

KEY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY: Public Education and Outreach



SOURCE: NEVUE NGAN ASSOCIATES

Figure 6-14: An interpretive sign describing a vegetated swale project and the hydrologic cycle in San Mateo County.



SOURCE: KEVIN ROBERT PERRY - CITY OF PORTLAND

Figure 6-15: Students, visiting another school's rain garden project, hope that a similar project will be built on their school's grounds.



SOURCE: NEVUE NGAN ASSOCIATES

Figure 6-16: A green street public workshop describes several options for retrofitting a boulevard.

One of the best tools for successful stormwater management is educating the general public. There is a lot of confusion and misconceptions about using various stormwater management strategies. People sometimes think of stormwater facilities as “swamps” or “mosquito nests” and are unaware of well-designed stormwater facility examples. Likewise, people may not realize well-designed stormwater facilities can look just as good as conventional landscapes.

Therefore, it is important to show the general public specific examples of successful demonstration projects (local or otherwise) in order to assure them that stormwater facilities can help protect the environment and can also provide a unique and attractive neighborhood amenity. There are several ways to promote stormwater education and outreach, such as:

- Conduct public tours of successful stormwater projects built in the local area, including field trip tours for school children who would like to learn more about environmental sustainability.
- Offer public meetings/workshops on the topic of sustainable stormwater management. Provide specific education materials that explains that well-designed stormwater facilities should not allow any prolonged periods of standing water that promote mosquito breeding.
- Send out brochures or provide fact sheets that describe different ways to manage stormwater runoff.
- Install interpretative signs for key stormwater demonstration projects. The signs should describe the particular elements of a project and where to find more information.