



HOW CAN I HELP?

Drought Resilience and Stormwater Runoff Management for Residents

Two of the most helpful things homeowners in Crestone can do to fight our drought conditions and build a more resilient ecosystem are to plant drought-resistant vegetation and to collect rainwater runoff. Rather than letting the rain wash away and erode our yards and roadways, we can capture it and put it to work.

💧 Plant a Rain Garden

One of the best ways to trap stormwater runoff and turn it into useful groundwater is to plant a rain garden. These gardens usually go where rainwater naturally flows heavily, such as under the eaves of your roof or right by your gutter spouts. A layer of rock about 6 to 10 inches deep, followed by heavy compost and mulch, traps rainwater effectively and stops runoff.

The water then percolates down through the earth, eventually becoming groundwater that revitalizes our well supply. This process also filters stormwater and helps keep harmful pollutants out of our creeks and streams.

💧 Choose Native, Drought-Resistant Plants

Along with rock layers and compost, you can plant native drought-resistant vegetation that thrives in the rainy season and survives the drier months. These plants filter rainwater further and turn a simple water-collection pit into a beautiful garden. Building swales alongside your rain garden helps guide and hold even more water on your property.

💧 Rethink Your Lawn

You can also replace traditional turf with low-maintenance, drought-resistant lawn alternatives. Many lawn-seed mixes are native to our high-country biosphere and need far less water and mowing than traditional grass. Better still, many of these alternatives are pollinator friendly, so you can support local bee populations and protect our ecosystem while conserving water.

💧 Simple Ways to Get Started

- 💧 **Plant a rain garden** where runoff naturally collects, such as under eaves or near gutter spouts.
- 💧 **Layer rock, compost, and mulch** 6 to 10 inches deep to slow and trap stormwater.
- 💧 **Build swales** to guide and hold rainwater across your property instead of letting it run off.
- 💧 **Plant native, drought-resistant vegetation** that thrives in the wet season and survives the dry months.

- 💧 **Try a lawn alternative** that needs less water and mowing, and choose pollinator-friendly options to support local bees.

💧 Learn More

For step-by-step guides on rain gardens and swales, visit:

- ◆ **How to Build a Swale for Drainage (Grit):** <https://www.grit.com/farm-and-garden/do-it-yourself/how-to-build-a-swale-for-drainage-zm0z23jazawar/>
- ◆ **How to Build a Swale (Practitioner Guide, PDF):** https://www.fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/PG_Manual_HowTo_Swale_R2.pdf
- ◆ **Rain Garden Resources (Colorado State University):** <https://watercenter.colostate.edu/rain-garden-resources/>

Every drop we keep on the land recharges our wells.

Capturing rainwater today protects our creeks, supports our pollinators, and helps Crestone thrive through the dry months.