



# Frequently Asked Questions about Stormwater: “Reduce Your Lawn” FAQs



## **How many acres of lawn are in the U.S.?**

The U.S. has approximately 40 million acres planted as lawn. This is about the size of Florida.

## **Will changing to native plants instead of lawn be more expensive?**

Americans spend about \$40 billion every year on lawn care. This pays for lawn mowers to cut the grass, fertilizers to make it grow, and water costs of maintaining a green lawn in the summer. Changing to native plants will reduce or remove these costs to approximately 1-2 years of traditional lawn care. Once the upfront cost is paid, native plants require less watering, less care, and no mowing.

## **I need my lawn for activities, how else can I help?**

Firstly, be mindful of how much lawn you use to its fullest capacity. Are you using that space or just used to having that space open? If you can identify some corners to reduce your lawn that helps or if you can add a buffer strip to the edge of your lawn. With the remaining lawn, raise your mower blade. The longer the grass, the longer the roots which increases health of the soil. This healthy soil captures more rainwater and reduces stormwater. Try to cut no shorter than 3 inches.





### **Why aren’t lawns considered native plants?**

Early colonizers brought over the lawn-friendly grass for both a yearning to be like England and because the native grasses weren’t enough to feed livestock. The native grasses of the U.S. were plants like buffalo grass, broomsedge, and bluestem.

### **How does using native plants instead of traditional lawns improve air quality?**

Native plants are not regularly mowed like traditional lawns. According to the EPA, one new gas lawn mower emits the same amount of air pollution in an hour as eleven new cars being driven for one hour. The EPA also says that one gas mower releases 88 lbs of the greenhouse gas CO<sub>2</sub> every year. Reducing mowing nationwide will improve air quality.

### **Will native plants save me time?**

Yes! Native plants do not require fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides, mowing, and only benefit from annual to semiannual pruning. They also require less frequent watering. Once the native plants are established you are free to just enjoy your property instead of maintain it all summer.

### **Will native plants increase mosquitos on my property?**

No, mosquitos need pools to breed which can come from the frequent watering that traditional lawns need. Native plants create a good habitat for other bugs and birds which eat mosquitos and other



### **References**

<https://www.peoplepoweredmachines.com/faq-environment.htm>

<https://greentownlosaltos.org/2013/04/top-ten-reasons-to-replace-your-lawn-with-native-plants/>