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LOW-IMPACT
DEVELOPMENT
CENTER

Low Impact Development (LID)

A Literature Review

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A literature review was conducted to determine the availability and reliability of data to assess the effectiveness of low impact development (LID) practices for controlling stormwater runoff volume and reducing pollutant loadings to receiving waters.

Background information concerning the uses, ownership and associated costs for LID measures was also compiled. In general LID measures are more cost effective and lower in maintenance than conventional, structural stormwater controls. Not all sites are suitable for LID. Considerations such as soil permeablility, depth of water table and slope must be considered, in addition to other factors. Further, the use of LID may not completely replace the need for conventional stormwater controls.

Maintenance issues can be more complicated than for conventional stormwater controls because the LID measures reside on private property. In most instances, homeowners agree to only the first year of maintenance. Homeowner associations could be a mechanism for providing long-term maintenance to these areas. Generally, bioretention facilities require replacement of dead or diseased vegetation, remulching as needed, and replacement of soils after 5–10 years. Grass swales require periodic mowing and removal of sediments. Maintenance of permeable pavements requires annual high-powered vacuuming of the area to remove sediments.

Several studies have been conducted to analyze the effectiveness of various LID practices based on hydrology and pollutant removal capabilities. Bioretention areas, grass swales, permeable pavements and vegetated roof tops were the most common practices studied. These techniques reduce the amount of Effective Impervious Area (EIA) in a watershed. EIA is the directly connected impervious area to the storm drain system and contributes to increased watershed volumes and runoff rates. There are documented case studies that conclusively link urbanization and increased watershed imperviousness to hydrologic impacts on streams. Existing reports and case studies provide strong evidence that urbanization negatively affects streams and results in water quality problems such as loss of habitat, increased temperatures, sedimentation and loss of fish populations (USEPA, 1997)

In general bioretention areas were found to be effective in reducing runoff volume and in treating the first flush (first ½ inch) of stormwater. Results from three different studies indicate that removal efficiencies were quite good for both metals and nutrients. Removal rates for metals were more consistent than for nutrients. Removal rates for metals ranged from 70–97% for lead, 43–97% for copper and 64–98% for zinc. Nutrient removal was more variable and ranged from 0–87% for phosphorus, 37–80% for Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen, <0–92% for ammonium and for nitrate <0–26%. Effluent volumes were lower than influent volumes. These studies were conducted by means of simulated rainfall events. Analysis of actual long-term rainfall events would produce more reliable data.

The effectiveness of grass swales was also quite good for both pollutant removal and runoff volume reduction. A study of three different sites in the United States reveal similar results despite the differences in location. In general, performance of swales is

dependant on not only channel length, but also longitudinal slope and the use of check dams to slow flows and allow for greater infiltration. Further, the removal of metals was found to be directly related to the removal rate of total suspended solids, and the removal rate of metals was greater than removal of nutrients.

Reduction of impervious surfaces can greatly reduce the volume of runoff generated by rainfall. Several methods can be employed to reduce total impervious surface area. Permeable pavements and vegetated rooftops are two methods to accomplish this goal. Vegetated rooftops have been used extensively in Germany for more than 25 years and results show up to 50% reduction in annual runoff in temperate climates. Many opportunities exist to retrofit these systems into older highly urbanized areas of the United States. The Philadelphia project case study provides an example of this practice.

Permeable pavements can also reduce impervious surfaces. However, they are more expensive to construct than traditional asphalt pavements. Costs of these systems may be off set by the reduction of traditional curb and gutter systems to convey stormwater. Benefits of these alternate pavement types include better infiltration, ground water recharge, reduction in runoff volume and treatment of stormwater for pollutants. The study conducted in Tampa, Florida outlines these benefits as well as the opportunity to retrofit permeable pavements into existing parking lots with little or no loss of parking space. Less than 20% of rainfall was converted to runoff when using permeable pavements. Study results from the University of Washington, compare several different treatments of varying permeablility. The study shows that the higher the amount of perviousness of the treatment, the greater the reduction of runoff volume and pollutant loadings.

The use of LID is relatively new and not widespread. Most of the available data are from Prince George's County, Maryland, which pioneered the use of LID. The data available for bioretention analysis were from single simulated storm events in actual bioretention facilities or from laboratory constructed and tested bioretention systems. The data for grass swales were for only a few storm events, collected over a short period of time. The only available data for a long-term study came from the Aquarium parking lot in Tampa, Florida and the Washington permeable pavement project. More long-term analysis is required to more accurately assess the effectiveness of LID and to determine long term trends.

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1 LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

1.1 Introduction

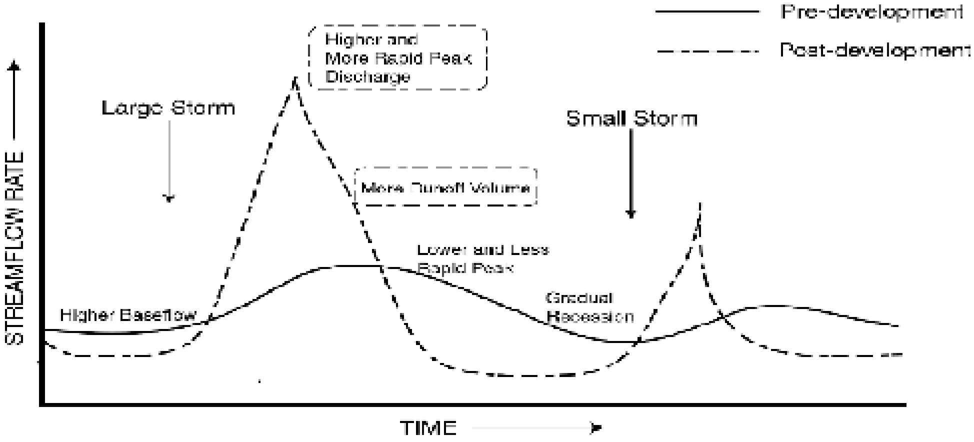
Low impact development (LID) is a relatively new concept in stormwater management. LID techniques were pioneered by Prince George’s County, Maryland, in the early 1990's, and several projects have been implemented within the state. Some LID principles are now being applied in other parts of the country, however, the use of LID is infrequent and opportunities are often not investigated. The purpose of this report is to conduct a literature review to determine existing information about the application of LID in new development and existing urbanized areas, including ownership, operation and maintenance issues. A related objective was to locate relevant studies of LID projects, which would provide evidence of the effectiveness of LID in retaining predevelopment hydrology and as a mechanism for pollutant removal for stormwater. The data from the studies were analyzed for usefulness and validity and the findings are summarized.

LID is a site design strategy with a goal of maintaining or replicating the pre-development hydrologic regime through the use of design techniques to create a functionally equivalent hydrologic landscape. Hydrologic functions of storage, infiltration, and ground water recharge, as well as the volume and frequency of discharges are maintained through the use of integrated and distributed micro-scale stormwater retention and detention areas, reduction of impervious surfaces, and the lengthening of flow paths and runoff time (Coffman, 2000). Other strategies include the preservation/protection of environmentally sensitive site features such as riparian buffers, wetlands, steep slopes, valuable (mature) trees, flood plains, woodlands and highly permeable soils.

LID principles are based on controlling stormwater at the source by the use of micro-scale controls that are distributed throughout the site. This is unlike conventional approaches that typically convey and manage runoff in large facilities located at the base of drainage areas. These multifunctional site designs incorporate alternative stormwater management practices such as functional landscape that act as stormwater facilities, flatter grades, depression storage and open drainage swales. This system of controls can reduce or eliminate the need for a centralized best management practice (BMP) facility for the control of stormwater runoff. Although traditional stormwater control measures have been documented to effectively remove pollutants, the natural hydrology is still negatively affected (inadequate base flow, thermal fluxes or flashy hydrology), which can have detrimental effects on ecosystems, even when water quality is not compromised (Coffman, 2000). LID practices offer an additional benefit in that they can be integrated into the infrastructure and are more cost effective and aesthetically pleasing than traditional, structural stormwater conveyance systems.

Conventional stormwater conveyance systems are designed to collect, convey and discharge runoff as efficiently as possible. The intent is to create a highly efficient drainage system, which will prevent on lot flooding, promote good drainage and quickly convey runoff to a BMP or stream. This runoff control system decreases groundwater recharge, increases runoff volume and changes the timing, frequency and rate of discharge. These changes can cause flooding, water quality degradation, stream erosion and the need to construct end of pipe BMPs. Discharge rates using traditional BMPs may be set only to match the predevelopment peak rate for a specific design year. This approach only controls the rate of runoff allowing significant increases in runoff volume, frequency and duration of runoff from the predevelopment conditions and provides the mechanisms for further degradation of receiving waters (Figure 1).

LID has often been compared to other innovative practices, such as Conservation Design, which uses similar approaches in reducing the impacts of development, such as reduction of impervious surfaces and conservation of natural features. Although the goals of Conservation Design protect natural flow paths and existing vegetative features, stormwater is not treated directly at the source. Conservation Design protects large areas adjacent to the development site and stormwater is directed to these common areas.



Changes in stream hydrology as a result of urbanization (Schueler, 1992).

Figure 1: Changes in Stormwater Hydrology as a Result of Urbanization

Although this approach protects trees and does reduce runoff, there is still potentially a significant amount of connected impervious area and centralized stormwater facilities that may contribute to stream degradation through stormwater volume, frequency and thermal impacts. Therefore, the hydrologic and hydraulic impacts of this approach on receiving waters may still be significant, although the volume and flows will be less than without the conservation design. The stormwater control measures used in Conservation Design are off-site and therefore not the individual property owner's responsibility. However, maintenance is generally provided by the homeowners association and financed through association fees.

1.2 Benefits and Limitations

The use of LID practices offers both economical and environmental benefits. LID measures result in less disturbance of the development area, conservation of natural features and can be less cost intensive than traditional stormwater control mechanisms. Cost savings for control mechanisms are not only for construction, but also for long-term maintenance and life cycle cost considerations. For example, an alternative LID stormwater control design for a new 270 unit apartment complex in Aberdeen, NC will save the developer approximately 72% or $175,000 of the stormwater construction costs. On this project, almost all of the subsurface collection systems associated with curb and gutter projects have been eliminated. Strategically located bioretention areas, compact weir outfalls, depressions, grass channels, wetland swales and specially designed storm water basins are some of the LID techniques used. These design features allow for longer flow paths, reduce the amount of polluted runoff and filter pollutants from stormwater runoff (Blue Land, Water and Infrastructure, 2000).

Today many states are facing the issue of urban sprawl, a form of development that consumes green space, promotes auto dependency and widens urban fringes, which puts pressure on environmentally sensitive areas. "Smart growth" strategies are designed to reconfigure development in a more eco-efficient and community oriented style. LID addresses many of the environmental practices that are essential to smart growth strategies including the conservation of open green space. LID does not address the subject of availability of public transportation.

LID provides many opportunities to retrofit existing highly urbanized areas with pollution controls, as well as address environmental issues in newly developed areas. LID techniques such as rooftop retention, permeable pavements, bioretention and disconnecting rooftop rain gutter spouts are valuable tools that can be used in urban areas. For example, stormwater flows can easily be directed into rain barrels, cisterns or across vegetated areas in high-density urban areas. Further, opportunities exist to implement bioretention systems in parking lots with little or no reduction in parking space. The use of vegetated rooftops and permeable pavements are 2 ways to reduce impervious surfaces in highly urbanized areas.

LID techniques can be applied to a range of lot sizes. The use of LID, however, may necessitate the use of structural BMPs in conjunction with LID techniques in order to achieve watershed objectives. The appropriateness of LID practices is dependent on site conditions, and is not based strictly on spatial limitations. Evaluation of soil permeability, slope and water table depth must be considered in order to effectively use LID practices. Another obstacle is that many communities have development rules that may restrict innovative practices that would reduce impervious cover. These "rules" refer to a mix of subdivision codes, zoning regulations, parking and street standards and other local ordinances that determine how development happens (Center for Watershed Protection, 1998). These rules are responsible for wide streets, expansive parking lots and large-lot subdivisions that reduce open space and natural features. These obstacles are often difficult to overcome.

Additionally, community perception of LID may prevent its implementation. Many homeowners want large-lots and wide streets and view reduction of these features as undesirable and even unsafe. Furthermore, many people believe that without conventional controls, such as curbs and gutters and end of pipe BMPs, they will be required to contend with basement flooding and subsurface structural damage.

2 LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

LID measures provide a means to address both pollutant removal and the protection of predevelopment hydrological functions. Some basic LID principles include conservation of natural features, minimization of impervious surfaces, hydraulic disconnects, disbursement of runoff and phytoremediation. LID practices such as bioretention facilities or rain gardens, grass swales and channels, vegetated rooftops, rain barrels, cisterns, vegetated filter strips and permeable pavements perform both runoff volume reduction and pollutant filtering functions.

2.1 Bioretention

Bioretention systems are designed based on soil types, site conditions and land uses. A bioretention area can be composed of a mix of functional components, each performing different functions in the removal of pollutants and attenuation of stormwater runoff (Figure 2).

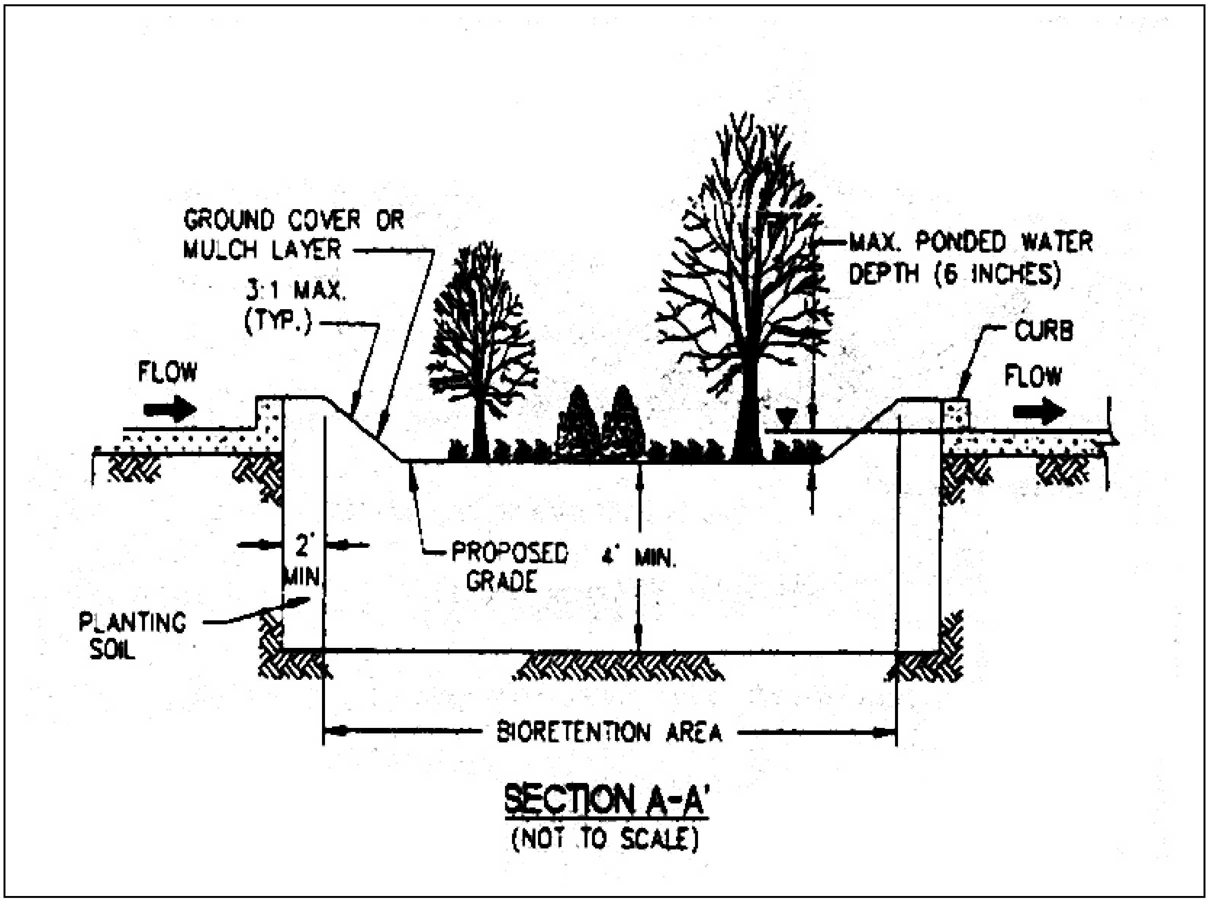


Figure 2: Typical Bioretention System (Prince George's County Department of Environmental Resources, 1993)

Six typical components found in bioretention cells:

- Grass buffer strips reduce runoff velocity and filter particulate matter.
- Sand bed provides aeration and drainage of the planting soil and assists in the flushing of pollutants from soil materials.
- Ponding area provides storage of excess runoff and facilitates the settling of particulates and evaporation of excess water.
- Organic layer performs the function of decomposition of organic material by providing a medium for biological growth (such as microorganisms) to degrade petroleum-based pollutants. It also filters pollutants and prevents soil erosion.
- Planting soil provides the area for stormwater storage and nutrient uptake by plants. The planting soils contain some clays which adsorb pollutants such as hydrocarbons, heavy metals and nutrients.
- Vegetation (plants) functions in the removal of water through evapotranspiration and pollutant removal through nutrient cycling.

Bioretention facilities are less cost intensive than traditional structural stormwater conveyance systems. Construction of a typical bioretention area in Prince George's County, Maryland is between $5,000 and $10,000 per acre drained, depending on soil type (Weinstein, 2000). Other sources estimate the costs for developing bioretention sites at between $3 and $15 per square foot of bioretention area. Design guidelines recommend that bioretention systems occupy 5-7% of the drainage basin. Additional savings can be realized in reduced construction costs for storm drainpipe. For example, bioretention practices reduced the amount of storm drain pipe at a Medical Office building in Prince George's County, Maryland from 800 to 230 feet, which resulted in a cost savings of $24,000 or 50% of the overall drainage cost for the site (Dept. of Env. Resources, 1993).

Components of the bioretention area should meet required guidelines in order to provide the most productive system possible. The mulch layer should be approximately 2-3 inches thick and replaced annually. Soil should be tested for several criteria before being used.

– pH range	5.5–6.5
– Organic matter	1.5–3.0%
– Magnesium (Mg)	35lbs/acre
– Phosphorus (P2O5)	100lbs/acre
– Potassium (K2O)	85lbs/acre
– Soluble salts	< 500 ppm

Plant material should be obtained from certified nurseries that have been inspected by state or federal agencies (Dept. of Env. Resources, 1993). Native species should be used and selected according to their moisture regime, morphology, susceptibility to pests and diseases and tolerance to pollutants. Selection of plant species should be based on site conditions and ecological factors. A minimum of three species of trees and three species of shrubs should be selected to insure diversity, differing rates of transpiration and ensure a more constant rate of evapotransportation and nutrient and pollutant uptake throughout the growing season (Dept. of Env. Resources, 1993). Species that require regular maintenance should be avoided or restricted. Prince George's County recommends a warranty be established with the nursery as part of the plant installation, and should include care and 80% replacement of plants for the first year.

Table 1: Example Maintenance Schedule for Bioretention Areas (Prince George's County, Department of Environmental Resources, 1993)

Description	Method	Frequency	Time of Year
Soil			
Inspect and Repair Erosion	Visual	Monthly	Monthly
Organic Layer			
Remulch void areas	By Hand	As Needed	As Needed
Remove previous mulch layer before applying new layer (optional)	By Hand	Once a Year	Spring
Additional mulch added (optional)	By Hand	Once a Year	Spring
Plants			
Remove and replace all dead and diseased vegetation that cannot be treated	See Planting Specifications	Twice a Year	Mar 15–Apr 30 and Oct 1–Nov 30
Treat all diseased trees and shrubs	Mechanical or by Hand	N/A	Varies, depends on insect or disease infestation
Water of plant materials, at the end of the day for 14 consecutive days after planting	By Hand	Immediately after Completion of Projects	N/A
Replace stakes after one year	By Hand	Once a Year	Remove only in the Spring
Replace deficient stakes or wires	By Hand	N/A	As Needed

Annual maintenance is required for the overall success of bioretention systems. This includes maintenance of plant material, soil layer and the mulch layer. A maintenance schedule outlining methods, frequency and time of year for bioretention maintenance should be developed. Table 1 is a typical maintenance checklist. Plants will provide enhanced environmental benefit over time as root systems and leaf canopies increase in size and pollutant uptake and removal efficiencies. Soils, however, begin filtering pollutants immediately and can lose their ability to function in this capacity over time. Therefore, evaluation of soil fertility is important in maintaining an effective bioretention system. Substances in runoff such as nutrients and metals eventually disrupt normal soil functions by lowering the cation exchange capacity (CEC) (Dept. of Env. Resources, 1993). CEC is the soil's ability to adsorb pollutant particles through ion attraction and will decrease over time. It is recommended that soils be tested annually and replaced when soil fertility is lost. Depending on environmental factors, this usually occurs within 5-10 years of construction. Replacement of soil can be accomplished in 1-2 days for approximately $1,000-$2,000 for a typical system which will drain one acre in the northeastern U.S. (Weinstein, 2000).

2.2 Grass Swales

Grass swales or channels are adaptable to a variety of site conditions, are flexible in design and layout, and are relatively inexpensive (USDOT, 1996). Generally open channel systems are most appropriate for smaller drainage areas with mildly sloping topography (Center for Watershed Protection, 1998). Their application is primarily along residential streets and highways. They function as a mechanism to reduce runoff velocity and as filtration/infiltration devices. Sedimentation is the primary pollutant removal mechanism, with additional secondary mechanisms of infiltration and adsorption. In general grass channels are most effective when the flow depth is minimized and detention time is maximized. The stability of the channel or overland flow is dependant on the erodibility of the soils in which the channel is constructed (USDOT, 1996). Decreasing the slope or providing dense cover will aid in both stability and pollutant removal effectiveness.

Engineered swales are less costly than installing curb and gutter/storm drain inlet and storm drain pipe systems. The cost for traditional structural conveyance systems ranges from $40–$50 per running foot. This is two to three times more expensive than an engineered grass swale (Center for Watershed Protection, 1998). Concerns that open channels are potential nuisance problems, present maintenance problems, or impact pavement stability can be alleviated by proper design. Periodic removal of sediments and mowing are the most significant maintenance requirements.

2.3 Vegetated Roof Covers

Vegetative roof covers or green roofs are an effective means of reducing urban stormwater runoff by reducing the percentage of impervious surfaces in urban areas. They are especially effective in older urban areas with chronic combined sewer overflow (CSO) problems, due to the high level of imperviousness. The green roof is a multilayered constructed material consisting of a vegetative layer, media, a geotextile layer and a synthetic drain layer. Vegetated roof covers in urban areas offer a variety of benefits, such as extending the life of roofs, reducing energy costs and conserving valuable land that would otherwise be required for stormwater runoff controls. Green roofs have been used extensively in Europe to accomplish these objectives. Many opportunities are available to apply this LID measure in older U.S. cities with stormwater infrastructures that have reached their capacities.

Green roofs are highly effective in reducing total runoff volume. Simple vegetated roof covers, with approximately 3 inches of substrate can reduce annual runoff by more than 50 percent in temperate climates (Miller, 2000). Research in Germany shows that the 3-inch design offers the highest benefit to cost ratio. Properly designed systems not only reduce runoff flows, but also can be added to existing rooftops without additional reinforcement or structural design requirements. The value of green roofs for reducing runoff is directly linked to the design rainfall event considered. Design should be developed for the storm events that most significantly contribute to CSOs, hydraulic overloads and runoff problems for a given area.

2.4 Permeable Pavements

The use of permeable pavements is an effective means of reducing the percent of imperviousness in a drainage basin. More than thirty different studies have documented that stream, lake and wetland quality is reduced sharply when impervious cover in an upstream watershed is greater than 10%. Porous pavements are best suited for low traffic areas, such as parking lots and sidewalks. The most successful installations of alternative pavements are found in coastal areas with sandy soils and flatter slopes (Center for Watershed Protection, 1998). Permeable pavements allow stormwater to infiltrate into underlying soils promoting pollutant treatment and recharge, as opposed to producing large volumes of rainfall runoff requiring conveyance and treatment. Costs for paving blocks and stones range from $2 to $4, whereas asphalt costs $0.50 to $1 (Center for Watershed Protection, 1998).

2.5 Other LID Strategies

Another strategy to minimize the impacts of development is the implementation of rain gutter disconnects. This practice involves redirecting rooftop runoff conveyed in rain gutters out of storm sewers, and into grass swales, bioretention systems and other functional landscape devices. Redirecting runoff from rooftops into functional landscape areas can significantly reduce runoff flow to surface waters and reduce the number of CSO events in urban areas. As long as the stormwater is transported well away from foundations, concerns of structural damage and basement flooding can be alleviated. As an alternative to redirection of stormwater to functional landscape, rain gutter flows can be directed into rain barrels or cisterns for later use in irrigating lawns and gardens. Disconnections of rain gutters can effectively be implemented on existing properties with little change to present site designs.

Many strategies exist to reduce the amount of impervious surface in development areas. Designing residential streets for the minimum required width needed to support traffic, on-street parking and emergency service vehicles, can reduce imperviousness. Other practices include shared driveways and parking lots, alternative pavements for overflow parking areas, center islands in cul-de-sacs, alternative street designs rather than traditional grid patterns and reduced setbacks and frontages for homes.

3 EVALUATION OF LID EFFECTIVENESS

3.1 Hydrological Measures

Enhancements in site drainage from traditional stormwater control measures, such as curbs and gutters that eliminate potential on-site flooding, often result in an increase in surface runoff. These alterations can cause an increase in volume, frequency and velocity of runoff flows, resulting in flooding, high erosion and a reduction in groundwater infiltration, as well as a reduction in water quality and habitat degradation. Four hydrological functions should be considered when investigating the effectiveness of LID practices. The runoff curve number (CN), time of concentration, retention and detention. LID techniques and the hydrological design and analysis components are represented in (Table 2).

Table 2: Low Impact Hydrologic Design and Analysis Components (Coffman, 2000)

	Low Impact Hydrologic Design and Analysis Components			
LID Practice	Lower Post-Development CN	Increase Tc	Retention	Detention
Flatten Slopes		X		
Increase Flow Path		X		
Increase Roughness		X		
Minimize Disturbances	X			
Flatten Slopes on Swale		X		X
Infiltration Swales	X		X	
Vegetative Filter Strips	X	X	X	
Disconnected Impervious Areas	X	X		
Reduce Curb and Gutter	X	X		
Rain Barrels		X	X	X
Rooftop Storage		X	X	X
Bioretention	X	X	X	
Revegetation	X	X	X	
Vegetation Presentation	X	X	X	

The runoff potential for a site is characterized by the runoff curve number or CN. One method of measuring hydrological function on a developed site is to compare the pre and post developed curve number. The CN method is used extensively in the analysis of environmental impact and design rainfall-runoff hydrology. The curve number measures a watershed or subwatershed's hydrological response and is determined based on soil type, land cover and amount of impervious surfaces (Hawkins 1998). A detailed evaluation of both proposed and existing land cover is the basis for determining the low-impact development CN, which is a calculation of the potential for runoff at a development site. One of the goals of LID is to design a system so that the post-developed CN is as close as possible to the predevelopment CN for the site. Limiting the percent of imperviousness is one technique to accomplishing this. The runoff coefficient, which can be derived from the CN, calculates the percent of rainfall converted to runoff.

The time of concentration (Tc) refers to the amount of time it takes for water to travel from the most distant point to the watershed outlet. By retaining predevelopment Tc, negative impacts associated with development can be reduced. Retention and detention of rainfall are the key components of increases in Tc. As the amount of impervious surface increases within a site, altering drainage paths, the contribution of total land area to excess rainfall increases, causing the time for stormwater to reach downstream outlets to decrease. This decrease in Tc reduces the pollutant removal capabilities of the site as well as resulting in an increase in the peak runoff rate. Maintaining Tc can be achieved by:

- Maintaining flow path lengths
- Increasing surface roughness
- Detaining flows
- Minimizing disturbances at the site
- Flattening grades in impact areas
- Disconnecting impervious surfaces
- Connecting pervious surfaces

3.2 Pollutant Removal Measures

Changes in site runoff characteristics can contribute to a reduction in water quality and degradation of aquatic and terrestrial habitats. LID practices provide a high level of water quality treatment controls due to runoff volume control of the "first flush" (first ½ inch) of runoff, which contains the highest pollutant loadings. Often LID practices control up to the first 2 inches of runoff and therefore treat a much greater volume of annual runoff (Coffman, 2000). By increasing the Tc and decreasing the flow velocity, LID practices result in a reduction in pollutant transport capacity and overall pollutant loading. Further, LID practices support pollution prevention by modifying human activities, which lower the introduction of pollutants into the environment.

LID practices such as bioretention facilities or rain gardens can be used as a mechanism for infiltration and pollutant removal, which is performed through physical and biological treatment processes occurring in the plant and soil complex. These processes include filtration, decomposition, ion exchange, adsorption and volatilization (Dept. of Env. Resources, 1993). Pollutant loadings are concentrated in the "first flush" of runoff from impervious surfaces and contain grease and oil, nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorous), sediments and heavy metals. Pollutant loadings and water quality impacts from development have been well documented in numerous studies. Concentrations of pollutants are appropriate to look at bio affects, but pollutant loads are better for assessing impacts to downstream habitats when cumulative effects are considered (Rushton, 1999). Studies should consider investigating both total metals and dissolved metals, when analyzing LID practice's effectiveness.

4 CASE STUDIES

The LID "functional landscape" is designed to mimic the predevelopment hydrological conditions through runoff volume control, peak runoff rate control, flow frequency/duration control and water quality control. Determining effectiveness of LID practices can be achieved by evaluating hydrological function and pollutant removal capabilities. Little investigation has been done to prove the actual effectiveness of LID in retaining predevelopment hydrology and preventing or reducing pollutant loadings caused by stormwater runoff on developed sites. LID is a relatively new concept in stormwater management and not widely implemented in all areas and climates in the United States. Limited research and analysis has been conducted on the various practices, due to this limited application.

The following case studies, though limited, represent the best examples of projects that use LID concepts for stormwater management. Both hydrologic and pollutant removal effectiveness are investigated. The most significant source for data is Prince George's County, Maryland where many of the LID practices were developed and first implemented. The Low-Impact Development Center, also located in Maryland, has done significant work in design and planning of LID sites. First year data from a two-year study of a Tampa, Florida, retrofit parking lot and an on-going permeable pavement project in Washington state provide the only long term analysis for the effectiveness of LID concepts (permeable pavements and swales) currently available.

4.1 Bioretention Facility
Laboratory and Field Study
Beltway Plaza Mall Parking Lot, Greenbelt, MD

Introduction

Land development results in increased stormwater runoff at the expense of infiltration. Additionally, surface runoff contains a broad range of pollutants and has been identified as one of the major sources for pollution of natural waters. Detention basins are commonly used for stormwater quality improvement and to optimize the infiltration of stormwater for recharge. A simple, yet effective method to control stormwater is through the use of bioretention areas or rain gardens.

Bioretention systems generally require less space, are more economical to build and require less maintenance than large-scale detention ponds. In addition these landscaped areas have aesthetic value. The design capacity for the system is generally for a typical storm event (0.5-0.7 inches per hour of rainfall over six hours) and to handle runoff from a small development area. The goal of this study is to compare field results with baseline data obtained through a laboratory constructed and tested bioretention systems.

Study Site

This study was conducted in two phases. The first phase took place at the University of Maryland, Department of Civil Engineering, Stormwater Lab in College Park, Maryland. Two different-sized bioretention prototypes were constructed and fitted with ports at varying depths in order to collect and analyze water quality and infiltration data. The small prototype was 2.5 ft wide and 3.5 ft long with a depth of 24 inches of material. The small bioretention system was fitted with two port depths. The large prototype was 10 ft long, 5 ft wide with a depth of 36 inches, and was fitted with three ports at various depth levels. Both systems had a freeboard of 6 inches, to allow water to accumulate if necessary. The soil, organic mulch layer and vegetation, were analyzed prior to construction to assure that the system was constructed according to design recommendations. Simulated runoff was applied to both systems at a rate of 1.6 inches per hour for six hours. A total of 16 simulations were tested on the small box, and four on the large prototype. The total volume of runoff applied to the small system was 200 L, and 1,000 L for the large system. These volumes represent the bioretention prototypes occupying 5% of a drainage area.

The second phase, a field study, took place at an existing bioretention facility located in the parking lot of Beltway Plaza in Greenbelt, Maryland. The depth of the system is 42" and is designed so that runoff infiltrates through the system and is collected by a 6-inch diameter perforated pipe underdrain, which feeds into the main storm drain system. A 7.5-ft x 7.5-ft area of the bioretention facility was used to conduct the study. Approximately 1,000 L of synthetic runoff, with characteristics similar to those used in the laboratory, were applied to the system over a 6-hour period. Effluent samples were collected from the main storm drain at 25-30 minutes intervals.

Study Results Summary

The laboratory results for the smaller prototype showed overall that the removal of heavy metals by the system was good. Cooper, lead and zinc levels in both upper and lower effluents had removal of more than 90%. Copper removal from samples taken from both ports was 94%. Lead removal was more effective from lower ports at 98%, but still good from upper ports at 94%. The average zinc removal from upper and lower ports was >96% (Table 3). No major variation of removal of metals occurred over time and all samples were less than EPA standards for freshwater. Nutrient removal for phosphorous was 65-75% from lower ports and approximately 40% from upper ports. The Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen (TKN) removal is 45-60% for the upper ports and 65-80% for the lower ports. Ammonium and nitrate removal followed no pattern and ranged from zero to 90%.

Table 3: Summary of Results for Smaller System—Standard Conditions

	Cu	Pb	Zn	P	TKN	NH_4^+	NO_3^-	Tn
Removal Upper	94%	94%	97%	25%	55%	60%	11%	60%
Removal Lower	94%	98%	98%	83%	80%	83%	26%	75%

Results from the large prototype correlated with those of the smaller constructed system. Experimental results indicated that removal of metals in most cases was more than 90%. Average copper removal for upper ports was 90% and 93% for middle and lower ports. Lead removal from upper ports was 93%, and >97% for middle and lower ports. The removal of zinc was 87% for upper ports and >96% for middle and lower ports. The data showed a trend of greater metal removal with depth. Nutrient removal was better from lower ports in most cases compared to removal of middle and upper ports. Phosphorous removal for lower ports was about 70-80% and 50-60% for middle ports. The upper ports showed a 10-15% increase in phosphorous levels above the influent amounts. The TKN removal was 50-75% for the lower and middle ports and a 45-30% increase was noted for upper ports. Removal of ammonium was 54% at upper ports, 86% for middle ports and 79% at lower ports (Table 4). Doubling or halving the influent pollutant levels during the laboratory testing had little effect on the effluent pollutant levels. Higher levels of phosphorous and TKN in effluent at the upper ports can be attributed to the vegetation.

Table 4: Summary of Results for Large System—Standard Conditions

	Cu	Pb	Zn	P	TKN	NH_4^+	NO_3^-	TN
Removal Upper	90%	93%	87%	0%	37%	54%	(-97%)	(-29%)
Removal Middle	93%	>97%	>96%	73%	60%	86%	(-194%)	0%
Removal Lower	93%	>97%	>96%	81%	68%	79%	23%	43%

During the field test at Beltway Plaza, a total of 1,000 L of synthetic runoff were applied to the bioretention area over a 6 hour period at a rate of approximately 0.5 inches per hour. Of the 1,000 L of influent, only 39% left the system. The remaining water leaked through cracks into the manhole, was held in the facility, or infiltrated. Effluent samples were analyzed for removal of nutrients and heavy metals (copper, lead and zinc).

The TKN removal was about 50% and the phosphorous removal was observed at approximately 65%. Nitrate concentrations were below input levels, with a removal of about 17%. The removal for ammonia was very good at >95%. Removal of metals was very good and was consistent with the laboratory results. The removal of copper was 97% and for lead, and zinc, the removal was >95% (Table 5).

Table 5: Summary of Results for Field Bioretention Study

	Cu	Pb	Zn	P	TKN	NH_4^+	NO_3^-	TN
Removal	97%	>95%	>95%	65%	52%	92%	16%	49%

Removal rates for the field study corresponded with the rates observed for the two laboratory constructed bioretention systems. In all cases pollutant removal rates approached 100% for the metals copper, zinc and lead. Doubling or halving the concentration levels of the influent had no effect on removal efficiencies and were statistically equivalent in nearly all cases. Pollutant removal rates for all systems are compared in the above graph (Figure 3). The negative removal rate for nitrate in the large prototype, upper and middle ports, was attributed to the release of previously captured nitrated or nitrate from nitrification processes.

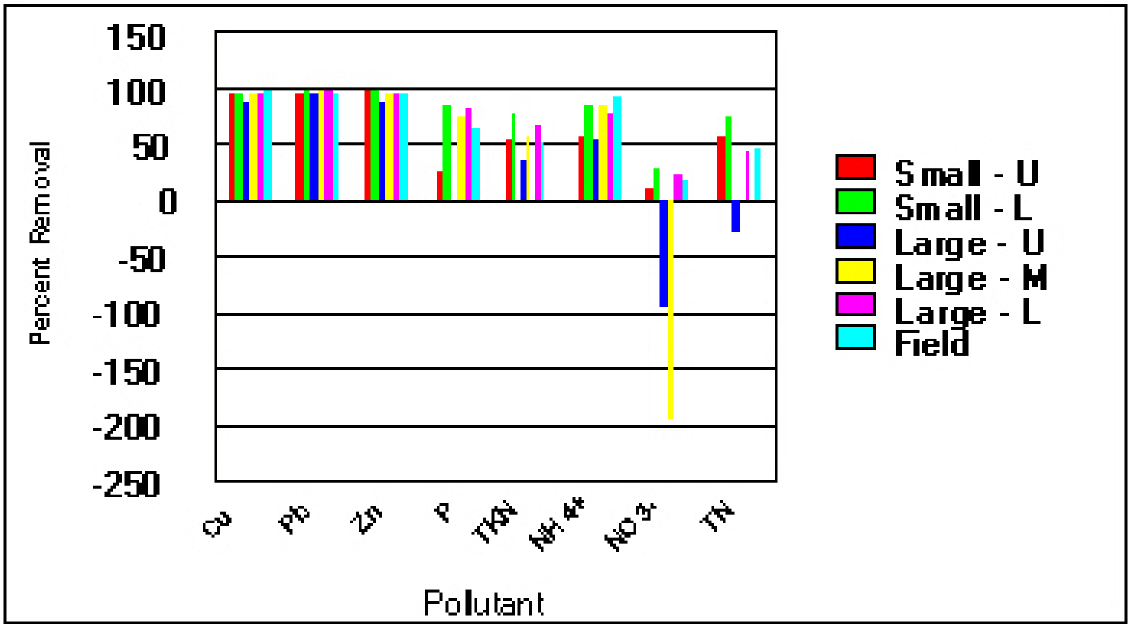


Figure 3: Pollutant Removal Rates for All Systems

4.2 Bioretention Facility
Field Study
Peppercorn Plaza Parking Lot at Inglewood Center, Landover, MD

Introduction

Impervious surfaces, such as parking lots, are a major contributor to pollutant loads in receiving waters in urban areas. These surfaces provide a place for pollutants to accumulate and later wash-off in the first flush of rainfall events. Parking lots are good site locations for bioretention systems, since they can be retrofit into existing lots with little or no loss of parking space. In addition, patrons have expressed appreciation of green space within parking areas. Bioretention areas are a natural means of controlling pollutants from entering urban water bodies. The hydrologically functional landscape, can be used as a mechanism for pollutant removal, through physical and biological treatment processes occurring in the plant and soil complex. The bioretention area in the Inglewood Center Parking lot, was analyzed for pollutant removal efficiency during a simulated rainfall event.

Study Site

The study was conducted at one of the two bioretention areas in the Inglewood Plaza parking lot. An area of 50 ft^2 was used in the south facility for the simulated rainfall event. The bioretention facility contains a T-shaped under drain that runs the entire length of the system and is located 32.5 inches below the surface (Figure 4). The under drain directly connects with the storm drainage system. Samples were collected from a pool of water in the storm drain observation area. Output samples were collected every 30 minutes. The soil was dry at the onset of the experiment, due to lack of rainfall for a period of several days prior to the experiment. The synthetic rainfall was applied at a rate of 1.6 inches per hour for a duration of six hours. A total of 300 gallons (1100L) was applied over the course of the experiment.

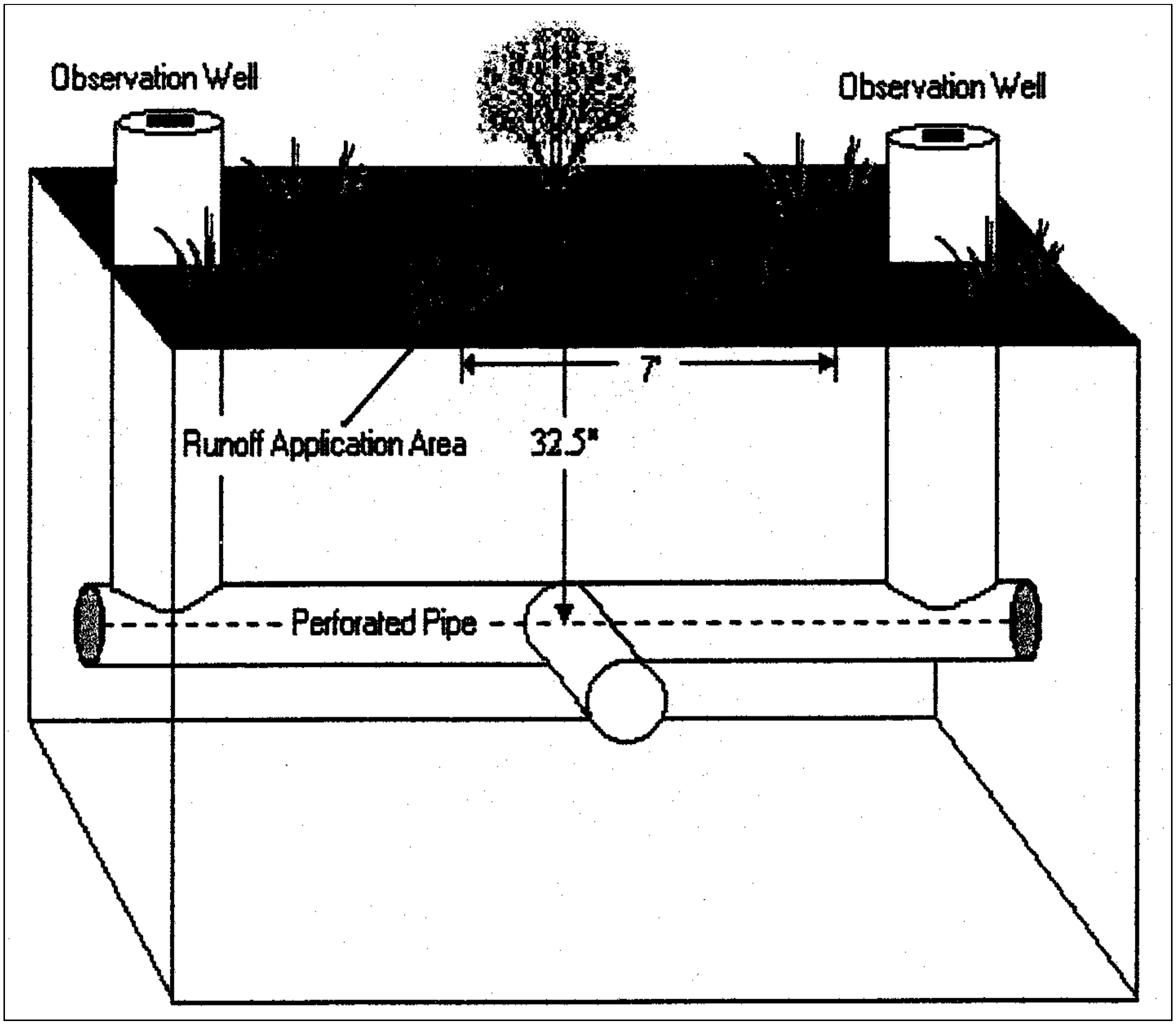


Figure 4: Bioretention System at Peppercorn Place, Inglewood Plaza (Davis, 1999)

Project Results Summary

Effluent concentrations for metals were fairly constant over the sampling period, with zinc being the exception by showing improved removal over time. Average removals for total copper was 43%, total lead was 70% and total zinc 64%. The removals were 5–14% better for dissolved metals. Nutrient concentrations were all below input levels. Removal of phosphorous was very good at 87%. Removal of TKN was observed at 67% and nitrate averaged 15% (Table 6). Ammonium was not detected in either the influent or the effluent. In addition, the bioretention facility removed some calcium, however chloride concentrations were higher in the effluent than in the influent, which is attributed to salting of the parking lot in the winter. Also, temperature variations during the experiment showed evidence of the system cooling the runoff water temperature.

Table 6: Summary of Pollutant Removal Results of Bioretention System at Inglewood Place

	Cu	Pb	Zn	Ca	P	TKN	NO_3^-
Removal	43%	70%	64%	27%	87%	67%	15%

By using synthetic runoff, the concentrations of applied pollutants could be controlled and accurately measured and compared to levels found in the effluent. However, testing has not been done on an actual rainfall event to determine effectiveness of the system for reducing runoff volume and pollutant loads.

4.3 Permeable Pavements and Swales
Field Study
Stormwater Management, Florida Aquarium Parking Lot, Tampa, FL

Introduction

Impervious surfaces are responsible for more stormwater runoff than any other type of land use. Paved surfaces that often replace vegetated areas increase the volume and frequency of rainfall runoff. In addition, these surfaces provide a place for pollutants to accumulate between rainfall events, and are later washed off into receiving waters. Keeping runoff on-site to allow for infiltration as well as chemical, physical and biological processes to take place is the most effective means of reducing pollutant loadings. This study quantifies how much runoff and pollutant loadings can be reduced by using swales and landscaped depressions in parking lots. In additional to investigating basins with and without swales, three paving surfaces were compared. The research is designed to determine pollutant load reductions measured from three different treatments within the parking lot; different paving materials in the parking lot, a planted strand with native trees and a small pond used for final treatment. Pollutant concentrations and infiltration were measured and analyzed for the various control methods. First year data collected in the parking lot between August 1998 and August 1999 were evaluated for this study. Also, sediment samples were collected from each of the swales, two locations in the strand and two locations in the pond.

Project Area

The study site is a parking lot at the Florida Aquarium in Tampa, Florida. The study uses the entire parking area, 4.65 ha, to define the drainage basin. The parking lot was modified for the study by reducing the length of each parking space by 61 centimeters, which allows for a 122-cm wide grass swale between rows. The vehicle front end now hangs over a grass swale instead of pavement, which prevented any reduction in the number of parking spaces within the parking area. Four different scenarios were investigated to determine the most efficient method of runoff reduction and pollutant removal. Eight basins, two of each type, were constructed and fitted with instrumentation to collect flow weighted water quality samples and measure discharge amounts during storm events (Figure 5). The four treatment types are:

- Asphalt paving with no swale
- Asphalt paving with a swale
- Cement paving with a swale
- Permeable pavement with a swale

Rainfall quality and volume were compared to runoff quality and volume to determine the effectiveness of each treatment type.

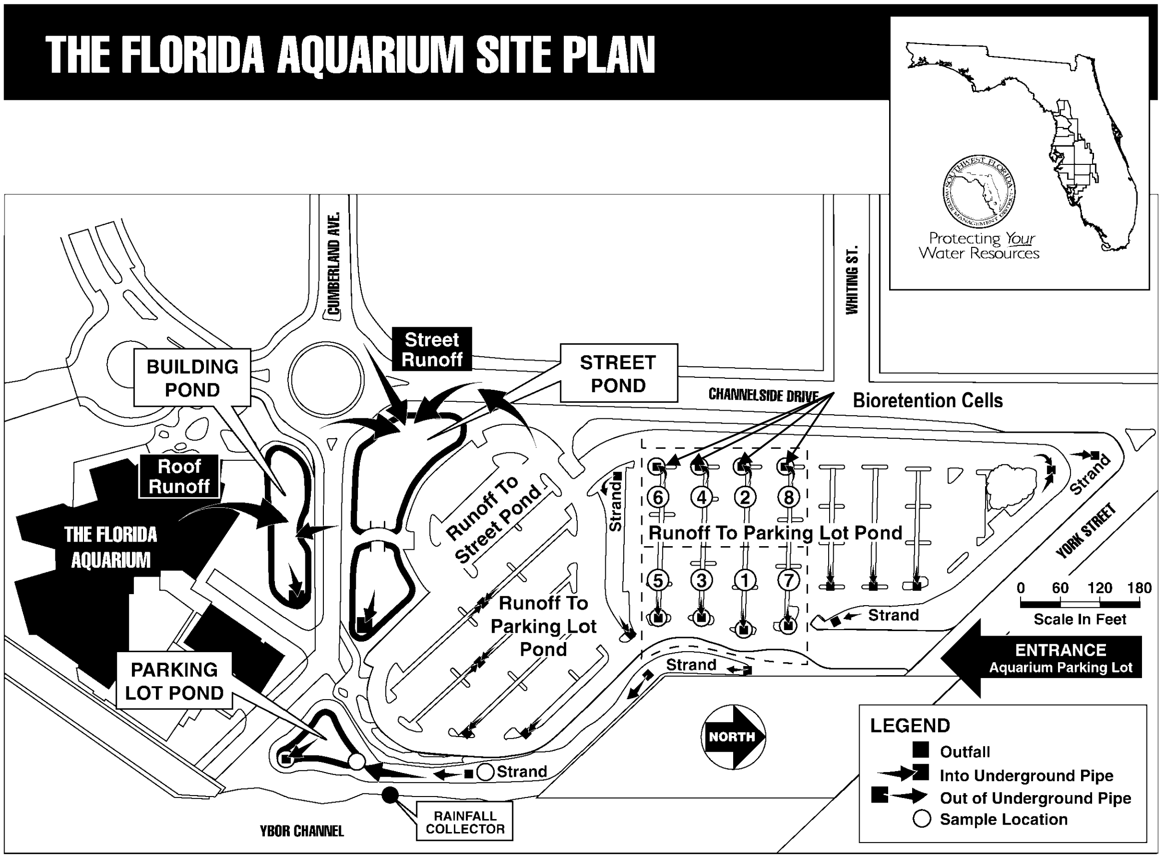


Figure 5: Florida Parking Lot Study Site (Rushton, 1999)

Project Results Summary

The larger garden areas (approximately the size of one parking space) account for a runoff coefficient calculation reduction of 40-50 percent for the smaller basins. The runoff coefficient is a value that ranges from zero to one and expresses the fraction of rainfall volume that is actually converted into storm runoff volume. The runoff coefficient closely tracks percent impervious cover. For rainfall events less than 2 cm, basins with swales and permeable pavement have 80-90% less runoff than basins without swales, and 60-80% less runoff than basins with the other pavement types and swales. The percent of rainfall converted to runoff for each treatment type is shown in Figure 6.

Larger rainfall amounts show fewer differences in runoff amounts between the different pavement types, but basins with swales have approximately 40% less runoff than the basins without swales. Soil analysis at the site shows a higher than average gravel content (8.9%) which may account for the good infiltration rates. Comparisons of rainfall with storm runoff amounts showed that swales reduced runoff for all rainfall events and paving types.

Water quality analysis shows that average concentrations varied by paving and depression storage types. Rainfall has been identified in other studies as a significant source of nitrogen in runoff. This site displayed the same correlation between concentrations of ammonia and nitrate in rainfall and their concentrations in runoff. Phosphorous concentrations displayed the inverse, since concentrations were higher in effluent samples than in the initial rainfall. The levels were somewhat higher in the runoff of basins without planted swales and the highest concentrations of phosphorous were noted in basins where runoff traveled through grassed swales.

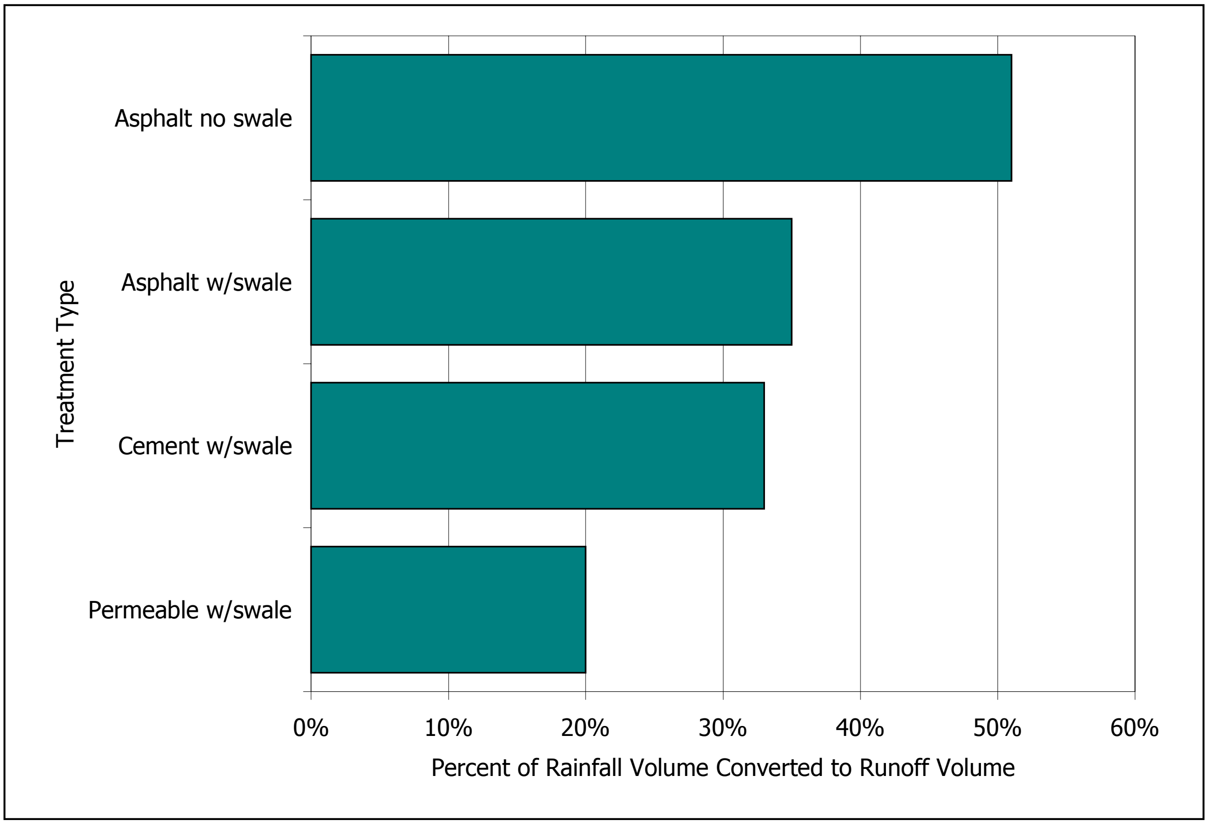


Figure 6: Percent of Rainfall Volume Converted to Runoff Volume for Events Less Than 2cm

Paving material showed an effect on the concentration of metals in runoff. Basins paved with asphalt showed higher concentrations of iron, manganese, lead, copper and zinc than those paved with cement or permeable paving. Many of the major ions also showed a correlation with the paving material. Potassium, sodium, sulfate and calcium concentration were much higher in the basins paved with cement, which is made from limestone, although these levels were still well below levels considered detrimental to the environment. No consistent pattern was discernable for suspended solids, but generally measurements were low when compared to similar stormwater studies.

Water quality loads were examined because they provide a more realistic measure for understanding the impacts of stormwater on receiving waters. Pollutant loads include both the volume of water discharged and the concentration of pollutants measured. Higher loads for all constituents, except phosphorous, were noted for basins without swales, since more water was discharged from these basins. Although phosphorous concentrations were much lower in basins without swales, loads were about the same.

Removal for Ammonia was 45% for asphalt with swale, 73% for cement with swale and 85% for permeable pavement with swale. Total nitrogen removal was 42% for permeable pavement with swale, 16% for cement with swale and 9% for asphalt with swale. TSS removal varied from 91% for permeable pavement with swales to 46% for asphalt with swales.

Table 7 summarizes the constituent load efficiency of the various treatments. The concentrations and loads measured during this study were compared to other stormwater studies conducted in Florida, and the values were much lower than measured values at other sites. Metal removal was good for the permeable pavement with swale treatment, with copper at 81%, iron 92%, lead 85%, manganese 92% and zinc 75%. The removals for the cement with swale treatment were somewhat lower, with the asphalt with swale treatment showing the poorest performance of the three treatments with swales.

Table 7: Summary of Pollutant Removal Efficiency for the Various Treatment Types

Constituent	Asphalt with swale	Cement with swale	Permeable with swale
Ammonia	45%	73%	85%
Nitrate	44%	41%	66%
Total Nitrogen	9%	16%	42%
Ortho Phosphorus	-180%	-180%	-74%
Total Phosphorus	-94%	-62%	3%
Suspended Solids	46%	78%	91%
Copper	23%	72%	81%
Iron	52%	84%	92%
Lead	59%	78%	85%
Manganese	40%	68%	92%
Zinc	46%	62%	75%

The concentrations of metals in sediment samples collected in swales were consistent with concentrations measured in stormwater runoff. Higher concentrations of metals were found in swales paved with asphalt than those of grass. None of the metals measured in the sediments exceed the level where toxicity to organisms is probable when compared to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) chemical toxicity guidelines for marine environments. However, copper and zinc concentrations were above the level where toxicity is possible.

Nutrient concentrations measured in sediment samples for TKN and total phosphorus were lower in the basins without grassed swales. Sediment samples taken from locations in the strand and the wet-detention pond were compared to swale samples. The comparison showed that most of the metals are being settled out in the swales or deposited in the drop boxes. Sediment samples at the site were tested for 100 organic pollutants, but only 16 were detected at the site. The high concentrations found in this and similar studies indicate that atmospheric deposition is the source for most of the 16 detected organic pollutants.

4.4 Vegetated Roof Covers
Field Study
Green Rooftop, Philadelphia, PA

Introduction

Many older American cities are plagued with nuisance flooding on roads and walkways and chronic overflows of combined sewer systems. In highly impervious cities, vegetated rooftops offer a practical solution for controlling runoff at the source. A vegetated roof cover is a veneer of living vegetation installed on top of a conventional roof. By mimicking natural hydrologic processes, they can achieve runoff characteristics similar to open space conditions. Green roofs are comprised of three components; subsurface drainage, growth media and vegetation. Specific hydraulic performance objectives are achieved through the appropriate selection of these components. Vegetated roof covers have been used extensively in Germany for 25 years.

Project Area

A 3,000-ft^2 rooftop in Philadelphia was fitted with a demonstration vegetated rooftop. The performance objective was the restoration of predevelopment runoff peak rates for a 24-hour, 2-year return-frequency storm. Although in the Philadelphia area, 90% of all rainfall is contributed by storms with volumes of 2 inches or less over a 24-hour period. The "green roof" used is only 3.4 inches (8.6cm) thick, including the drain layer (Figure 7). Its maximum saturated weight is less than 17 lb/ft^2 and it weighs less than 5lb/ft^2 when dry. No additional structural support was necessary for installation. The saturated infiltration capacity is 3.5 inches per hour. The key features of this system are a synthetic under drain layer which promotes rapid water drainage from the roof surface, thin, lightweight growth media suitable for installation on existing roof surfaces and a meadow-like setting of perennial *Sedum* varieties selected for hardiness and the ability to withstand seasonal conditions typical of the area.

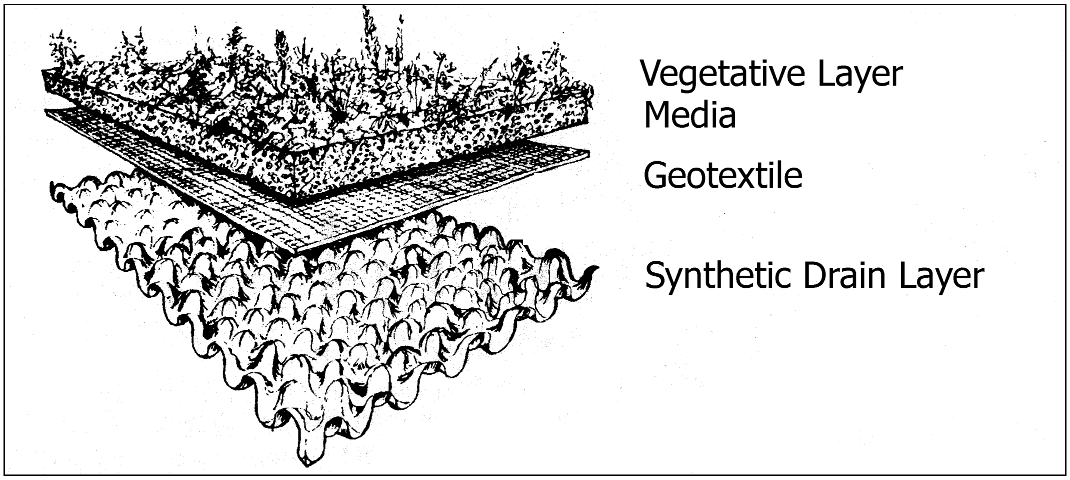


Figure 7: Structure of the Philadelphia Vegetated Roof Cover (Miller, 1998)

Project Results Summary

Currently too few storms have been observed to permit quantitative assessment of the vegetative covered roof. Data are available from one intense storm monitored during a 0.4 inch, 20-minute rainfall event (Figure 8). Supplemental data from a pilot-scale experimental station were used in this study. Test data show that for storms with less than 0.6 inches, runoff is negligible. During a 9-month period, 44 inches of rainfall was recorded at the pilot-scale test station, with only 15.5 inches of runoff generated. Runoff occurred for precipitation events between 0.6 and 1.0 inches, but lagged rainfall significantly. Attenuation was lower for the pilot-scale experiment than the anticipated modeled value (40% vs. 48%), which has been attributed to differing drain conditions and a steeper slope at the test site. Additional benefits of this project include extended life of the underlying roof materials, reduction of energy costs by improving effectiveness of insulation and restoration of ecological aesthetic value of open space in densely populated areas.

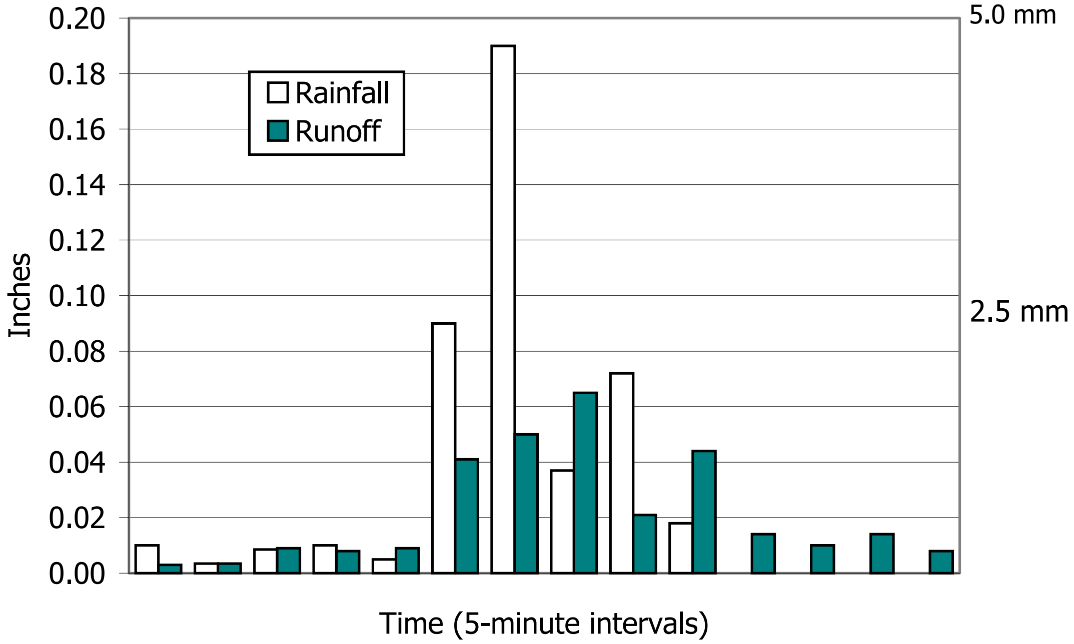


Figure 8: A Rainfall Event of 0.4 inches with Media Completely Saturated (Miller, 1998)

4.5 Permeable Pavements
Field Study
Permeable Pavements for Stormwater Management, Olympia, WA

Introduction

This study demonstrates the use of permeable surfaces for reducing runoff volume, improving infiltration and reducing pollutant loadings in an urban parking area. Numerous problems associated with urbanization, such as flooding, channel erosion and destruction of aquatic habitats are directly linked to the loss of water-retaining function of soil in urban landscape. As imperviousness increases, a stormwater runoff reservoir of tremendous volume is removed. Water that may have lingered in this reservoir for anywhere from a few hours to many weeks now flows rapidly across land surfaces and arrives at stream channels in short, concentrated bursts. The scope of this project was to review existing information on types and characteristics of permeable pavements, construct and monitor a full-scale test site and evaluate long-term performance of these systems. This study of permeable pavements evolved from a growing recognition of the limitations of traditional stormwater management in keeping water in the soil by allowing excess of water to the soil over large areas of landscape.

Study Site

The study site is an employee parking lot on the southeast corner of the King County Public Works facility in Renton, Washington. The permeable pavement sections of the lot were constructed for the purpose of this study. A total of eight stalls using four different pavement types were constructed. In addition a ninth stall of traditional asphalt was used as a control. The parking stalls are fitted with pipe, gutters and gauges to collect and measure the quantity and quality of storm runoff from each pavement type. Subsurface troughs were constructed down the middle of each stall and imbedded into the subgrade six to 8 inches below the surface. This allows for the collection of only a fraction of the infiltrated water (about 1.8%). The permeable pavement types studied were:

- A plastic network with grass infilling (<5% impervious)
- An equivalent plastic network with gravel infilling (<5% impervious)
- Impervious blocks with grass infilling (~60% impervious)
- Impervious blocks with gravel infilling (~90% impervious)

Project Results Summary

Data used to monitor the various permeable pavements were from three different storm events during the autumn of 1996. The volume of runoff generated from cement blocks with 60% impervious surface stalls and runoff from traditional asphalt are compared (Figure 9). The storm had a fairly uniform distribution of rainfall (4mm per hour) throughout the duration of the event. Rain falling on the asphalt yielded sharp hydrograph peaks and a high total volume of runoff water. Only about one peak per hour (0.03mm per hour of runoff) was recorded for the cement blocks with 60% impervious surface. These data are representative of data gathered at the other stalls and reflect little or no runoff from the permeable pavement stalls.

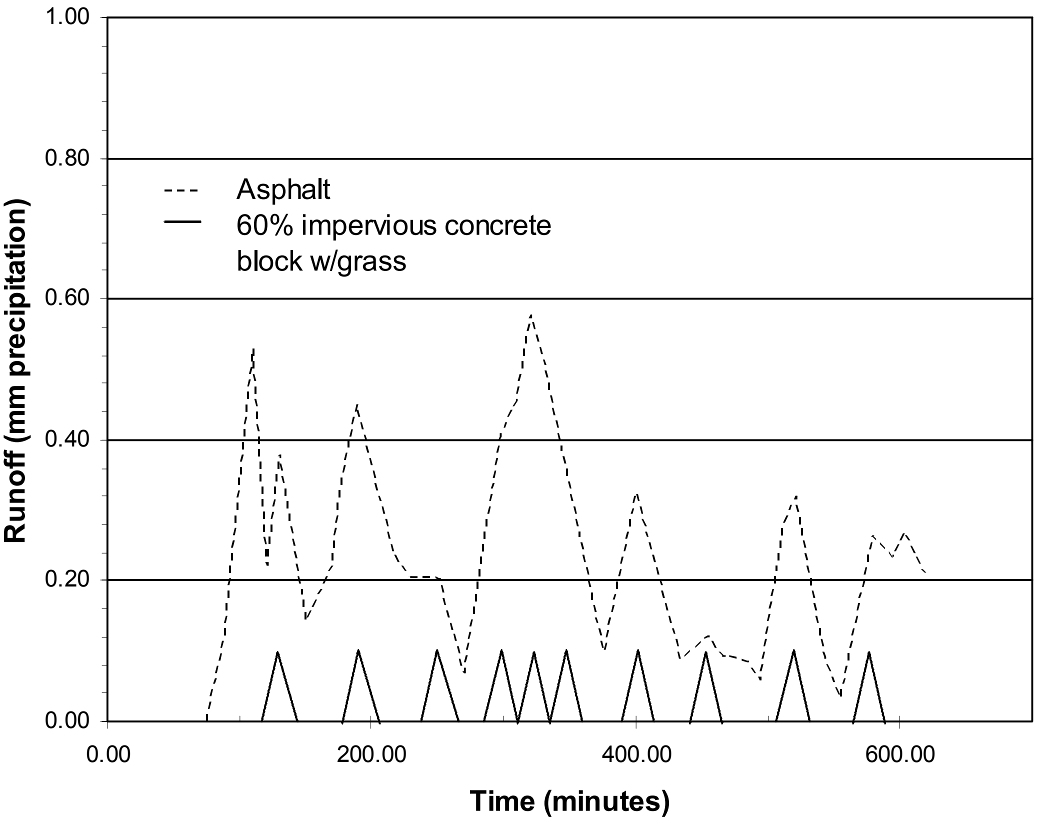


Figure 9: Surface Runoff from 60% Impervious Pavement vs. Asphalt (Booth, 1996)

In contrast to surface runoff, subsurface flow generally responds more slowly and more uniformly. The data for a storm of short duration and moderate intensity are represented in the following graph (Figure 10). Individual peaks on the bar graph indicate rainfall rates as high as 14mm per hour, lasting for short durations (15-minute intervals). Runoff gauges on all four systems showed virtually no surface runoff (on average 0.03 mm). It displays a characteristically attenuated discharge peak and lagged response to the rainfall inputs. All pervious surfaces responded similarly. For the asphalt surface, the volume of water running off the asphalt responded quickly to changes in the rate of rainfall. This is indicated by high peak flows corresponding with precipitation amounts, with little lag time noted (Figure 11).

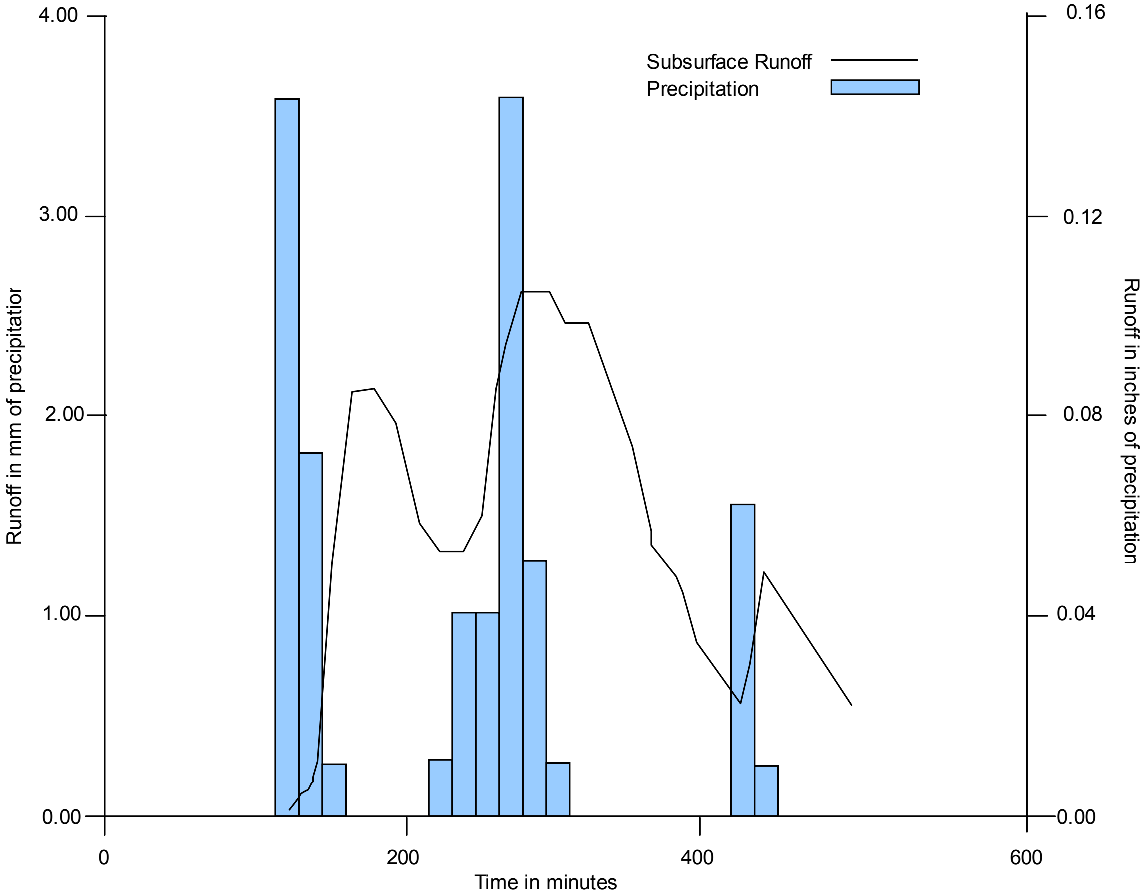


Figure 10: Subsurface Runoff From Pavement Less Than 5% Impervious Compared to Precipitation (Booth, 1996)

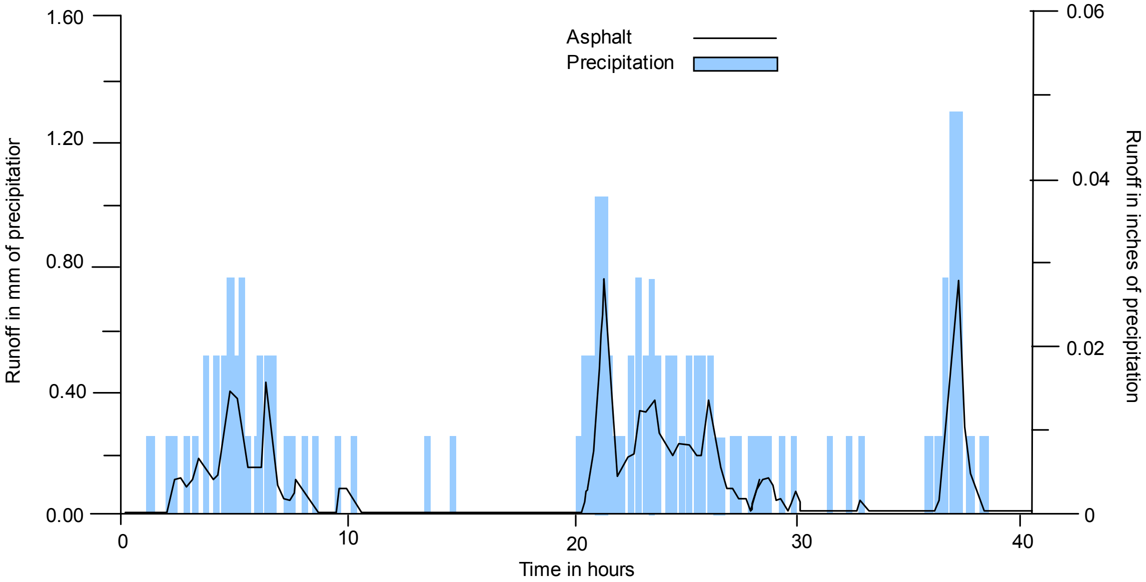


Figure 11: Surface Runoff From Asphalt Compared to Precipitation (Booth, 1996)

Water quality results were obtained from samples collected directly from tipping bucket gauges. Only five samples from the four subsurface collection troughs and the asphalt surface runoff were analyzed. Chemical analysis of the subsurface samples showed sub-detection levels for many of the constituents and relatively low levels for all tested compounds. Measured concentrations of common metals (copper, lead, zinc aluminum and iron) were substantially below the reported national averages. Subsurface samples did show slightly higher concentrations than runoff, which can be attributed to the troughs collecting the "dirtiest" 2 percent of runoff, from directly under where vehicles park. Still, these concentrations were below typical values seen in urban runoff.

4.6 Grass Swales
Field Study
Highway Grass Channels, Northern Virginia, Maryland, and Florida

Introduction

The U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration conducted a field study to determine the pollutant removal efficiencies of grassed channels and swales along highways in Northern Virginia, Maryland and Florida. Sampling was conducted at the inflow and outflow areas of the channels, which provided data for quantity and quality of waters entering and leaving the channels. The samples were analyzed for the following pollutants:

- Total Suspended Solids (TSS)
- Heavy Metals (cadmium, copper, lead and zinc)
- Nitrogen (Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen and nitrite/nitrate)
- Total Phosphorus
- Total Organic Carbon

Twelve rainfall events were monitored, including both frequent and infrequent rainfall periods, most involving discrete stormwater runoff events following a minimum of two days of dry weather. In addition continuous rainfall periods of seven to 14 days were included to determine overall removal efficiencies.

Project Area

The test area in northern Virginia is located along I-66. The channel has an average slope of 4.7% with a total drainage area of 1.27 acres (0.51 ha). Stormwater enters the channel indirectly, by means of overland flow. Stormwater data were collected from June 13, 1987 through November 12, 1987. The test site in Maryland is a grass channel located alongside I-270. This channel has a slope of 3.2% and a total drainage area of 1 acre (0.40 ha) with stormwater entering by means of overland flow. Data were collected for the period beginning June 18, 1987 and ending mid-September 1987. The Florida test site is a grass channel median located between the East and West lanes of I-4. The Florida grass channel has a lower slope than the other two test sites with a drainage area of 0.56 acres (0.23 ha). Data collection began at this site on February 25, 1988 and ended on October 31, 1988.

Project Results Summary

All three locations showed some effectiveness with regard to pollutant removals, although results varied depending on the method of analysis and the location. The results for all three locations are represented in Table 8. Sediment core samples were obtained from the channels and compared to samples from adjacent, upland areas, to determine pollutant removal effectiveness of the grass channels. Based on the data from the analysis the following conclusions were made. Removal of metals appears to be directly related to the removal of TSS, whereas nutrient removal is not. Removal of TSS can be estimated using flow depth and travel time relationships. Relatively low nutrient removal may be observed in channels that are effective in removing other pollutants. The controlling factors in pollutants removal of grass channels are length, channel geometry, channel slope and average flow. Both metals and nutrients are removed in grass channels, but metal removal is more reliable.

Table 8: Long Term Pollutant Removal Estimates for Grassed Swales

	TSS	TOC	TKN	NO_2/NO_3	TP	Cd	Cr	Cu	Pb	Zn
VA	65%	76%	17%	11%	41%	12-98%	12-16%	28%	41-55%	49%
MD	-85%	23%	9%	-143%	40%	85-91%	22-72%	14%	18-92%	47%
FL	98%	64%	48%	45%	18%	29-45%	51-61%	62-67%	67-94%	81%

5 CONCLUSION

Pollutant loading reduction data for bioretention systems are promising in that removal percentages for heavy metals and nutrients seem quite high. Generally, the experimental data show a fairly consistent removal rate for all of the tested bioretention systems for heavy metals and most nutrients (Table 9). Field study results support the laboratory baseline data collected by the University of Maryland, College Park. However, the field studies provide data for single, simulated rainfall events using synthetic rainfall. A larger number of sampled events would be required for statistical validity of the results.

Table 9: Pollutant Removal Efficiencies for Laboratory and Field Bioretention Studies

Pollutant	Laboratory (small)	Laboratory (large)	Beltway Plaza	Inglewood Plaza
Pb	93–97%	93–97%	>95%	70%
Cu	91–97%	90–93%	97%	43%
Zn	93–98%	87–96%	>95%	64%
P	16–83%	0–81%	65%	87%
TKN	55–80%	37–68%	52%	67%
NH_4^+	<0 -83%	54 -86%	92%	N/A
NO_3^-	11–26%	<0–23%	16%	15%
TN	60–75%	<0–43%	49%	N/A

The use of synthetic runoff during the bioretention experiments, both in the lab and field, allowed the concentrations of applied pollutants to be controlled and accurately measured, so that influent and effluent levels could be compared. In addition, infiltration could be determined based on the volume of runoff verses volume input. The statistical analysis applied for the mass loadings was sound. However, testing for these studies has not been conducted for any actual rainfall events to determine effectiveness of the system for reducing runoff volume and pollutant loads. A comparison of average pollutant removal efficiencies is shown in Figure 12.

The grass swale data from the Federal Highway study show trends in removal of metals as they relate to TSS removal for three different areas in the United States. However a short study period, using data from only a few storm events, is used to quantify the results. Additional data from numerous storm events would be required to provide statistical validity to the analysis. The data from additional, less extensive studies conducted by the University of Virginia help to validate the highway data, as pollutant loading removal rates and runoff volume reduction rates were fairly consistent between the two studies. Conclusions drawn from both studies indicate that not only length, but also longitudinal slope and the presence of check dams increase the pollutant removal capabilities (Kuo, 1999).

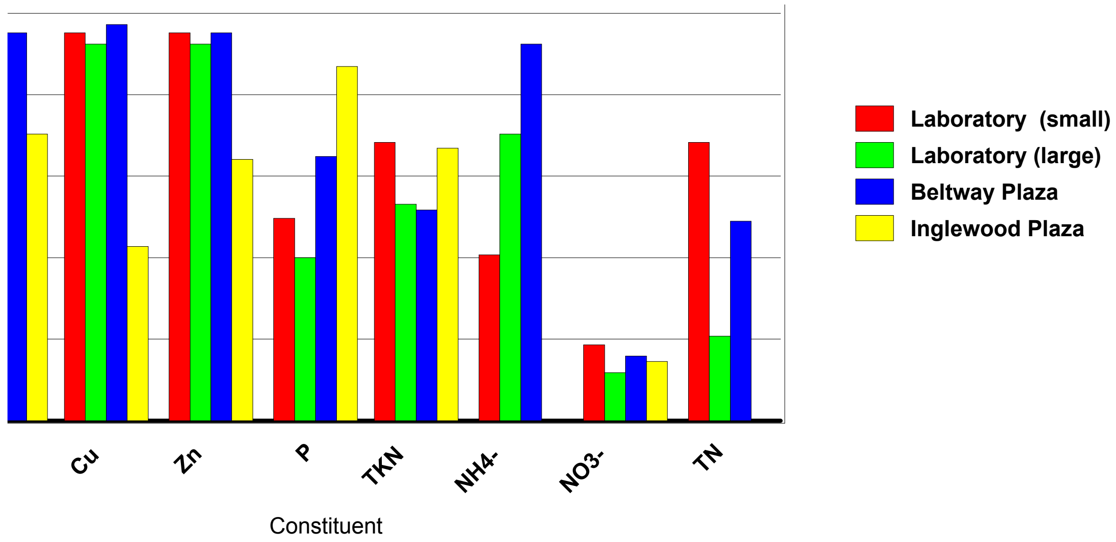


Figure 12: Pollutant Removal Rates for Laboratory and Field Experiments of Bioretention Systems

In addition, a study conducted in Ontario, Canada concluded that no evidence existed to show that nutrient or metal concentrations in soils increased with age in grass swales, as concentrations varied regardless of age. Also, the Canadian study determined that no degradation in vegetative quality resulted from continuous exposure to stormwater runoff. It was shown that vegetation quality was similar to what would be found along conventional systems (Sabourin, 1999). The Canadian study also showed that total runoff volumes from grassed swales were 6-30% less than conventional systems and that a loading comparison revealed that the system released significantly less pollutants than conventional systems.

Permeable pavements can reduce the percent imperviousness for urban areas, which allows for greater infiltration rates and reduced runoff volumes. In addition these alternate pavement types function as stormwater pollutant removal mechanisms. Preliminary data from the Washington project show effectiveness, but too few storms have been analyzed. Only the Florida Aquarium parking lot data represent an analysis of a significant number of actual storm events. As the study continues, and second year data become available, more compelling proof of the pollutant removal effectiveness and runoff volume reduction can be realized. The methodology for testing runoff volume reduction and mass pollutant loadings in the Florida study provided reliable data.

Extensive data exist that show runoff volume reduction using vegetated roof covers in Europe, especially Germany. The data are specific to temperate climates and results may vary considerably for other areas in the United States. However, the Philadelphia project shows the benefits of this application in reducing runoff volume by reducing the level of imperviousness in urbanized areas. Further, it demonstrates the capacity for retrofit of green roofs in highly impervious, older, urbanized U.S. cities experiencing chronic CSO problems. Little data are available from this demonstration project. However, with continued monitoring, evidence of the suitability of green roofs in the United States may become more apparent.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

A detailed comparison of pre- and post-development conditions and an analysis of adjacent areas using traditional stormwater controls and LID practices side-by-side, would provide the best possible assessment of LID effectiveness hydrologically and as a mechanism for reducing pollutant loadings. The Jordan Cove Urban Watershed project in Waterford, Connecticut, is currently under construction for a side-by-side analysis, however, no data are available at this time. Baseline predevelopment hydrological data are currently being collected for comparison once the development is completed and monitoring begins.

Most of the current field data available for bioretention facilities are for single, simulated rainfall events. Fitting the existing, tested bioretention areas in Prince George's County with monitoring equipment and running a significant number of tests on actual rainfall events over 9 months to 1 year, would provide higher quality data. Long term studies would prove or disprove the long-term effectiveness of bioretention systems, as well as provide information on trends in soil fertility lifetimes and trends in reduced capabilities over time. The two-year Florida Aquarium study is currently the best possible source for these data.

The majority of case studies cited above are ongoing investigations, and reported data represent preliminary findings. Follow-up on these studies will provide better support for proof of effectiveness of LID practices. Additional studies testing LID practices should be identified as the use of these practices grows. Preliminary findings should be viewed as a starting point, and not the empirical proof of effectiveness for the various LID practices studied. The development of a database for entry and storage of LID study data could provide a useful tool for future investigation of LID effectiveness.

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