gardens instead of watering and mowing lawns! It was so empowering getting to tour the city and see other peoples projects! My favorites were when we go to see people implementing the use of rainwater collection. This class lead to so many gardening rabbit holes and I am forever thankful for the education I received during the class. It is imperative moving forward that classes like this are available to the public. It was a blessing that it was a free class and that made it more accessible to more in the community with different incomes. Education is the first step to changing peoples perspective and seeing the different ways people took what they

learned and put it into practice was so amazing and motivational. This is vital to building a green community who has the skills to make change in the world at large.

- drought tolerant plants control runoff
- extremely low-effort lawn care approach
- First of all, I didn't even realize what stormwater was and its' impact on Lake Whatcom before I took this class. Regarding my practices, I am keenly aware of not using any chemicals, and to also provide stormwater storage in the manner of layers of vegetation vs grass.
- French drain
- HIP program helped me to reduce my lawn and plant natives that absorb and filter nutrients. The big drainage system is also reducing flow into the open ditch by the street. I would never had the initiative to do the HIP program if I had not taken the class. It was an investment of about \$13,000 for me for a \$19,000 project. I am a lot more conscious of what I am doing gardening wise..
- I added some terracing to the steep western slope in my garden. Although not a part of the best management practices plan that I created at the end of the Gardening Green Plan, to reduce stormwater runoff, I've also restored a stone path on a slope that leads to the road below my home.
- I am in Birch Bay, but I have implemented no spraying of my lawn for weeds.
- I am watering much less - we installed a drip system. We allow the 'grass' (actually a mix of clover, weeds and some grass) to go dormant in the summer. We are composting garden and food waste. Have converted some 'finicky' planting areas to more natural plantings.
- I conserve water as a daily practice now. Never have or would use pesticides.
- I do almost no watering of my garden except for the vegetables, I don't use any pesticides, or chemical fertilizers, I have directed the roof drain water into my flower beds. I learned so much from your gardening class.
- I do not live in that region.
- I feel good about our rain water containment and management of stormwater. Overall, nutrient loading in any waterbodies have been reduced due to removal of lawn and associated chemical usage. I hand pull/dig weeds and do not typically use any electric or gasoline powered tools. The greatest impact on these goals was removal of any lawn on our property.
- I feel we were doing pretty prior to the class, just much more aware of the impact of everything we do to our property living in the watershed. Also shared information with neighbors.
- I have a rain garden that captures water from a portion of my roof, and driveway. I have rain barrels. I use no chemicals, weed killers, etc.
- I removed the front lawn and replaced it with drought and heat tolerant plants which require little or no water. This process continues. I am continuing to add plantings to borders and enlarge the vegetable garden. New additions to the borders are native plants suited to the soil and microclimate in my yard. I have developed one corner specifically for wildlife. There is more to go as gardening is an ever evolving process. The class and materials provided were a wonderful resource that I am still using.
- I'm in north county, not the Lake Whatcom watershed.
- In 2013, I had only slightly heard about Mycorrhiza. Originally I had been concerned it was a problem, but thankfully due to the class I learned it was a great thing that I would want in

my soil and promote. I mow the grass to a higher length to conserve moisture. I do not water my lawn at all. I've allowed some areas to grow very long with no mowing.

- Installation of native plants and woody mulch support the water conservation and stormwater management goals.
- Installing rain garden and water harvesting systems, replacing lawn with mostly native plants, fertilizing with compost and woody mulch, and eliminating use of herbicides, pesticides and chemical fertilizers.
- I've become committed to plant native plants and conserve many of the existing ones on my property. I have never cultivated a lawn but I do have it mowed. However, I do not use pesticides or fertilizers on it. I don't use any pesticides and mostly organic fertilizers on the other areas of garden beds. I try to plant things that will not need a lot of extra water in summer.
- Last year I installed drip irrigation for my landscape. I do not water the lawn. This year I am spreading hogfuel to suppress the weeds. I am also removing lawn and replacing with plants.
- Less spraying weeds
- Low impact lawns, storm runoff management, integrated pest management
- Made contact with the HIP program and had analysis for implementation of program. Much of the proposed measures were already in place.
- Maintain a woody mulch, right plant right place and improved watering practices.
- Making sure that new plantings are native and require low maintenance and are drought tolerant.
- Managing storm water and reducing nutrient loading.
- Managing storm water.
- Mulching flower beds and tree/shrub wells to decrease weeds and maintain moisture in the soil. We've decreased lawn space and we let it go dormant in dry season. We use a mulching blade on the mower so nutrients are returned to the soil. We added a rain barrel to catch storm water and use it to water greenhouse plants. We put up a mason bee house to encourage pollination. We encourage neighbors to maintain large native trees to help prevent erosion and provide shade and shelter instead of cutting down trees on their banks for a sea view. Our greatest impact has been the example we provide having a good canopy of large trees, bushes, and flower and vegetable gardens.
- Mulching heavily!
- My goals are different, since my water doesn't drain into Lake Whatcom but goes toward Padden. I live on a steep slope, and soil stabilization is my primary concern. Learning which plants to install on that slope (where I could reach) has probably had the greatest impact, along with being able to recognize which invasive species I can eliminate without guilt (again, where I can reach). My "back yard" is really forest, so I have more trouble keeping it out than encouraging it!
- Natural mulch, hand weeding and watering, use of native plants, grouping of plants with similar water needs
- New native plants Lot margin enhancement Heavy mulching Reduced irrigation water consumption
- No longer using round up and pesticides- fertilizers more aware of the plants I am buying to buy native drought resistant plants and planting them in the right space after I planted too many in the wrong place. Every spring enlarging the flowerbeds a half foot at a time to start slowly replace grass with flowerbeds. One of the biggest changes with leaving the things

that fell from the trees on the ground in the flowerbeds instead of raking everything up and hauling it off to clean green.

- None.
- Not over fertilizing.
- Not sure, I am still in over my head.
- Not using chemicals in the garden. Selecting plant materials that are either native, attract beneficial insects, or drought tolerant. Use drip irrigation and timers. Mulching grass clippings. Keeping an area in the garden 'wild' with natural plant materials for my mason bees and other insects.
- not using fertilizer, removing lawn
- Not watering my front yard.
- Not watering the lawn, never using pesticides, cleaning up after our dog
- Plant selection, drip lines in beds, use electric tools for mowing. Layering landscape canopies, Leaving lawn dormant in dry season, plant for bird variety, composting and top-dressing for soul health.
- Planting appropriate plants for my area, including reliance on native, drought resistant and deer resistant plants.
- planting drought tolerant plants soaker hoses planting native plants
- Planting three levels, ground cover, bushes and trees and tiering planting areas.
- Rain barrel flow, right plant/right place and native plant use.
- Rainwater gathering
- Really an integration of all the practices create the greatest impact but I would say right plant, right place, and using a watering system has had the greatest impact on the above goals.
- Redirecting runoff to planted area, using native plants, maintaining soil cover during the rainy season.
- reduce nutrient loading in Lake Whatcom and conserve watering outdoors.
- reduce water and nutrient loading
- Reducing storm water - I live in the Whatcom Lake watershed. My French drain filters water from my roof and my next door neighbor's roof before it trickles down to the lake.
- Reduction of lawn and fertilizer.
- removing part of our lawn & replacing it with more native plants. It's a work in progress. Only part of the lawn is out so far, but we are committed to continuing to slowly pull it out & replace it. I'm really happy with how it looks & how well the natives are filling in.
- Replacing grass with wood chips/mulch, adding 3 water tanks to capture the entire roof water drainage, installing a storm water management system that captures overflow water in deep gravel and tile systems to keep water on our land. Additionally, we use the water in the tanks for our gardens and avoid washing cars in the driveway. We've also added a number of native plants, just not to the ratio deemed ideal.
- Right place, right plant, direct sunlight mapping.
- Right plant right place in conjunction with layering 3+ of plants to improve rain water retention.
- setting up drip irrigation throughout landscape beds. Improving mulch management.
- Since I had already been using the techniques the class urged, there hasn't been much implementation on a greater scale. I am still in the process of planting more trees however.
- Since I live in Blaine, there's not much impact on Lake Whatcom from my adoption of the practices. I live in the Drayton Harbor watershed, and that's the area where my actions have

the most impact. That said, this was a tremendously valuable class that has enabled me to create and execute a landscaping plan for supporting soil, water, native plants and wildlife on my 4+ acres.

- Smarter watering practices.
- Storm management
- Storm water Management
- storm water management
- Storm water runoff, lawn chemicals that will run into Lk whatcom.
- Stormwater management
- Stormwater management. It should be noted that while I did not pledge to partake as a NEW feature, I already am a part of a neighborhood stormwater management system. I care for the neighborhood's major retention and drainage feature.
- Stormwater management. Growing food at home and soil enrichment.
- The introduction of raised beds, composting and mulching. We will also be aerating and introducing more native plants along with improving our woodsy area under the sequoia trees on our northern border.
- they all had an impact
- Use of drip irrigation, use of appropriate fertilizer for plant, use of drought tolerant plants,
- Use of layers of hog fuel and other mulches. Native plants and trees. PIM. Reduction of lawn space.
- use of native plants, rain water drainage system
- Using native plants for biodiversity.
- Water conservation
- Water conservation
- Water conservation using rain water and drip systems.
- Water conservation/management
- Water Conservation; Run-off control; Reduce carbon footprint; plant native trees, bushes and shrubs; enhance wildlife habitat.
- water deeply less often; use rainwater off the roof into our ponds
- Watering early in the morning if needed and watering less frequently but more deeply. Planting drought tolerant plants. Choosing drought tolerant plants and using a right plant/right place mentality. We have no lawn at all, and intermix native plants with others. We rarely use pesticides or fertilizers which could runoff into the lake.
- We committed to reducing our grass lawn by 50%, planting more conifers/native plants, installing rain barrels to catch water from our shed, and use natural weed control measures.
- We don't use any lawn fertilizer, only organics like compost or slow acting organic fertilizer, use our rain barrels, planted a few natives-nootka rose, ferns, native huckleberry, solomon's seal... We don't live close to Lake Whatcom but still are mindful of leaving as much leaf litter and materials for insects and other species. For example, leaving the dried heads of one plant, the hummingbirds use the 'cotton' in the pods for nest-have observed this. We have a pile of branches and leaves in a remote part of yard that doesn't get disturbed. We have 2 rainbarrels as back up for water. We don't use any chemicals on the lawn or in the garden including herbicides or pesticides. We compost and recycle with clean green bin too.
- We fertilize the lawn less often and use fewer weed killers, hand weeding instead.
- We live near a small stream that feeds into Lake whatcom so we don't use chemicals. I learned many things in this class about runoff water and how to keep it from harming our water in the lake.

- We own a ~10 acre wetland which has been conserved in its natural state. It was already handling most of the stormwater runoff from my residential property and continues to do so.
- We think of our garden as a system and all the practices and changes we implemented work together help maintain our watershed and lake. Thank you Gardening Green
- We use drip irrigation in our vegetable gardens. Also dug ponds to manage storm water, something that also contributed to wildlife
- What I learned in the class about better green gardening methods empowered us with greater appreciation of the impact of our actions on the environment. The class was remarkable in the amount of new information we learned, even as gardeners with some years of experience. Learning about the wealth of life under the soil and the value of leaving plant material in the beds over winter was valuable. When we covered grass areas with cardboard and mulch, I was astounded how much better trees and shrubs and plants did afterwards, how the mulch served as slow release fertilizer and diminished markedly the need for watering, thus protecting the lake's water quality twofold.
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Q17. Of the natural yard care practices you implemented, which have you most enjoyed?

- After yanking out the invasive blackberries, seeing the native plants emerge that laid dormant under the briars.
- All of them.
- All. Especially water conservation.
- Anything with plants and soil building
- Being able to feed my family from a garden that is a circular system. NO one is hauling lawn clippings, leaves, or fallen branches off the property to throw in the dump. Everything is used and has a purpose. Drip Irrigation has been wonderful and I do not have the same problems in the garden that I did before because the leaves aren't getting wet and the plants are being watered early in the day instead of when its super hot outside. and with the use of mulch and the lasagna method, what once was a lawn is now a thriving garden!
- Being comfortable with a brown yard, leaving leaf litter in the beds, not removing dandelions until done flowering (seeds for birds), drip system only to plants requiring supplemental water, increased variety of bird species.
- Canopy planting
- Caring for all the critters —plants, bees, insects
- Choice of the right plants and using native plants.
- Choosing sites for plants, watching pollinators (mostly red tailed bumblebees) and birds (including robins feeding their babies native strawberries, spreading flowering seeds from last season, sharing w/bunnies and deer...watching a fawn's birth outside our window, watching the soil (covered w/woody mulch) disappear as plants grow and spread into a lush growth, having flowers blooming throughout the year (even heather in winter).
- chop and drop weeds :) picking the right plants for the area and drought tolerant ones protecting the soil feeding the soil using more compost in my soil
- Converting to more natural, native plantings.
- Creating a woodland garden
- Darrell is coming into his own as a backyard farmer, renewing and revitalizing his life as a farm boy years ago. He grows veggies outside in straw bales for soil enrichment and I grow medicinal herbs that I dry and create tinctures, salves and infused oils with. As said previously, I grow microgreens and sprouts inside.
- Discovering native plants
- Drip irrigation on timers. I can have plants watered very very early in the morning. Use of compost for mulching and leaving grass clippings on cut areas.
- Drip irrigation.
- Educated about indigenous plants for our region.
- Embracing wildness of native plantings
- Encouraging bees and birds by leaving dandelions grow and providing a range of plants like lavender for the bees and crocosmia for the hummingbirds
- Expanding beds and also using non-traditional ground covers that support pollinators while slowing runoff
- Finding and favoring natives I find from wasteland of previous owner, and planting others. Moved here from east coast just before taking class, so many plants new to me.
- Flowers and veggies during lockdown time
- Getting to know the native species and experiencing their cycles.

- Growing own food and slowing water run from my property.
- Hand weeding? Don't really enjoy it, but it is meditative, cost-effective, and gets me up close and observant.
- Having a more natural yard, doesn't have the same look as "pristine" yards, but has it's own beauty. A beauty that is very calming and makes me feel good that I am helping the environment, not harming it.
- Having much less grass to maintain and more native plants.
- Having native plants helps reduce the workload. They're beautiful and they draw in pollinators and other wildlife.
- hmmm...maybe adding water barrels to collect rain water, or maybe the drip irrigation system that we customized so that we can water just what needs it. Or maybe how pretty my front yard is starting to look. Actually, that's the one I enjoy most. I get satisfaction out of the first two, but I enjoy looking at my yard.
- I am impressed with the variety and beauty of native species, as well as the ease of maintaining. A dogwood that we planted many years ago had it's most spectacular bloom. I am also impressed with the use of mulch, which saves on needing added fertilizer and watering both.
- I am still enjoying replacing the lawn with native plants that will thrive in an area that is extremely well drained, sunny and hot in the summer. It has been the biggest challenge but I enjoy the view out my window now as opposed to the previous view of a suffering lawn.
- I can't single out one practice. I've enjoyed learning the integrated practices for how to take an approach to landscaping that is in harmony with the part of Washington where I am fortunate to live.
- I enjoy composting, and landscaping.
- I get so much enjoyment out of our garden and yard from the birds who douse themselves in our bird bath and waterfall to the bees who hum around the flowers so loud that you almost need hearing protection! I owe a debt of gratitude to the fine instruction and instructors, Sue Taylor and Jill. They have helped beyond class instruction by actual site visitations and making themselves available to respond to my out-of-the-blue questions. I would like very much to attend Master Gardening classes and to become a Master Gardner at some point.
- I have included more Pacific NW plants into my garden with much less watering, and by the 3rd summer season, no watering.
- ideas for soil improvement
- In my front yard, I have limited the amount of grass, used mulch and bark and planted a variety of plants that do not require a lot of watering and are deer resistant. I have lovely plants, but they are becoming more self sustaining (so I don't have to do as much maintenance).
- Installation of native plants using right plant right place guideline. The plants have thrived and are a joy to take observe and take care of.
- I've enjoyed seeing the garden thrive.
- I've never used any chemicals in my gardening years but developing a deeper understanding of how to protect our ecosystem gave more meaning to what I've done all along.
- Learning about and experiencing the plants that work for my shady yard.
- Learning that all my neighbors enjoy plenty of fruits during harvest after I began keeping mason bees. I treated an area of heavy weeds with just water and vinegar and seeing that

they haven't grown back year after year. Seeing more "nature"-- insects/birds/rabbits in the garden.

- Leaving leaves and weeds to compost in the garden
- Leaving the falling leaves and debris on the ground throughout the fall and winter to encourage more bug life For the birds to eat and planting plants to encourage bees butterflies and hummingbirds
- Leaving the natural debris and branches in remote back yard. Also, getting some native plants established.
- Less pruning.
- Less time on maintenance
- Less work
- Letting lawn dry out during summer and enriching my gardens with wonderful compost.
- Mulching to maintain moisture and prevent weeds has made gardening much easier. Less weeds to pull or achy muscles.
- Native plants
- Native plants
- Native plants and right plant/ right place selection.
- Native plants flourishing
- Native plants that are thriving this year.
- native plants,
- native plants, electric mower
- Native plants. Learning more about them.
- Natural planting means less damage from deer and insects and less need for watering.
- No spraying of chemicals on the lawn.
- None specifically, I guess the letting the grasses go dormant in the summer but was doing that anyway.
- Not bagging grass, just mulching it back into soil
- Not mowing during the dry season.
- On my hands and knees weeding, watching each plant for growth, problems. Over 900 plants and trees were put in on this property. I really loved the work.
- Placing native plants in the proper area.
- Planted several PNW natives.
- Planting more trees, especially for shade.
- Planting Native plants, bee keeping, reducing chemicals, reduce lawns
- Planting native plants.
- Reduced lawn to about 1 percent and created lots of paths and flower beds where the lawn used to be. Hardly have any grass to cut...yeah!
- reducing the grass and building garden beds with native and ornamentals
- Reducing the lawn area and plantings.
- Removing and replacing all lawn.
- removing bushes that blocked the view and replacing them with native fruiting trees
- Removing lawn areas to create raised bed and landscape areas. Removing a tiled area to create landscape area.
- Removing lawn.
- Removing vines and perennials and replacing with native shrubs because this lowered my maintenance requirements considerably.

- Right place, right plant
- Right plant, Right place!
- Ripping out lawn and putting in new beds.
- Seeing birds and insects on native plants.
- Seeing more native plants grow well!
- Selecting the right plants
- supporting biodiversity
- Taking spindly native plant starts to the next level of growth and conversion of margins to forest floor
- The end of the day looking over work well done and washing off my wellies. Lol Seriously I think knowing more about the soil, it's where all the action is happening like an underground club that you never got to dance in until you became a member.
- The native plants have been a beautiful addition to my yard and are very easy to maintain!
- The transformation. The yard is now a nice place to spend time that I don't even mind weeding. I especially like to find new solutions for our not so good plant choices. I am almost 75 years old and my garden keeps me active and engaged.
- The use of native plants & easy care.
- To be honest I'm not sure. We haven't done all that much yet.
- Top-dressing the soil in my garden with compost before mulching with wood chips. My garden is established and resilient, but I was delighted to see how the shrubs and perennials responded to this TLC! Now an annual practice!
- Transform lawn area with plant diverse landscape using mostly native plants.
- Truthfully, I don't really enjoy much yard care at all anymore. It's just exhausting work that has to be done. Not the fault of the class or the methods; I just need to marshall my strength and yard work takes it from other things I need or want to do.
- Trying to seek out and use native plants.
- Understanding my yard & plants needs pertaining to watering or not and shopping for the right plants the area in my yard based on sun/shade or moving around plants to places that they are happier. This has been most satisfying to me. Now I do not have to water very often because I understand better how water moves through my yard and how the sun & shade can be an asset to the right plant in the right place!
- Using more native plantings and the use of wood chips On the planting beds.
- Using mulch. Using leaves. Not using Roundup and other chemicals my neighbors use. Watering lillies, daisies, iris individually and not waste water.
- Using natural mulch practices and water savings.
- Watching shrubs and ground cover grow into maturity.
- Watching the native plants slowly get established.
- Watching the small native plants we established eight years ago during the Gardening Green class and our HIP project, grow into a diverse, mature garden that attracts many pollinators, birds and other wildlife.
- Watching things grow.
- Water conservation; planting native habitat; enhancing wildlife habitat.

Q21. Were there any practices that you had pledged to do but were unable to implement? If yes, which practice(s)? And what prevented you from being able to implement it/them?

- Again, we haven't been able to do that much yet.
- Biodiversity: am still working on applying proper mulching, composting and organic fertilizers. Over time, have started to replant reclaimed areas with native flora.
- Build a rain garden.
- Can't recall
- Cost to collect rain water
- decrease energy consumption. We haven't needed to replace our gas powered mower yet. It's the only gas powered item we have. And, we already have a significant number of trees for the size of our property.
- Deer loved to destroy native plantings
- Finding a local source to purchase a rain barrel. I planned to offer a 2-part class on sustainable gardening at my spiritual center last fall but it was cancelled when the garden coordinator fell ill. I've rescheduled it for this fall. Lastly, there was what appeared to be an anaerobic runoff into the small Lake Louise nearby my Sudden Valley home in 2017-2018. But happily, it did not appear last spring nor has it this spring.
- Giving walk through talks. Although I frequently talked with the property owner (and had to beg repeatedly for more loads of fir or hemlock hog fuel). He did not want non-tenants on the property.
- Have no recollection of any pledge. That whole part of this survey is probably not giving you the feedback you are expecting. I have done all those things anyway.
- Health issues
- I already answered that question.
- I can't remember what I pledged.
- I didn't have a lot of time to spend on gardening due to work comm
- I have no grass, and don't use power tools except a blower once/ month, but I sweep first to avoid just blowing.
- I have yet to redo my garden to implement more of the water management measures. i.e. water barrel. After the garden is improved, more natives, and less lawn then I would be able to invite neighbors to see my handiwork.
- I haven't put in the water butts yet
- I haven't replaced lawn with native landscaping in order to keep a portion of our property open for our kids and pets to play on.
- I intended to create more pervious surfaces but so far have lacked the time and funding.
- I thought we would do more with irrigating, but we found that we do not water much by hand except in the veggie garden. We hope to implement soaker hoses this year.
- I wanted to capture rain water for summer, but the cost would have added \$5,000 to an otherwise increasingly costly project. Maybe in the future if summers continue to be so dry.
- I was in the pilot class called "Sustainable Landscaping". I don't think we pledged, so it was hard to answer these questions as written.
- Increasing tree canopy
- It takes time to make landscape changes.
- It's a tall order to do everything. I think my limitation is time and to some extent energy (I will turn 70 years old this fall).

- My husband is in charge of our lawn and he uses moss control
- Plant shade trees on south side and maintain 3 or more layers of canopy cover in landscape beds.
- Rain barrels, some of the automated systems for watering as did not have money or expertise. I do not live in the Whatcom Lake conservation area.
- Right planting right place.
- Stormwater management
- The stormwater recycling was the most challenging I got water barrels but they filled so fast and the water wasn't needed for months. For our property I could have used 50 barrels 😊. We did implement French drains we have NEVER WATERED our lawns
- Unable to finish planting of native trees & shrubs. I've only planted two trees. I made mistake in hiring someone to implement the plan to put in water cistern and then dozens of native trees and shrubs. I paid a deposit, then when job was half done I paid the balance (I know I should have waited til job was done) and they then deserted the job. Not sure how to get help in getting them to finish job or who to report them to. This was most of my savings. As single mom of special needs adult child I fell overwhelmed with lack of time and money.
- Unable to implement changes due to family issues.
- We have a sprinkler system to water the yard and flower beds. We can't separate one from the other to let the lawn go gold in order to save water.
- We use gas-powered mower, weed-eater
-
- Q25
- All except storm water management and conservation. But we are working on a plan
- All of the above except haven't done anything that would require earth moving - ie walls or retention ponds. Do move rocks and retaining boards around to help prevent runoff.
- I use all except have a rain garden.
- In what once was a large fenced off lawn I have: *planted trees *used the mulch/lasagna method to create a garden from what used to just be grass *used drip irrigation to water my garden *used rainwater collection to conserve water *created natural & edible windbreak that is also a habitat for so many swallows, robins, hummingbirds, and other wildlife *used native plants and drought tolerant plants throughout the garden. *controlled pest with natural methods, such as having roaming ducks in the garden to eat slugs, and planting beneficial companion plants to deter pests
- Keep the leaves in place after they fall to enrich the soil. No lawn. No watering. No chemicals. Promote natural species (birds, insects etc)
- Mulching, watering early in the AM, let my lawn go brown in summer, picking native plants more and more.
- My son and his wife are already doing all of these wonderful things. So I am just joining them in their efforts. What a joy.
- Native plantings, composting, mulching with local materials, improving habitat, redirecting runoff and improving infiltration, reducing lawn and expanding beds
- Right plant/right place, mechanical weed removal versus chemical treatment, lawn mulching
- The gravel driveway was as wide as the property so I eliminated as much as possible and planted native plants mixed with fruit and vegetables. The back is rain forest which I will leave in its natural state.
- We are letting a large area grow naturally instead of maintaining a lawn

- You don't want all these words to read...lol. We just moved, so we are planning to add irrigation, started planting native trees and bushes, adding wildflowers, removing lawn, fortifying the earth, will be removing hard scrape, enlarging a pond...

Q27. Thinking about people who you know – your friends and neighbors - what part(s) of the Gardening Green course would be best for those who may be less experienced with gardening?

- ?
- 2 parts--one is the basics of landscaping design broken down into doable steps, the other is the elements of right plant, right place
- A couple of my neighbors are completely garden clueless. One has expressed a desire to learn and asks questions. Basic gardening would be best there.
- all of it is excellent
- All parts are accessible even to folks like myself w/ little gardening experience.
- All, course presents a multi faceted and integrated approach to landscape design and management. Makes most sense when presented n this way.
- Basic understanding of ecological principles and watershed health
- Biodiversity and soil
- Choosing indigenous plants and testing soil in garden.
- Choosing plant sites and leaving enough space b/twn plants Proper planting methods for successful growth Importance of heavy mulching including cardboard underneath Planting to encourage pollinators Creating safe nesting shrubbery for birds Weeding out invasives as soon as possible Field trips to successful, mature native yards are very helpful b/c folks can look around and ask questions. The class has visited our yard regularly in the past
- Eliminate pesticide use, minimal fertilizer use and use of wood chips for natural soil enhancement.
- Emphasis on natives, less fertilizing, and no spraying.
- Feeding the soil rather than the plants and learning that native insects and native plants have evolved alongside each other and can benefit one another.
- Gaining a better appreciation for what grows best in this area and how we can help conserve native species by growing native plants.
- Growing veggies
- how soil works
- How to care for soil (feed the soil NOT the plant!) The importance of native drought resistant plants and putting the right plant in the right place at the right time. DON'T use ROUND UP and pesticides- fertilizers (phosphorus) Replace as much grass as possible with 3 layers of plant life (trees, shrubs @ ground covers) to help the rain filter slowly into the ground ecosystem before it enters the lakes rivers & streams.
- how to handle pests and composting, as well as planting techniques
- I don't know.
- I really liked the rain garden idea and if you lived close to the lake would be a good place to start, be a good conversation starter and demo for neighborhood with the help of a knowledgeable landscaper. Buying native plants with attractive berries and other features that enhance landscape and contribute to animal or other species for food, etc.
- I think all the learned knowledge is good, whether forgotten/ignored practices for new knowledge..
- I think everything about the course is important for people in the community to learn. Just choosing one piece would be a disservice to the entire program as it all builds upon itself. One practice leads to another! But to be helpful I feel that a lot of people don't garden

because they have killed a plant before and don't want to fail again. So having the right plant in the right place with drip irrigation in place will change anyones mind! Once they have grown a plants and its so big and beautiful they won't be able to resist the other steps they may have scoffed at before.

- I think everything in the class was worthwhile. The onsite gardening visits where very helpful.
- I think people are sold on the idea that they need to use herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers to care for their yard. They also have no idea what one can do simply and easily to compost, conserve water and reduce runoff, the value of native plants, attract wildlife and many other things that this class has taught. The less experienced need a different perspective. One that shows them how easily a yard can be maintained and made into a beautiful and enjoyable place to spend time.
- I think understanding the value of native plants! This has been my biggest struggle getting people to understand the value of adding natives to their yards. Many of them roll their eyes and smile. People do not understand the implications of not having native plants and the value to our planet!
- integrated pest management water conservation low impact lawn care protect healthy soil to a much lesser extent support biodiversity
- It was wonderful to learn how to take control of the garden, and plant plants that thrive in the garden.
- It would please me if everyone had to take the Gardening Green course! The best management practices should be required and considered essential knowledge for the betterment of the public and the community in general.
- Knowledge of invasive, shallow-rooted plants (most of my neighbors live on slopes); non-chemically-based cultivation and control methods; general knowledge of area ecology. Many of my neighbors moved here from (sigh) California and have no clue about the vast differences between there and the PNW.
- knowledge of native planes less lawn
- Knowledge of native plants and their advantages.
- Knowledge of plants to attract birds and bees.
- learning about chemicals and how they are not as necessary as they think they are.
- Learning about conscientious gardening so as to become more aware of our impacts on the environment.
- Learning about native plants
- Learning about storm water runoff and what folks can do to lessen their impact on the water shed.
- Learning smallgardening practices and soil enrichment.
- Letting lawns go dormant, right plant right place, using native plants
- Lower impact lawn care.
- Many of my neighbors applied for and were awarded homeowner incentive program grants to make changes since we live in the watershed. Even though they used the money to make physical changes to their property, they do not use best practices we learned in the class. For example still using using fertilizer on a well manicured and much watered lawn. I believe that people who are awarded those grants should be required to take a condensed version of this class so they learn to follow best practices. I loved this class but most people work and do not have that many daytime hours to take this class.

- Many of the people on my course were master gardeners, which was a bit intimidating to me since I didn't have any experience with gardening but wanted to learn. So I would suggest a basic class. The site visits were really useful because we could see things in actual conditions.
- Most of my friends are pretty decent gardeners.
- My friends all seem to be much better at gardening than me.
- Native plant utilization Benefits of planting margins and mulching Reducing irrigation water consumption Low tech storm runoff management
- Native plants, compost,
- Native plants, water conservation, plant diversity
- New homeowners, renters with yards that plan to stay long term, young people in general.
- non toxic lawn care
- Not sure
- On-site consultation with a sustainable design expert. Site tours of homeowner projects.
- Organic practices, local native plants and their value, water conservation, soil maintenance, pretty much all of the topics covered. It was an excellent class.
- Plant selection- Right Plant, Right Place.
- Plant varieties for birds, resources in the community for gardening products (covered in written materials provided in class).
- Planting native plants and mulch to decrease maintenance and chemical use.
- Planting the right plants and where to plant them. Advantages of not having a lawn. Herbicides and pesticides and their consequences. Water conservation and run off.
- Proper planting techniques, awareness of PNW natives and hopefully encourage them to choose natives.
- Reasons to plant natives and reduce/remove lawn.
- Reduce lawn size. Test soil ph, etc. Watch Sun shine location. Include more pn raised beds, how to make them, etc. More about protecting gardens from rabbits and deer.
- Reducing impervious surfaces. Basic landscaping with native plants - understanding to detriment of using chemical products. Understanding how to maximize water use and conservation.
- Reducing lawn with native plants, helping them choose natives over plants that need more water and fertilizer and pesticides. The yard tours of past participants was invaluable.
- Right plant right place, and feed the soil not the plants
- Right plant right place, the benefits of reducing lawn size and increasing rain water retention in the landscape.
- Right plant selection. Native plant selection.
- Right plant, right place Mulching Canopy layering
- Right plant, right place, discussion of types of bark, drip irrigation. It was all good.
- Right plant, right place.
- Right plant, right place. Mulching and watering info.
- right plant, right place; lawn reduction; soil health;
- Right planting. Managing pests. Soil prep.
- Right plants, feed the soil
- Seaside living- how to prevent erosion of the bluff, having a varied canopy, notcutting down the trees for a view and planting ivy on a bluff, how to harness storm water. Not watering and using chemicals on their lawn.

- Seeing how others have implemented practices.
- Showing them the pros vs cons of sustainable gardening practices vs conventional.
- Simply increasing awareness and enthusiasm for making changes.
- Soil. How to naturally fortify the earth without harm, how to remove lawn and add beneficial natives that require much less water, care.
- Some people have moved here from the East Coast and from California. They need to better understand the Northwest landscape and responsibility to our waterways and the environment. It would be good to teach them the geographical differences from where they came.
- stop the use of Roundup and toxic herbicides and pesticides less lawns more mulch and native plants and trees educate the people about local plants and our native environment protecting our neighborhoods from mow and blow practices
- Stop using pesticides and non organic fertilizers.
- storm water management, organic gardening,
- Taking care of yards, gardens- veggie and perennials, water drainage, composting
- Teaching about the rights plants to plant, how to compost and how to use it, and how best to conserve water.
- That is a really tough question. Plant selection, reduction of lawn and live garden tours.
- That's a hard question to answer since the whole thing was so useful. It was helpful to see different yards & learn about what they did & see that this could be done with different sizes of yards, costs/financial backgrounds, and different looks. It also helped to make the plan for my yard out. The step by step instructions were useful. I have something that I can look at & keep working toward. So, I think that's the most important thing for long term success, to make sure that by the end of the class, each person has a plan started. Even a beginning gardener can break that plan down into small chunks to work on as time & money allow and as skills improve.
- The concepts regarding soil management. Don't spend so much time trying to 'fix' the soil. It's expensive and time-consuming. Rather try and find plants that grow well in the existing soil.
- The course as a whole is very good, it would be good for everyone to attend it. I live more rural, in town, so many of the ideas would really benefit the whole environment. With all the hard surfaces, nature doesn't get to work properly, people using chemicals of all kinds. So many things people do, they think is needed, but are not aware of how it affects the world as a whole.
- The native plant selection
- The stormwater education piece, as well as water conservation. Teaching that what you do to your lawn, yard, garden has consequences that you may not realize, either in your own soil or downstream. Once that is understood, the solution is learning about the use of native plants and wildlife habitat as well. The whole class was very useful, and the field trips were inspirational and fun.
- The use of fewer chemicals on the lawn and garden.
- They are all important, but what I notice less experienced gardeners doing that degrades the water shed and lake, is fertilizing and using harmful pesticides. I would say that is the easiest practice to understand and the effort to change is minimal.
- Thorough sheet mulching techniques; landscaping design, including matching plants with sites; identifying and eliminating invasive plants early on; effective "deer-proofing" techniques; and field trips at model properties.

- Understanding about local plants, better usage of permeable hard scale, elimination of lawns, attracting biodiversity
- Understanding soil health and how to promote. Also, conserving water.
- Understanding the impact of good practices as well as the downside of undesirable practices (typical lawn maintenance).
- Understanding the unique PNW soil, growth factors and interaction with fungi
- Unknown.
- use of native plants and storm water management.
- value of mulching, how soil is alive with mycorrhizae, natives require less fertilizer and support wildlife. It's great when what is best practice is also easier and less expensive to maintain.
- Water conservation
- water conservation
- Water conservation and lake preservation. Study of invasive plants. Soils of our area and how to treat them or not treat them. The right plant for the right place.
- Water conservation, right plant/right place/right planting with emphasis on native plants, stormwater management, supporting biodiversity.
- Water Conservation; planting native flora; enhancing wildlife habitat; reducing carbon footprint and using of renewable engeries; be more involved with conservation management.
- Water harvesting and conservation
- We actually don't know many neighbors, sad but true. Those we do know are either elderly or don't even mow their lawns.
- We have many friends who have moved to the PNW. They don't yet know what plants/trees grow well here, so that would be valuable. Also, learning about conservative watering practices would be helpful.
- We live in a small court that even has a master gardener so not sure what might be best. For me, the entire course and how the various sections fit together was very important.
- Whole thing was great and well balanced
- Why and how to select native plants, and then assist with a garden design or re-design.
-

Q28. What parts of the Gardening Green course should we avoid including for friends or neighbors who may be less experienced with gardening?

- ?
- ??
- All are necessary.
- All of it was very interesting and informative.
- All parts of the course are useful.
- All parts of the course were interesting and valuable learning, might be a tough sell though for those whole aspire to manicured lawns and garden beds that look like a fancy golf course and are tended by hired gardeners....will take time and exposure to alternative garden approaches before those folks will change
- All the information was valuable. It was a well planned class
- All was relevant and useful
- Avoid giving the impression that, once established, a green garden will require no maintenance. Set realistic expectations!
- Can't think of any. Jill and Sue always available for more in-depth information if needed.
- Can't think of anything
- Can't think of anything.
- Cannot think of anything to exclude.
- Can't think of a anything
- Can't think of any
- Can't think of any .
- can't think of any right now
- Can't think of any...
- Designing a site plan was very challenging, however (for me, at least). I took this class in 2014, and the syllabus was packed so perhaps we didn't get to concentrate enough on site design. However, some people are good at this, others aren't. So if you aren't a gardener, it would be baffling to design your garden - it would be more worthwhile to educate.
- Don't know
- Don't know. New information is how you become knowledgeable.
- Don't know
- don't know
- Don't know.
- Drawing the lot and mapping the sun. I think photos taken at different times of day could accomplish the same task to show where plants would do best.
- Everything was excellent in my class but, My one instructor told us about using roundup on unwanted blueberry bushes. I was surprised by that practice.
- Hummm. Im not sure.
- I can not think of any. The length of the program may be prohibitive for people who work. Maybe a shortened version or on a Saturday morning for several months would work for them. I have several friends who would be interested if it was more accessible. Maybe a Zoom part or online videos with discussion group once a week. I know this is a big investment for the county and city. There may be a way to reach more people with less cost and time. Then a subset of those people could get more training and be required to volunteer hours to help with the first level classes. It could be modeled like Master Gardeners somewhat. Just an idea. I think it is such a great program that I would like more

people to learn from it. I had wanted to invite my neighbors to a presentation after my yard grew out better. But it is going to take a while for it to be presentable and, besides, the virus has disrupted any normal planning.

- I can't think of any ?
- I can't remember any part of the class that was a negative or over their heads.
- I can't remember. I took the class in 2013.
- I can't think of any at this time.
- I can't think of any.
- I didn't think bringing in a soil sample was very helpful.
- I don't know.
- I don't recall anything that I felt should have been left out - it was all very good information.
- I think a condensed class in the evenings would be helpful for working people.
- I think ALL of the information is great for any level of gardener. I would like to see everything included.
- I think every topic was helpful. Although the walk in the forest was helpful, it wasn't necessary, since so many of the plants identified are not available for sale anywhere. So if folks REALLY like the plant, they might go to the forest/park and dig them up.
- I think it was all worthwhile. the field trips were very good as well.
- I think it's all valuable
- I thought it was a very good program as it was.
- I thought it was all useful.
- I thought the entire course was useful but try not to use too many Latin names for plants because I think that is intimidating for less experienced gardeners.
- I was overwhelmed with the number of native plants, but I need the info too. It would be helpful if it were presented in a more "dumbed down" manner for those of us who aren't as experienced. For instance put them all on a nice spreadsheet type handout with small pics. Or even better put the nifty spreadsheet online for everyone to access & be able to search it by size, water requirements, soil needs, sun needs, etc. I know some of these are available, but they aren't very user friendly or are for other areas or use terms that I'm still trying to figure out.
- I would not change the curriculum at all as each student had particular goals and objectives in mind. I thought the overview from A-Z was quite appropriate and presented very well. I refer to my course reference materials and notes often.
- I would not exclude any of the material. My experience was being presented with all the info, and then I was able to do those things I could, at whatever level I was able. I would say continue to provide all the info, people will choose their projects according to their abilities, time, funding.
- I wouldn't eliminate anything. The course was broad and while not everything would appeal to everyone, it's hard to decide what to cut.
- I'm a bad one to ask, since I think it's all intertwined. I'd say include it all, but just don't go in-depth as much?
- I'd be hard pressed what to avoid. Sue Taylor put together an extraordinary course that already felt condensed. I was learning new, interesting and applicable information every session. She respected our time and efforts and brought wonderful resources together for one of the best programs I've ever participated in.
- In many cases, landscape design, the use of cisterns, and soil classifications. Many, many do not live anywhere near the Lake Whatcom watershed.

- It is all valuable. It could be presented in sections from beginner to more advanced and people could progress as far as their interest takes them.
- It was all good
- It was all important. All should be included.
- It was all pretty good, for example Latin names for plants weren't used, which can be offputting.
- it was all relevant
- It was all valuable!
- It's all important. I meant to list low impact lawn care under the prior question. I don't have a lawn; but reducing or getting rid of lawn is increasingly important to aid water conservation.
- It's been too long to recall adequately
- Just dumb it down. No parts need to be avoided.
- N a
- N/A
- NA
- none
- None
- none
- None
- none
- None
- None
- None
- None
- None
- None
- none
- none
- None
- None
- none if you come here to live because it is beautiful please respect and learn to keep it that way as best as possible. more people means more building and less natural environment for native plants and wildlife. Please respect and learn about our natural environment
- None all are at different places and who knows what their future needs will be. Good resources are always good. I thought it was a marvelous class - what a gift
- None of them, all are important for a comprehensive course of study.
- None that I can recall.
- None that I can think of.
- None that I recall.
- None!
- None, it applies differently to each, but it is good to understand it all.
- None.
- None.
- Not sure
- Not sure

- Not sure, it's all good stuff. (would be helpful to have the list to reference when asking this question)
- Not sure.
- nothing
- Nothing should be avoided.
- Nothing. It was a very good curriculum
- Nothing. In contrast to the class I took at the Blaine Library, the curriculum for the Gardening Green class was well thought out and all useful. None of it was presented as over the head of someone like me, a novice gardener.
- OMG NO! This question is all wrong. Like I have said before each piece is connected. Changing people social stigmas is so damn important if we want our planet and civilization to survive and better yet THRIVE! Get rid of the lawn loving culture!
- Rain gardens, French drains as it's too complicated and creates a mess prior to completion.
- Seriously, I think the program is complete and nothing should be left out or avoided.
- Soil testing, details about weather, microclimates, etc. Offer a class (online?) for beginners that just introduces the most important ideas.
- Some less experienced may want a shorter class, less days. Hard to commit to that many hours. Maybe record some of the classes so people can view online.
- storm water management
- The class had quite a few Master gardeners (not sure why they were there) who dominated the class. Very intimidating for me.
- The Gardening Green course presented each topic in a format that was understandable and easy to implement for gardeners with little to no experience.
- There was a small section of the class that was aimed at keeping cats indoors. I do not think this was very useful.
- There were sessions of photos of numerous plants we flipped through quickly. Overwhelming.
- Visiting onsite water management practices - what was used were done by wealthy people. Not applicable to most.
- While fun, the 'identify the plant' section wasn't as helpful.

Q29. Is there anything else you'd recommend we do to make learning about natural yard care more attractive to more people?

- A list of indigenous plants for this area and deer resistant plants.
- Advertise with Birchwood Garden Club, neighborhood associations
- All good. Susan was excellent. Organized, clear, kind and interesting. She made sure all our questions were addressed. I would like to take another class.
- Bring it to there attention, like "Eric's Heroes" on TV, Bellingham's Heroes. Right or wrong, it's not for everyone.
- Can't think of any. The course you gave was a great mix of classroom and visiting people's gardens. I found the walks in the state parks 'nice' but I wasn't all that interested in the plants growing there. The countryside is full of ferns and native trees, and personally I was looking for alternatives to this. It's the variety and the 'something different' I was looking for.
- Can't think of anything
- Collect photos and video of "natural yard care" yards in Bellingham. Make available on cob website (but don't give out actual addresses to protect privacy). Create a contest each year. Have different contest categories for each of the gardening green practices. Advertise on radio, Bellingham Herald, Cascade Weekly, and posters on store windows. Maybe since is a good cause, could get free advertising. Get article in Community Food Co-op newsletter. Ask local groups and businesses to post on facebook. Have a class schedule for after the contest to get people excited to learn how they can do for the next year's contest. Have the mayor give out the prizes for the contest. Local businesses can contribute the prizes and in turn promotes their business. Everyone wins!
- Continue to educate on the overall benefit of gardening without chemicals, with native plants, etc. Point out how native plants can be used for food, teas, etc.
- Cost savings involved, like with taking cuttings
- Don't know
- Emphasis on enjoying your garden and that a natural garden (I am into permaculture) is a different aesthetic than a traditional American garden.
- Emphasis on flowering natives and advantages in garden. I can never say enough about compost.
- Emphasize local material supply chains Improve native plant size and availability
- Encourage children and teens. Offer weekend classes. Have a demo garden where people can have a hands-on experience along with classroom and field notes, resource listings. I use the binder you provided still today.
- Encourage Gardners to invite kids into the garden and help them get their hands in the dirt.
- Find out why people prefer or are satisfied with their current yard care practice. Offer several shorter classes — like how to attract bees, what hummingbirds like, etc — that would lure people in.
- Finding a Graphic Designer to streamline the advertisements about the class, handout material in class and just to provide a cohesive vibe would get more peoples interest. Also putting up posters in the bagelry, wonderland herbs, the co-op, and downtown would draw a younger crowd who were interested in this kind of program. It is great that the class was filled with middle aged people but they need to be partnered up with someone younger who can help with projects so that everyone is successful. Since most young people will not

have their own land. Education needs to be passed to our youth in order for it to cause systematic change

- Garden tours of those who have ripped out lawns and formal gardens? Perhaps before and after pictures, and progress photos that show how patience is required.....
- Have slides available of really attractive gardens that implement natural yard care and label what they are doing so that students can study the pictures and learn from them.
- How to grow vegetable from seeds.
- I enjoyed the home tours and the park tour. It would be great to keep that and maybe add additional park tours for people to get a better sense of native plants, trees, and shrubs. The trip to a native nursery was also very much appreciated.
- I felt the class was excellent and hope it is implemented in Skagit County.
- I heard about the course from a master gardner and former course attendee. Perhaps more advertising through more diverse media.
- I loved it just as it was
- I loved the class so no. Maybe emphasize the fun and joy of gardening and don't sweat it if you can't always implement the Recommended practices. This is gardening not virtue signaling.
- I think that more people have become involved in gardening since the COVID19 pandemic hit. So a course like this should appeal to many.
- I think the class was great and Zi learned so much. It made a much better gardener.
- I thought it was a very worthwhile class, with the onsite visits really helpful.
- I was new to gardening in the Pacific Northwest when I took the class and thought it was a very helpful introduction to gardening here. I especially enjoyed learning about the native plants of the region and how to use them in our landscape.
- I'd love to see some examples of natural lawn replacements. They mentioned some with low growing flowers that you don't need to mow. Could someone grow some demo patches of these?
- If people have children, native plants could be part of a bigger interest like attracting birds, butterflies, bees and other pollinators. Also, they could help plant and care for plant til it gets established.
- If there was a way to include an introductory one hour class at the Co-op or some other venue, more people might be enticed to commit to the longer program. In most cases, I think the interest level would be enhanced if they knew more about the benefits to themselves and the community.
- In my opinion, or in my experience, I find that a natural yard is more work than a grass lawn and herbicide use. Maybe that is because I haven't actually planned my property out wisely, or it's too big, or whatever. I believe I do have a very challenging property. So for the "typical" person with a city-sized lot..... really come up with a honest, bottom-line approach that it can be easier after a few years, and can be beautiful, all the while helping the planet and its creatures. It's doing their part of hard work for a few years, and then it's easier and a benefit for not only them, but for all.
- In the Lake Whatcom watershed we are taking part in protecting our drinking water and mitigating climate chaos as best we can. More advertising. Folks can save \$\$ and energy from constant lawn mowing. Growing native berries supplements our diet deliciously (salmon/thimble/blackberry/strawberry/salal/red flowering currant). Fresh air, personal growth and fulfillment, and exercise. :-)
- Include Joan Nassauer's Cues to Care

- It was a superb class with actual field trips to demonstrate local landscape designs.
- It was a thoroughly enjoyable class taught by well informed and experienced instructors. My lack of progress in implementation is almost solely due to family issues. I strongly recommend this class. Thank you.
- It was an excellent course. The impediment to most people is wanting to look manicured, but without much work. If you could convince people that not every weed has to go it would help with chemicals. Perhaps teach something about succession - they can help improvement along without having to mulch or spray everything now.
- It's important that the participants be interested in making improvements and changes however small. So criteria for inclusion in the class is important. I participated because we had already applied for the HIP program. The field trips were very beneficial.
- Keep it free.
- Keep offering the class for free.
- Less of a time commitment. The yard tours very inspiring - do not limit these.
- Lists of native plants by size, shape, color, location needs
- lol. I don't think that's a problem. The class was full & there was a waiting list. I heard the class filled up in just a day or two at most. I felt lucky to get in. I appreciated that the other participants were serious about the class as well. Obviously, we are adults with other responsibilities. Things happen & people may have to miss a class, but over all, everyone really were able to attend well. I guess this is probably the main thing to make it so that more people would attend: offer classes at different times. So many people wanted evening or weekend classes. Daytime on weekdays worked great for me. But, by offering classes at various times, you'll reach more people.
- Make programs more accessible, for example library sessions covering the key essentials for healthy gardening. We actually do quite a bit of that in Whatcom County.
- Make sure people hear about it. Most people I talked with hadn't heard. When I took it I don't even think there was a cost, but it has great value. Have you thought about incorporating this at the high schools as part of biology? earth science? Botany? Not sure what classes they have but I would say to keep it in the most basic and core class so that ALL students get a taste of this. This is the kind of class that could change a kid's life. It could be the spark they were looking for to make a difference in the world
- Make them aware how destructive the deer are and how much work it takes to protect plantings
- Maybe an App or weekly tip that goes out to people who subscribe on their phone or email. The HIP program is great but maybe a smaller incentive that helps people make small changes and does not require such large investments. Maybe \$50 -\$100 in native plants in exchange for completing a pledge.
- Maybe have a natural methods Garden Tour to show others what's possible and attainable
- Maybe having shorter trainings on each topic, for those who cannot attend the full 6-week session (or however long it is). Libraries might be a good place for this. Online seminars/videos. Field trip yard visits for inspiration. Plant swaps. Facebook group for idea sharing and questions.
- more classes
- More effective advertising (emphasizing not only conservation and economic benefits, but also health, fun and personal fulfillment benefits); more networking with RE Sources, NSEA, B'ham and County Public Works/HIP departments; and more demonstration/tour field trips. We have hosted HIP and Gardening Green class field trips during our 2012 class session and

since then, and are eager to continue doing so. We can be reached at 360-353-4192, or loon13@comcast.net. Thank You!

- More garden visits.
- more publicity on the classes
- My expectations were met with this course. It should be attractive to interested gardeners as is.
- My landlords have been required to work with Whatcom county native plants administrators in conjunction with their property and have been turned off by the rigid implementation of the program - assigning plants that don't fit and plants that repeatedly die in certain areas. The determinations have seemingly been based on numbers and policy and lack a real life flexibility which has been frustrating for them. Therefore, my recommendation to make learning about natural yard care more attractive would be to address the administrative execution of the requirements so that tales like these aren't so likely to be retold in the community as this is not the only instance that I have heard such a story.
- Natural Landscaping requires tremendous maintenance. Tips and tools are most interesting and helpful.
- no
- No
- no
- No
- No
- No
- No, but I hope you continue to offer this class!
- No.
- No.
- no.
- no.
- No. Visits to existing gardens and home consultations were very valuable also.
- None.
- not sure but I hope you keep this class going thanks
- Offer financial incentives for purchasing native plants, mulch, and drip irrigation supplies.
- Offer mentoring for follow-up.
- Outstanding program, well organized and thoughtfully presented. Field trips and local examples especially effective.
- Perhaps a monthly newsletter reminding us of tasks, informing us of new ideas and new programs or classes we could take part in.
- previous comments.
- provide snacks
- See if gardeners for field trips are willing to release plans of their yard. Or work though a plan in class, maybe a small one, talking about best choices and good alternates.
- Seeing A variety of insects and birds not possible with lawns.
- Show people how they benefit: less time, less money, etc.... This draws them in & can get them interested even if they're not super interested in helping the environment.
- Stress the advantages and how it makes gardening more enjoyable and less stressful.
- study of microclimates for various plants

- The afternoon trips to gardens to see how the ideas were implemented were so useful and interesting. People may still want a landscape that is beautiful to their neighbors also. It could be useful to show some yards that emphasize a beautiful yard that also conserves water, benefits pollinators and is relatively low maintenance.
- The class was excellent for those who are VERY interested in gardening and wanting to get their nails dirty. Many topics delved into details. As a landscape architect I think that's great. But for the average gardener, maybe the details might be too much for weekend worriers. I would love to teach the garden design portion of the class to help those who want to improve their garden but don't know where to begin. I can help folks plan and layout their yards to allow spaces for a variety of uses: natural woodland, kitchen garden, BBQ area, fruit trees, and water feature to name just a few. Once the garden is laid out, then homeowners can implement one area of the garden at a time, as time and budget allows. Overall I would recommend this class to everyone interested in gardening in the northwest.
- The class was well done. The price was exceptionally right. The field trips and professional help given throughout the process was fantastic. Maybe break the class into two sessions with time (week or two) between them. Just so there would be time to do the homework and implement more. However it was well done.
- The cost of maintaining a yard/plants that are chemically supported. The cost to our planet and the cost even to our health. People seem to be so unwilling to care about this.
- The garden tours were great!
- The incentive of buying native plants at a reduced cost - having someone more knowledgeable help with a landscape plan. Maybe forming groups to help plant each other's yards (especially for seniors who cannot dig?) contact High Schools see if a Senior Project could be students helping weed areas again for seniors who have a hard time using their fingers to weed to get the yard ready to plant native drop resistant plants this could work on so many levels for the community to come together and work on these projects
- There are a lot of lawns in the watershed, perhaps encouraging making lawns more attractive by decreasing lawn size slightly and planting native plants. Perhaps evaluating where owners are and encouraging small changes.
- This was an excellent class! It was very rewarding for me. The tone of the class was about personal empowerment and how you can make an impact on your property and the world. It teaches you to change your mindset. I would recommend this class to everyone. We all can make a difference. I think people do not know enough about this topic therefore don't know how to approach gardening etc.
- Unfortunately most people I knew had jobs and could not attend.
- Use of social media to inform people about value of class
- Visiting more sample gardens and discussing experience
- We thoroughly appreciated the class, as did anyone else we knew who took it. If this sort of information became more widely available it would greatly reduce the mindless introduction of harmful chemicals into our lake and watershed. Keeping the cost down would make it more widely accessible. You might consider having a shortened or online version in addition to the full course for those with more limited time availability, but every section of the course was valuable and has increased my appreciation of good green practices immensely, so do continue to offer a full scale course.
- Well, it would save them money. That might be an appeal. It is good for the environment. They could start a gardening club in their neighborhood and meet other people. It is good

exercise. Spending time in nature is good for one's well being. They could get the kids off the computer and into the outdoors.

- Well, two projects in our neighborhood are not very attractive to look at, sorry to say. The yards look kind of overgrown and not too inviting. One is older and well-established and the other is less than 5 years ago. For us, the kind of native plants we want to grow are those that bloom and have color. We still hope to add more in the future. But we are not spring chickens, so one day at a time.
- When I enrolled in the class it filled up very quickly, so it seems that there's plenty of interest and actually not enough sessions offered for the class.