



# MINNESOTA NATURALISTS' ASSOCIATION

## Organization Highlight: Nine Mile Creek Watershed District

By Gael Zembal



The Nine Mile Creek Watershed District is a local unit of government that manages, protects and enhances the water resources in the Nine Mile Creek watershed. We have state authority to protect and manage the District's water resources for everyone's benefit. We serve the residents, property owners and visitors of the cities in our district: Bloomington, Eden Prairie, Edina, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Richfield. This year, we are celebrating our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary; we were the second watershed district formed in the Twin Cities, in 1959.

Our headquarters, Nine Mile Creek Discovery Point, is located in Eden Prairie, at 12800 Gerard Drive. It is situated in a renovated house, donated by Barbara Kaerwer. It sits on 5 acres of woodland, which we are restoring to native woodland and prairie. This building is a demonstration facility for storm water best management practices: we capture and infiltrate all the storm water onsite with 4 rain gardens, a cistern, and two kinds of permeable pavements.

We have a variety of programs to help people explore the natural areas of our watershed. We teach public programs, K-12, adult workshops, and professional trainings on topics ranging from outdoor recreation to lake ecology to sustainable landscaping. We also perform restoration projects on lakes, creeks, and shorelines to prevent erosion into the Minnesota River.

We also offer cost share grants to residents, businesses and non-profits within our watershed to put in storm water practices.

One of the big challenges we face is winter road salt. Nine Mile Creek has too much chloride in it from road salt and deicing chemicals. We are working with our partners to help reduce the deicing products used throughout our watershed. In 2019, the District won the Environmental Leadership Award for its work to reduce salt overuse.

To learn more about the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District, visit: [ninemilecreek.org/](http://ninemilecreek.org/)

Other watershed districts around the state offer similar programs—to find out which watershed district you are in, enter your (Twin Cities Metro Area) address into [this map](#). Outstate addresses can find their general watershed here: <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/watersheds>

### Photo Credit

Top Left-Right: Randy W; Wheelock Photography

