

Chittenden County Stream Team Summary of Activities January-December 2015



This report summarizes CCST activities in the 2015 calendar year. Demographic data about participant numbers from each town is presented in tabular form following the narrative.

Social Media

Facebook

- 120 total “likes”-- a 15% increase in likes from 2014 annual report numbers (104 total likes)
Facebook ‘likes’ can’t be isolated by year; only total numbers over time can be counted.
- 20% of the people who like CCST are from Burlington (23 people)
- 41% of the people who like CCST live in CCST member towns (49 people)

CCST Website

Google Analytics provides website traffic data from: January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015

- 1,773 website visits, spending an average of 1 minute and 53 seconds on the website per visit. The number of visits is up 22% from 2014 (1,454 visits)
- 3,603 page views, similar to the 2014 quantity (3,683)
- 80.5% of visitors were new visitors to the site.
- The highest spike in page views occurred on April 2nd, with 39 visits, which coincided with the announcement that the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission was recognized by The New England Water Environment Association with a *Stormy Award* for “Regional Collaboration for Enhanced Stormwater Program Efficiency.” Website traffic remained relatively high through April and May as the Connecting the Drops display was planned and installed. There were also spikes in July around the time of the rain barrel give-away and two rain barrel workshops. On average, the busiest months for web traffic were April, May, June and July.

Newsletter and e-correspondence

- In 2015, there were 459 subscribers to the CCST newsletter, up 55% from 295 in 2014.
- A spring newsletter was sent out in May with a 37.1% open rate. A fall newsletter was sent out in October with a 42.1 % open rate. CCST E-News open rate is high; the typical open rate for similar industries is between 20-25% according to research completed by Mail Chimp.
- The Mail Chimp email list was used throughout the year to announce rain barrel workshops and to request volunteers for water quality monitoring.



Chittenden County Stream Team

Summary of Activities January-December 2015

Organizational Partnerships

The Chittenden County Stream Team partnered with nine different organizations in 2015; CCST partnered with 12 organizations in 2014.

- A local gardener donated plants for the Stream Team's rain gardens. In 2015, Ann Pearce provided CCST with dozens of iris, lobelia and native grasses for multiple rain gardens (Chamberlin School, South Burlington and Williston Town Hall Annex, Williston).
- CCST worked with multiple schools and school groups this year for hands-on events and for outreach opportunities. The Stream Team partnered with teachers from South Burlington High School, Winooski High School and the Winooski Teen Center. Additionally, students from Champlain Valley Union High School decorated two of the rain barrels for the Connecting the Drops 3.0 display.
- CCST partnered with towns and other local organizations to host two rain barrel workshops. CCST partnered with the South Burlington Natural Resources Committee, the South Burlington Department of Public Works and the Town of Williston Public Works Department to hold the rain barrel workshops.
- During the 2015 Connecting the Drops outreach campaign and events, CCST partnered with the Let it Rain program (administered by Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District and UVM's Lake Champlain Sea Grant) to develop outreach materials and to manage the events. Lake Champlain Sea Grant staff member Becky Tharp recruited the artists for the displayed rain barrels and coordinated press and advertising. CCST partnered with the Town Williston to provide outreach for Connecting the Drops, display the barrels and engage citizens.
- CCST worked with the Milton Conservation Commission to provide outreach to the community and to build-up future ideas for hand-on participation in the town.

Media

The Chittenden County Stream Team had six media appearances this year, and increase from 4 in 2014. Copies of each article are archived in the CCST 3-ring binder housed at the office of the CCST chair (if applicable).

- Water Environment Federation (WEF) Stormwater Report May 5, 2015 (Stormy Award recognition) <http://stormwater.wef.org/2015/05/stormy-awards-elevate-new-england-stormwater-efforts/>
- Milton Independent: May 7, 2015. The Stream Team is not mentioned in the linked article, but there was a picture of CCST tabling at Milton's Green-Up Day and a caption in the print edition. <http://www.miltonindependent.com/retro-rubbish/>
- Williston Observer: May 21, 2015 <http://www.willistonobserver.com/artsy-stormwater-management-i-89-northbound-rest-stop-gets-new-rain-barrel/>
- Williston Observer: July 30, 2015 <http://www.willistonobserver.com/photos-building-a-rain-barrel/b> Photos of the Connecting the Drops rain barrel workshop
- The Citizen: May 14, 2015: <http://www.thecitizenvt.com/2015/05/14/partnership-offers-rain-barrel-workshop-june-7/>
- Shelburne News: May 6, 2015: <http://www.shelburnenews.com/2015/05/06/build-your-own-rain-barrel-june-7/>

Outreach



Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District

“Connecting people to a sustainable landscape”

Chittenden County Stream Team Summary of Activities January-December 2015

Outreach events include tabling and the distribution of educational materials or information. There were nine outreach events in 2015 in which the Stream Team interacted with 324 people. See Table 1 below for detailed outreach audience information. An additional 36 people clicked on Front Porch Forum advertisements about the Connecting the Drops 3.0 outreach campaign, bringing total outreach numbers to 360.

- Milton Green-Up Day (5/2/2015, 36 people reached)
- Connecting the Drops 3.0 ribbon cutting ceremony in Williston (5/18/15, 35 people reached)
- Presentation to Milton Conservation Commission (6/23/15, 7 people reached)
- Williston Independence Day Celebration (7/3/15, 35 people reached)
- Burlington farmers Market (8/1/15, 46 people reached)
- Water Works Fair in Burlington (8/9/15, 26 people reached)
- Summervale in Burlington (8/20/15, 28 people reached)
- Shelburne Farmers Market (9/12/15, 33 people reached)
- Shelburne Harvest Festival (9/19/15, 88 people reached)

Event-Driven Tasks

There were nine hands-on events held and the continuation of on-going tasks including, rain garden adoption and maintenance, and water quality monitoring in 2015. Detailed participation data is provided in Table 2.

- Rain Barrel Painting for Connecting the Drops 3.0 Display (April/May 2015)
 - Partnered with Champlain Valley Union High School's Art club to decorate two rain barrels for the Connecting the Drops 3.0 display in Williston
 - Six students and one teacher worked to paint two display barrels
- Rain Garden Adopters are Supplied with Plants and Mulch for work days in mid-May (May2015)
 - Rain garden adopters worked to maintain the gardens at Williston Town Hall Annex, Chamberlain Elementary School in South Burlington and at the Coast Guard Station in Burlington.
 - Donated rain garden plants were planted in the Chamberlin School garden in South Burlington, the Williston Town Hall Annex garden, and in the Coast Guard Station garden in Burlington. Other volunteers maintained the gardens but were not in need of supplies.
- Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Training/Sampling and Volunteer Thank You (6/16/2015)
 - Interest in the water quality monitoring program was high; 28 people contacted CCST to find out more information about volunteering. Of those who contacted CCST, 22 volunteers participated in the water quality monitoring training session. Sampling occurred on five scheduled dates (6/23, 7/07, 7/21, 8/04, 8/18, 9/1)
 - Sampling was expanded this year to include e. coli sampling at Wheeler Park in South Burlington
 - Volunteers were recognized for their dedication with pizza and appreciation during the water quality monitoring training event.
 - Analyzed sampling data was uploaded to the CCST [website](#).
- Rain Barrel Decorating at the Williston Independence Day Celebration (7/3/2015)
 - 17 Williston residents participated in rain barrel decoration during the Connecting the Drops 3.0 rain barrel give away at the Independence Day Celebration; most of these people also signed up to win a rain barrel.
- South Burlington Rain Barrel Workshop (7/7/2015)



Chittenden County Stream Team Summary of Activities January-December 2015

- Partnered with South Burlington’s Natural Resources Committee and the South Burlington Department of Public Works to hold a rain barrel workshop
- 32 participants built 29 barrels. All participants received outreach materials about rain barrels and stormwater.
- Connecting the Drops 3.0 Rain Barrel Workshop (7/25/2015)
 - Partnered with the Town of Williston’s Public Works Department and Lake Champlain Sea Grant to prepare and advertise for the event.
 - 32 participants built 26 rain barrels. All participants received outreach materials about rain barrels and stormwater.
- Potash Brook Stream Clean-Up with South Burlington High School (9/20/2015)
 - Partnered with South Burlington High School Environmental Science class
 - 21 students and 1 teacher participated in the clean-up, removing four bags of trash from Potash Brook.

CCST Outreach and Event Demographic Impacts

Since participation numbers for Milton and Shelburne were low in 2014 and because CCST had not focused on Burlington in some time, these towns were identified as the outreach target towns in 2015. Displayed in the table below, 2015 outreach efforts in these towns were a success and all workplan goals were met. Hands-on events are planned for these 3 towns in 2016.

Table 1: Participation in Outreach Activities by CCST Member Town

Activity	Location	Participant Town									Total
		Burlington	South Burlington	Essex	Essex Jct	Milton	Shelburne	Williston	Winooski	Other/Unkown	
Facebook 'Likes'	N/A	23	10	0	4	2	2	4	4	71	120
Website Visits	N/A	236	42	58	0	4	7	27	5	1,394	1773
e-news Mailing List	N/A	56	40	10	34	30	13	71	25	180	459
Green-Up Day	Milton	0	0	1	0	32	0	0	0	3	36
Milton Conservation Commission	Milton	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	7
CtD 3.0 Ribbon Cutting Ceremony	Williston	3	0	3	0	0	1	18	0	0	25
Independence Day Celebration	Williston	0	0	5	2	0	0	28	0	0	35
Farmers Market	Burlington	25	8	0	2	2	1	0	3	5	46
Summervale	Burlington	18	1	0	3	0	0	0	3	3	28
Water Works Fair	Burlington	19	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	26
Harvest Festival	Shelburne	35	0	3	0	0	5	11	9	25	88
Farmers Market	Shelburne	0	0	0	0	0	28	0	1	4	33
Front Porch Forum CtD 3.0 Ad 'clicks'	Williston	0	0	0	0	0	0	36	0	0	36
	Total	415	103	81	48	77	57	195	50	1686	2712

**Colchester represents a portion of the “other” participants, with 51 Colchester residents engaged with CCST outreach events (See Table 3 for details).

Hands-on participation events in 2015 were targeted to the towns of Williston, Winooski and South Burlington. The workplan goals for participation were met and exceeded in all three towns. There were a total of 188 event participants in 2015, surpassing the workplan goal of 100 participants. Outreach towns for the following year are selected from end-of-year event participation numbers and frequency of targeting a town. Based on the participation numbers from 2015 and the inclusion of Colchester into CCST, the towns that will be targeted for outreach in 2016 are: Colchester, Essex and Essex Junction.



Chittenden County Stream Team Summary of Activities January-December 2015

Table 2: Participation in Hands-On /Event-Driven Projects

Activity	Location	Participant Town									Total
		Burlington	South Burlington	Essex	Essex Jct	Milton	Shelburne	Williston	Winooski	Other/ Unkown	
Adopt-a Rain Garden Maintenance Days	Multiple	7	12	0	9	0	0	4	0	0	32
WQ Monitoring Training and Volunteer appreciation	Williston	7	5	1	2	0	1	4	2	0	22
WQ Monitoring Volunteers	Multiple	5	4	0	0	0	1	3	1	0	14
Stream Clean-Up	Winooski	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	10
Painting Barrels for CTD Display	Hinesburg (CVU)	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	3	7
Rain Barrel Workshop	South Burlington	9	14	0	0	0	3	0	0	6	32
Rain Barrel Decorating	Williston	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	0	0	17
Rain Barrel Workshop	Williston	0	3	1	1	3	0	22	0	2	32
Stream Clean-Up	South Burlington	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22
		28	60	2	12	3	6	53	13	11	188

Other Vermont towns that are not part of the Chittenden County Stream Team participate in CCST activities. The chart below identifies towns with significant participation (Table 3).

Table 3. Participation in CCST Activities from Non-Member Towns

CCST Outreach and Event Participation Beyond Participating MS4 Towns									
	Huntington	Jericho	Richmond	Hinesburg	Charlotte	Colchester	Montpelier	St. Albans	Total
Facebook likes	1	4	0	3	0	7	4	4	23
e-news	1	2	4	3	1	12	0	2	25
website visits	0	2	1	6	1	26	48	8	92
Green-Up Day tabling in Milton	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
Burlington Farmers Market	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Burlington's Summervale	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Water Works Fair (BTV)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Shelburne Harvest Fest	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4
Shelburne Farmers Market	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	2	8	5	14	3	51	54	16	153

Connecting the Drops 3.0

In 2013, the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District received a grant from the Ecosystem Restoration Program, VT DEC, for Let it Rain, a technical and financial assistance program aimed at supporting landowners in the installation of low impact development practices, and subsequently received funding from the Lake Champlain Basin Program to support this initiative with funding for outreach and education to landowners about stormwater. Connecting the Drops emerged from Let it Rain as an art and education installation about stormwater, featuring rain barrels, in downtown Burlington in the summer of 2013. WNRCD received a \$40,000 grant from ECOS to develop Connecting the Drops. RSEP provided an additional \$12,500 to leverage the exhibit's exposure for logo placement on print and web ads, signage, website, fliers, and verbal recognition at public events associated with the exhibit.



Chittenden County Stream Team Summary of Activities January-December 2015

Based on the successful outcomes of the 2013 campaign, RSEP members requested a proposal for a second year of the Connecting the Drops Project, known as Connecting the Drops 2.0 (CtD 2.0). With a significantly smaller scope, Lake Champlain Sea Grant (LCSG) worked with The Chittenden County Stream Team (CCST) to develop a “traveling” version of the Connecting the Drops exhibit to be held in Essex Junction during the summer of 2014. CtD 2.0 had a significant impact on successfully meeting and exceeding CCST’s outreach goals in 2014. The amount spent by CCST (\$1,728.77) on CtD2.0 was six percent of CCST’s FY15 budget. This relatively small budget percentage had a large impact on overall community participation numbers, which exceeded workplan goals in 2014. Due to the success of CtD2.0, CCST decided to pursue a third year of the campaign, Connecting the Drops 3.0 (CtD 3.0). The Town of Williston was selected because it was a 2015 CCST target town and there was support from town representatives.

Full reports on the details of the CtD 3.0 and all of the Connecting the Drops campaigns are available and on file with the CCST chairs.

A total of seven rain barrels were displayed at Williston Community Park for the CtD 3.0 exhibit displayed from May 23-June 29, 2015. Five barrels were decorated by local artists and two barrels were decorated by student artists from the Champlain Valley Union High School Art Club. In addition to the display in Williston Community Park, there were two outreach events associated with CtD 3.0 and a build-your-own rain barrel workshop. Throughout the five weeks that the rain barrels were on display in Williston Community Park before the give-away, 85 people applied through the Let it Rain website/QR code on the display signage to win a rain barrel (Table 4); an additional 30 people signed up during the Independence Day celebration (Table 5) for a total of 115 sign-ups.

Table 4. Rain Barrel Sign-Ups by Town (QR Code)

Town	# of People
Burlington	4
Essex	2
Essex Junction	9
South Burlington	2
Williston	55
Colchester	2
Other	11
TOTAL	85

Table 5. Rain Barrel Sign-Ups by Town (During Event)

Town	# of people
Williston	26
Essex	2
Essex Junction	1
Burlington	1
Total	30

The total cost to plan, manage and implement CtD 3.0 was \$3,800.84. In addition to personnel hours for project management and travel funds, the primary costs are compensation for the five professional artists (\$1,000) and paid advertising (\$722.10). CCST staff used 48.5 personnel hours and \$94.55 of mileage to plan and execute CtD3.0.

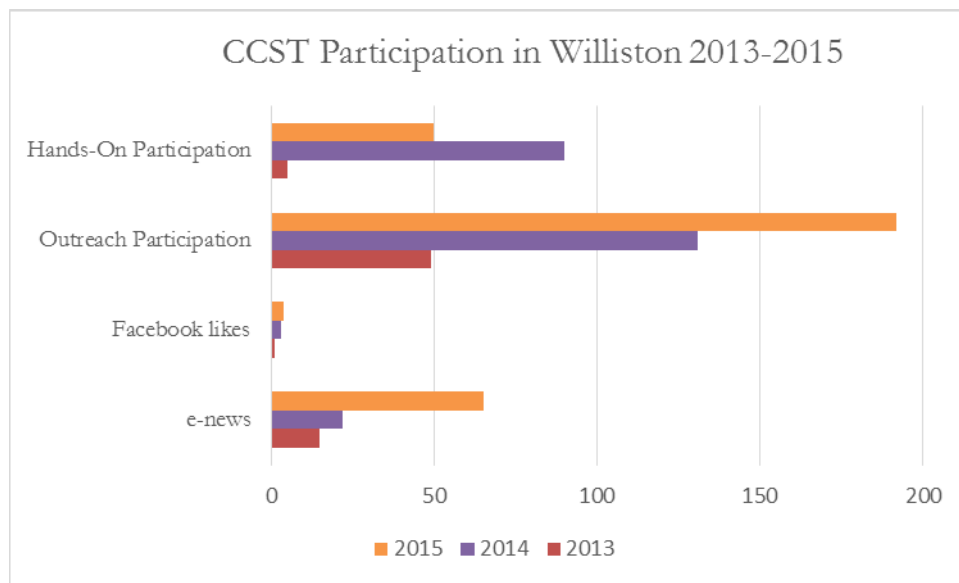
Connecting the Drops 3.0 had a significant impact on CCST’s successful year in 2015. The amount spent by CCST (\$3,800.84) is 14 percent of CCST’s FY15 budget. This relatively small budget percentage had a large impact on the overall participation numbers in 2015. All workplan targets for outreach and event participation in Williston were exceeded through the CtD 3.0 events. Additionally, the draw of signing up to win a rain barrel at the Williston Independence Day Celebration resulted in the largest impact in terms of outreach that CCST has made in Williston to date. Not only did Williston residents sign up to win a barrel, but many of them took outreach materials, talked with CCST staff and/or decorated CCST’s chalkboard rain



Chittenden County Stream Team Summary of Activities January-December 2015

barrel. A comparison of participation numbers in Williston between 2013, 2014 and 2015 for equivalent events and interactions is provided below (Figure 1). The elevated outreach numbers may be attributed to the increased CCST presence and advertising efforts that occurred through CtD3.0.

Figure 1. Williston Participation Numbers 2013-2015



Adopt-a Rain Garden Program Summary

The Stream Team’s Adopt-a-Rain Garden program is an opportunity for individuals to assist in keeping Chittenden County’s public rain gardens clean and attractive by performing basic maintenance activities like picking up litter, pulling weeds, and installing new mulch. The “adopted” gardens are of varying age and origin. A few were installed by the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District/Chittenden County Stream Team, some have been in existence for a long time and needed extra care, while others are new. Information about CCST adopt-a-rain garden program is available on the Stream Team [website](#). In 2015, CCST chairs approved funding to create signage for the rain gardens. The signs were printed and installed in several gardens.

Following is a description of the status of each of the CCST public rain gardens; Table 6 condenses the information:

Brownell Library Rain Garden

Location: 6 Lincoln St. Essex Junction

Status: This garden has existed for many years and has several mature shrubs. Unfortunately, several of the mature shrubs are the invasive burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*.) Although the garden does not currently have an adopter, it has had an active adopter over the last several years. Additional plants and mulch were added to the garden in 2013 and 2014. It has been weeded and well-maintained in 2013, 2014 and 2015. Brownell Library staff are interested in getting rid of the burning bush. CCST would like to work with the Village of Essex Junction to remove the invasive plants and seek replacement shrubs.



Chittenden County Stream Team

Summary of Activities January-December 2015

Callahan Park Rain Garden

Location: Locust St., Burlington

Status: This garden has been functioning well for some time, despite its surrounding conditions. In 2013 the garden began to experience significant slumping. Work was done to repair the slumping, which caused the loss of many plants. However, the garden appears to be building back up and doing better. This garden has an active volunteer, Brad Ketterling, who is committed to weeding and monitoring the garden. This garden received donated plants in 2015. Brad is interested in adding more pollinator species in the future.

Chamberlain School

Location: 262 White Street, South Burlington

Status: This garden was installed in partnership with WNRCDC and the Let it Rain Program in 2013. This is one of several rain gardens on the grounds of Chamberlain Elementary. Chris Provost has adopted this garden and actively maintains it. He often uses his students to help maintain the gardens and uses the gardens as an educational aide. Additional plants and mulch were provided to these gardens in 2014 and 2015.

Coast Guard Station

Location: Depot Street, Burlington

Status: This garden was very overgrown for some time. It is a small garden in a large parking lot at the edge of Lake Champlain. In 2014, CCST worked with the ECHO summer kids program to engage elementary school children in rain gardens. In several work sessions over the summer, the students pulled weeds, removed trash, planted dozens of new plants and applied mulch. The garden is doing very well and now has an active adopter, Wiley Reading.

Correctional Facility

Location: 7 Farrell St., South Burlington

Status: This garden is visible from the road and appears to be functioning. Originally, employees of the prison adopted this garden and would occasionally maintain the garden with inmates. There has been a lot of staff turn-over in the past few years without a clear adopter. In 2013, CCST delivered upwards of 50 plants to the center to be planted by the inmates. We were told that there was a weed-pulling day in 2014.

Farrell Park

Location: Swift Street, South Burlington

Status: This garden is unique in terms of its design. It is called an “advanced wetland stormwater filter.” It was installed in 2012. Stormwater enters the garden through inlet, flows through the gravel wetland filter media, is cleaned and exits through other end. The garden requires very little maintenance because it has a flushing system that prevents sediment from building up. This garden had an active adopter for its entire life, until 2015 when the adopter moved away. The garden was not ever in need of additional plants or maintenance. It would not be appropriate to add mulch to this garden. CCST would like to find another adopter to bring any issues to our attention.

Landry Park

Location: North St., Winooski

Status: This garden was constructed in 2006. It was originally constructed as two separate gardens along the narrow strip of grass between a fence at Landry Park and the road. Over the years, the garden has fallen into



Chittenden County Stream Team Summary of Activities January-December 2015

disrepair. A few years ago, nearby road construction altered the slope of the road carrying larger volumes of water into the garden. The increased flows have killed most of the vegetation and caused gullies to form. Over the years, CCST has attempted to add more vegetation and mulch in hopes of slowing the flow, but these attempts have not been successful. The City of Winooski is willing to work with CCST to repair the garden. Currently UVM students in an Ecosystem Design course are developing recommendations to repair the garden. There is no current adopter; the adoption program was put on hold for this garden as we try to address its problems.

Williston Town Hall Annex

Location: 7900 Williston Rd, Williston

Status: This small garden, near the entrance walkway to the Annex building and the parking lot, has had an active adopter since 2014, Rita Desseau. Each year she weeds the garden and has installed plants and mulch as needed. In 2013, after an absence of care for a year, UVM students helped clear the garden of trash and weeds.

Williston Library

Location: 21 Library Lane, Williston

Status: This garden has had an active adopter for many years. Andrew Wolf cares for the garden and keeps CCST posted on its status. The garden is functioning properly, is weeded and not in need of any extra care.

New Garden:

South Burlington Fire Department

575 Dorset St.

Status: South Burlington recently installed a bioretention area/rain garden to improve stormwater management at the Fire Department. <http://www.sburlstormwater.com/stormwater-projects/city-offices-stormwater-improvement-project/>. We have been actively looking for a volunteer to maintain this garden over time.

Table 6. CCST 2015 Rain Garden Status Update

Town	Garden Name	Adopter	Last Miantenance	Needs
Burlington	Coast Guard Station	Yes	plants/mulch 2014, 2015 weeding	None
Burlington	Callahan Park	Yes	plants/weeding 2015	None
South Burlington	Farrell Park	No	monitored through 2014	Nothing for garden, but do need a new adopter
South Burlington	Correctional Center	Yes	2014 plants/weeding	Touch base with new staff
South Burlington	Chamberlain School	Yes	2015 plants/mulch	none
South Burlington	Fire Station	No	new garden	needs adopter
Essex Junction	Brownell Library	No	2014/2015 new plants, weeding	Needs new adopter, needs removal of invasives
Williston	Town Hall Annex	Yes	2015 weeding/2014 mulch and plants	None
Williston	Willsiton Library	Yes	2015 plants/weeding	None
Winooski	Landry Park	No	2014 plants, weeding (2015 maintenance on hold)	Serious attention/redesign

