

**INVESTIGATION OF THE FEASIBILITY AND BENEFITS OF LOW-IMPACT  
SITE DESIGN PRACTICES APPLIED TO MEET VARIOUS POTENTIAL  
STORMWATER RUNOFF REGULATORY STANDARDS**

By

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **STUDY DESIGN**

A study was performed to investigate the degree to which stormwater management practices, commonly referred to as “low-impact development” methods or “green infrastructure,” can retain urban runoff and meet five possible regulatory standards that could be applied nationally. Retention is defined as preventing the conversion of precipitation to runoff discharging from a development site on the surface, from where it can enter a receiving water. Retaining runoff from impervious and pollutant generating pervious surfaces prevents the introduction of urban runoff pollutants to receiving waters as well as reduces runoff volume to prevent stream channel and habitat damage, flooding, and loss of groundwater recharge. ARCD methods were assessed for their ability to: (1-2) meet standards pertaining to retention of the runoff generated by the 85<sup>th</sup> and 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation events; (3) retain 90 percent of the post-development runoff; and (4-5) retain the difference between the post- and pre-development runoff, both with and without a cap at the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour event. The study assessed five urban land use types (three residential, one retail commercial, and one infill redevelopment), each placed in four climate regions in the continental United States on two regionally common soil types.

Infiltrating bioretention was applied as an initial strategy in the analysis of each case. When the initial strategy could not fully retain post-development runoff, additional methods were applied, involving roof runoff harvesting in the most impervious development cases and roof water dispersion in those with substantial pervious area. Benefits were assessed with respect to reduction of the annual average surface runoff volume from the quantity estimated without any stormwater management practices, the associated maintenance of pre-development groundwater recharge, and water quality improvement achieved through preventing discharge to receiving waters of pollutants generated with developed land uses.

### **RETENTION AND POLLUTANT REDUCTION CAPABILITIES**

The initial strategy of infiltrating bioretention could retain all post-development runoff and pre-existing groundwater recharge, as well as attenuate all pollutant transport, in the three residential land use development types on hydrologic soil group (HSG) B soils, in all cases, in all regions, taking a fraction of the available pervious area to do so. For the more highly impervious commercial retail and redevelopment cases, bioretention would retain about 45 percent of the runoff and pollutants generated and save about 40 percent of the pre-development recharge. Adding roof runoff management measures in these cases would approximately double retention and pollutant reduction for the retail commercial land use and raise it to 100 percent for the redevelopment. Results were generally similar with HSG C soils, although more of the pervious portion of sites was required to equal the retention seen on B soils.

For development on the D soils in all climate regions, use of roof runoff management techniques was estimated to increase runoff retention and pollutant reduction from zero to between about one-third to two-thirds of the post-development runoff generated, depending on the land use case. These strategies would offer little groundwater recharge benefit with this soil condition, but would still have the potential to significantly reduce runoff volume and pollutant loading.

### **ABILITY TO MEET STANDARDS**

The projected ability to meet the five standards identified above was found to vary mostly in relation to soil type (B or C versus D) and the relative imperviousness of development. The ability to meet the five standards varied much less across climate regions. With B and C soils,

the methods considered were projected to meet all five standards in all but 12 of 125 evaluations. With D soils, however, only three standards could be met at all and those only occasionally. However, even on D soils, all cases for Standard 1 (retention of the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event) were able to retain greater than 50 percent of the required runoff volume. Moreover, opportunities to use ARCD practices or site design principles not modeled in this analysis have the potential to further increase runoff retention volume.

Standard 3 (retain 90 percent of the average annual post-development runoff volume) would be the most environmentally protective standard. Meeting or coming as close as possible to meeting, but not exceeding, this standard was estimated to lead to 66-90 percent of total runoff retention and pollutant loading reduction on B and C soils and 37-66 percent runoff retention on D soils. Standard 2 (retain the runoff produced by the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event) would yield equivalent protection on D soils and only slightly less protection with B and C soils. The outcome with this standard would also be more consistent region to region than with the alternative standard 1, based on the 85<sup>th</sup> instead of the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile precipitation event. Sites located on B or C soils were able to retain the runoff produced by the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile storm in 24 of 25 cases modeled (in 18 of the 25 cases by using infiltrating bioretention alone), and were able to retain the runoff produced by the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile storm in 22 of 25 cases modeled.

Standards 4 and 5, based on the differential between pre- and post-development runoff volume, are inconsistent in retaining runoff and reducing pollutants, in that they are relatively protective where pre-development runoff is estimated to be low relative to post-development flow, but result in progressively lower retention and pollutant loading reduction as pre- and post-development volumes converge, such as in several cases on D soils. Standard 5 is especially weak in this regard. The potentially low level of retention and pollutant loading reduction renders these standards based on the change in pre- versus post-development runoff volume poor candidates for national application, at least as formulated in these terms.

In summary, standards 2 and 3 are clearly superior to the other three options from both a volume and pollutant load reduction standpoint. Standard 3 is entirely consistent from place to place in degree of environmental protection, and standard 2 does not deviate much. Analysis of the five development cases on two soil groups in each of four regions demonstrated the two standards are virtually identical in the runoff retention and pollutant loading reduction they would bring about. Of the remaining standards, standard 1 (retention of the runoff produced by the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile storm event) remains more consistent across regions and more protective of water quality for development on D soils than either standard 4 or 5, and is preferable to those standards in this regard.

## INTRODUCTION

### GENERAL STUDY DESCRIPTION

#### Study Design

This purpose of this study was to investigate the degree to which low-impact development (LID)<sup>1</sup> practices can meet or exceed the requirements of various potential stormwater management facility design standards and to determine the environmental benefits that can be realized by applying these techniques. The investigation was performed by estimating the stormwater retention possible with full application of low-impact options under a range of conditions broadly representative of different regions within the United States and then determining the implications of the findings for achieving various standards and for providing benefits. Retention is defined as preventing the conversion of precipitation to surface runoff from urbanized land uses through infiltration, evapotranspiration, and/or harvesting for some water supply purpose. Retaining runoff from impervious and pollutant generating pervious surfaces prevents the introduction of urban runoff pollutants to receiving waters as well as reduces runoff volume to prevent stream channel and habitat damage, flooding, and loss of groundwater recharge. Benefits were assessed with respect to reduction of the potential developed land surface runoff volume, the associated maintenance of pre-development groundwater recharge, and water quality improvement achieved through preventing discharge to receiving waters of pollutants generated with developed land uses.

The potential regulatory standards investigated were capture and retention of, at minimum:

- Standard 1—The runoff produced by the 85th percentile, 24-hour precipitation event,<sup>2</sup> a standard commonly used in California;
- Standard 2—The runoff produced by the 95th percentile, 24-hour precipitation event, the standard adopted under Section 438 of the Energy Independence and Security Act;
- Standard 3—90 percent of the average annual post-development runoff volume;
- Standard 4—The difference between the post- and pre-development<sup>3</sup> average annual runoff volumes; and
- Standard 5—The difference between the post- and pre-development runoff volumes for all events up to and including the 85th percentile, 24-hour precipitation event.

Conditions broadly representative of the nation were selected by, first, considering the climate regions defined in USEPA's (1983) Nationwide Urban Runoff Project (NURP) report. For full analysis, climate regions 1 (Northeast-Upper Midwest), 3 (Southeast), 5 (South Central), and 6 (Southwest) were chosen as providing a wide range of climatological conditions and geographic distribution. Once the four regions were picked, a metropolitan area and a specific city in each were chosen to serve as typical models of development circumstances in the general area, as

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<sup>1</sup> The National Research Council (NRC, 2009) renamed LID, also known as green infrastructure, as aquatic resources conservation design (ARCD), the term used henceforth in this report.

<sup>2</sup> The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour event represents the precipitation quantity in a 24-hour period not exceeded in 85 percent of all events in an extended record.

<sup>3</sup> In this study the pre-development state is taken as the typical land cover existing before European settlement of an area.

detailed in the Case Studies discussion below. In addition, region 7 (Pacific Northwest) was identified as an additional location to be discussed. This region is the site of a considerable amount of ARCD application in an area somewhat different climatologically than other selected regions, in having persistent winter rainfall totaling annually, in the major urban areas, intermediately among the other regions. Results of research on ARCD conducted in this region are discussed at several points in this report.

Soils and topography were the next considerations in developing broadly representative conditions. U.S. Department of Agriculture websites were the source of general soil characterizations for the study regions and specific soil survey data in and around the representative metropolitan areas. Soils generally represented some range in textural classes and associated hydraulic conductivities. For each region, a soil type predominating among those representing hydraulic conductivities relatively high and low for the region were selected to serve as a basis for the analyses. The effect of slope was also investigated but ultimately found not to affect results substantially.

Five types of urban development were selected to represent breadth in land use: (1) multi-family residential, (2) small-scale single-family residential, (3) large-scale single-family residential, (4) large-scale commercial, and (5) infill redevelopment. Building permit data from each region were consulted to determine typical distributions of site features for each (e.g., land cover by buildings, parking areas, roadways, walkways, driveways, landscaping).

Case studies thus comprised four climate regions, each with two soil conditions and five land use types, for a total of 40 permutations. For each, the ability of the site to accommodate soil- and vegetation-based ARCD practices was investigated. Runoff quantities were estimated and compared to the five potential regulatory standards. Annual mass loading discharges were estimated for four pollutants: total suspended solids (TSS), total recoverable copper (TCu) and zinc (TZn), and total phosphorus (TP). In any case where soil- and vegetation-based ARCD infiltration techniques appeared not to be able to attenuate all runoff, specific roof runoff management strategies were investigated as possible measures to achieve additional retention. Runoff quantities and pollutant discharges were recalculated based on use of these additional practices in place.

This report covers the methods employed in the investigation, data sources, and references for both. It then presents the results, discusses their consequences, draws conclusions, and makes recommendations relative to the feasibility of utilizing low-impact development practices to meet the respective potential regulatory standards.

## **AQUATIC RESOURCES CONSERVATION DESIGN PRACTICES**

### **General Description**

As the stormwater management field developed, it passed through several stages. First, it was thought that the key to success was to match post-development with pre-development peak flow rates, while also reducing a few common pollutants (usually, TSS) by a set percentage. Finding that these efforts generally required large ponds, but that they did not forestall impacts, stormwater managers next deduced that runoff volumes and high discharge durations would also have to decrease. Almost simultaneously, although not necessarily in concert, the idea of low-impact development arose to offer a way to achieve actual avoidance, or at least minimization, of discharge quantity and pollutant increases reaching far above pre-development levels. These methods reduce storm runoff and its contaminants by decreasing their generation

at sources, infiltrating into the soil or evaporating or transpiring<sup>4</sup> storm flows before they can enter surface receiving waters, and treating flow remaining on the surface through contact with vegetation and soil, or a combination of these strategies.

The National Research Council (“NRC”) (2009) renamed LID as Aquatic Resources Conservation Design (ARCD) for several reasons. First, this term signifies that the principles and many of the methods apply not only to building on previously undeveloped sites, but also to redeveloping and retrofitting existing development. Second, incorporating aquatic resources conservation in the title is a direct reminder of the central reason for improving stormwater regulation and management. ARCD encompasses the complete range of practices to counteract all negative urban runoff impacts; i.e., the full suite of practices that emphasize and accomplish retention as defined above. These practices aim at decreasing surface runoff peak flow rates, volumes, and elevated flow durations, as well as avoiding or at least minimizing the introduction of pollutants to any surface runoff produced. Reducing the concentration of pollutants, together with runoff volume decrease, cuts the cumulative mass loadings (mass per unit time) of pollutants entering receiving waters over time.

The menu of ARCD practices begins with conserving, as much as possible, existing trees, other vegetation, and soils, as well as natural drainage features (e.g., depressions, dispersed sheet flows, swales). Clustering development to affect less land is a fundamental practice advancing this goal. Conserving natural features would further entail performing construction in such a way that vegetation and soils are not needlessly disturbed and soils are not compacted by heavy equipment. Using less of polluting materials, isolating contaminating materials and activities from contact with rainfall or runoff, and reducing the introduction of irrigation and other non-stormwater flows into storm drain systems are essential. Many ARCD practices fall into the category of minimizing impervious areas through decreasing building footprints and restricting the widths of streets and other pavements to the minimums necessary. Another important category of ARCD practices involves directing runoff from roofs and pavements onto pervious areas as sheet flow, where all or much of the runoff can infiltrate or evaporate in many situations.

Water can be harvested from impervious surfaces, especially roofs, and put to use for irrigation, non-potable indoor water supply. Harvesting is a standard technique for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) buildings (U.S. Green Building Council, 2008). Many successful systems of this type are in operation, with examples such as the Natural Resources Defense Council offices (Santa Monica, CA), the King County Administration Building (Seattle, WA), and two buildings on the Portland State University campus (Portland, OR). Harvesting is feasible at the small scale using rain barrels and at larger scales using larger collection cisterns and piping systems. These small-scale applications have been used throughout the world for centuries and are rapidly spreading in the United States today (See, e.g., Texas Water Development Board, 2005; Georgia Department of Community Affairs, 2009).

If these practices are used but runoff is still produced, ARCD offers an array of techniques to retain it on-site through infiltration and evapotranspiration (ET). The bioretention cell (rain garden) is the workhorse practice in this category, but swales conveying flow slowly, filter strips set up for sheet flows, and other modes are also important. Relatively low traffic areas can be constructed with permeable surfaces such as porous asphalt, open-graded Portland cement concrete, coarse granular materials, concrete or plastic unit pavers, or plastic grid systems to allow for infiltration.

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<sup>4</sup> Transpiration refers to vaporization of water from plant tissue, while evaporation applies to vaporization from a liquid (e.g., pool) or solid (e.g., leaf) surface. The terms are often combined to form the compound evapotranspiration (ET).

ARCD practices should be selected and applied as close to sources as possible to stem runoff and pollutant production near the point of potential generation. However, these practices must also work well together and, in many cases, must be supplemented with strategies operating farther downstream. For example, the City of Seattle, in its “natural drainage system” retrofit initiative, built serial bioretention cells flanking relatively flat streets. “Cascades” of vegetated stepped pools created by weirs were installed along more sloping streets. In some cases the cells drain to downstream cascades. The upstream components are highly effective in attenuating most or even all runoff. Flowing at higher velocities on sloped surfaces, the cascades do not perform at such a high level, although under favorable conditions they can still infiltrate or evapotranspire the majority of the incoming runoff (Chapman 2006, Chapman and Horner 2010). Even if not as impressive statistically, cascades can actually decrease storm discharge to streams more than the cells do, because of their generally greater size. Also, the cascades extract pollutants from remnant runoff through mechanisms mediated by vegetation and soils. The success of Seattle’s natural drainage systems demonstrates that well designed ARCD practices can mimic natural landscapes hydrologically, and thereby avoid raising discharge quantities.

A watershed-based program emphasizing ARCD practices would convey significant benefits beyond greatly improved stormwater management. ARCD techniques overall would advance water conservation, and infiltrative practices would increase recharge of groundwater resources. ARCD practices can be made attractive and thereby improve neighborhood aesthetics and property values. Retention of more natural vegetation can both save wildlife habitat and provide recreational opportunities. Municipalities could use the program in their general urban improvement initiatives, giving incentives to property owners to contribute to goals in that area while also protecting water resources.

### **A Catalogue of ARCD Practices**

ARCD practices are numerous and expanding as existing configurations are applied in new ways. Table 1 presents a catalogue adapted from USEPA (2007) and NRC (2009). This catalogue contains practices that are not equally applicable in all settings; e.g., nevertheless, each category offers practices applicable in a broad variety of circumstances.

The best strategy for choosing among and implementing these practices is a decentralized, integrated one; i.e., selecting practices that fit together as a system, starting at or near sources and working through the landscape until management objectives are met. This strategy makes maximum possible use of practices in the first three categories, which prevent stormwater quantity and quality problems, and then selects among the remaining classifications in relation to the localized and overall site conditions. Source control and preservation of existing vegetation and soils obviously avoid post-development runoff quantity and pollutant increases from any portion of the site that can be so treated. Among all strategies, these best maintain natural infiltration and ET patterns and yield of materials flowing from the site. This preventive strategy is supplemented by strategies to create as little impervious cover as possible. The remaining practices then contend with the excess runoff and pollutants over pre-development levels generated by the development.

For the practices that infiltrate water, a site’s soil characteristics and depth to groundwater can and should be determined through infiltration rate testing and excavation to determine the infiltration capability. Because of the often substantial variability of conditions around a site, these determinations should be made at multiple points. If the natural infiltration rate is low, generally < 0.5 inch/hour (< 1.25 cm/h, Geosyntec 2008), in many situations the soil can be amended, usually with organic compost, to apply an infiltrative practice.

In addition to soil characteristics, the position of the groundwater table is a crucial determinant of whether or not stormwater infiltration should be promoted by applying ground-based ARCD

practices. A seasonal high water table too close to the surface results in rapid saturation of a thin soil column and retarded infiltration. Ponding water longer than 72 hours can permit mosquito growth, damage vegetation, and promote clogging of the facility by microorganism growths and polysaccharide organic materials that form in the reduced-oxygen environment accompanying excessive ponding time (Mitchell and Nevo 1964, Ronner and Wong 1996). Also, storm runoff flow through a short soil column or very rapidly through a coarse-textured soil can convey contaminants to groundwater.

Evidence gathering from available performance data is that evapotranspiration (ET) can be a substantial factor in water retention (discussed below) but may be difficult to quantify at a given site without more research. A conservative approach is to design on the basis of infiltration rate, calculated to include consideration of soil amendments, if any. Together with careful investigation of soils and hydrogeologic conditions, this means of proceeding is very likely to produce facilities that retain at least as much runoff as predicted, and almost certainly more as a result of unquantified ET.



Table 1. A Catalogue of Aquatic Resources Conservation Design Practices (USEPA [2007] and NRC [2009])

Category	Definition	Examples
Source control	Minimizing pollutants or isolating them from contact with rainfall or runoff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Substituting less for more polluting products</li> <li>● Segregating, covering, containing, and/or enclosing pollutant-generating materials, wastes, and activities</li> <li>● Avoiding or minimizing fertilizer and pesticide applications</li> <li>● Removing animal wastes deposited outdoors</li> <li>● Conserving water to reduce non-stormwater discharges</li> </ul>
Conservation site design	Minimizing the generation of runoff by preserving open space and reducing the amount of land disturbance and impervious surface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clustering development</li> <li>● Preserving wetlands, riparian areas, forested tracts, and porous soils</li> <li>● Reducing pavement widths (streets, sidewalks, driveways, parking lot aisles)</li> <li>● Reducing building footprints</li> </ul>
Conservation construction	Retaining vegetation and avoiding removing topsoil or compacting soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Minimizing site clearing</li> <li>● Minimizing site grading</li> <li>● Prohibiting heavy vehicles from driving anywhere unnecessary</li> </ul>
Runoff harvesting	Capturing rainwater, generally from roofs, for a beneficial use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Using storage and distribution systems (rain barrels or cisterns) for irrigation and/or indoor supply for public and private buildings</li> </ul>
Natural runoff conveyance practices	Maintaining natural drainage patterns (e.g., depressions, natural swales) as much as possible, and designing drainage paths to increase the time before runoff leaves the site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Emphasizing sheet instead of concentrated flow</li> <li>● Eliminating curb-and-gutter systems in favor of natural drainage systems</li> <li>● Roughening land surfaces</li> <li>● Creating long flow paths over landscaped areas</li> <li>● When flow must be concentrated, using vegetated channels with flow controls (e.g., check dams)</li> </ul>
Practices for temporary runoff storage followed by infiltration and/or evapotranspiration <sup>a</sup>	Use of soil pore space and vegetative tissue to increase the opportunity for runoff to percolate to groundwater or vaporize to the atmosphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bioretention cells (rain garden)</li> <li>● Vegetated swales (channel flow)</li> <li>● Vegetated filter strips (sheet flow)</li> <li>● Planter boxes</li> <li>● Tree pits</li> <li>● Infiltration basins</li> <li>● Infiltration trenches</li> <li>● Roof downspout surface or subsurface dispersal</li> <li>● Permeable pavement</li> <li>● Vegetated (green) roofs</li> </ul>
ARCD landscaping <sup>b</sup>	Soil amendment and/or plant selection to increase storage, infiltration, and evapotranspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organic compost soil amendments</li> <li>● Native, drought-tolerant plantings</li> <li>● Reforestation</li> <li>● Turf conversion to meadow, shrubs, and/or trees</li> </ul>

<sup>a</sup> Some of these practices are also conventional stormwater BMPs but are ARCD practices when ARCD landscaping methods are employed as necessary to maximize storage, infiltration, and evapotranspiration. The first five examples can be constructed with an impermeable liner and an underdrain connection to a storm sewer, if full retention is technically infeasible (see further discussion later). Vegetated roofs store and evapotranspire water but offer no infiltration opportunity, unless their discharge is directed to a secondary, ground-based facility.

<sup>b</sup> Selection of landscaping methods depends on the ARCD practice to which it applies and the stormwater management objectives, but amending soils unless they are highly infiltrative and planting several vegetation canopy layers (e.g., herbaceous growth, shrubs, and trees) are generally conducive to increasing storage, infiltration, and evapotranspiration.

## **Application of ARCD Practices in This Study**

The investigation performed for this study first assessed the capacity of each case study site to infiltrate the full average annual post-development storm runoff volume and thereby reduce pollutant releases to zero. The report terms this initial evaluation as the “Basic ARCD Analysis”. The means of infiltration was not distinguished at this level of analysis. For example, it was not specified if runoff would be distributed in sheet flow across a pervious area or channeled into a rain garden. As detailed later in the Methods of Analysis section, this analysis was limited to the estimated infiltration capacity of the case study soil type, possibly compost-amended, and the available pervious area.

Critically, there was no attempt to estimate the loss of surface runoff through ET in the Basic ARCD analysis (ET is considered, to address rooftop runoff only, as part of our “Full ARCD analysis,” discussed below). In general, the estimated mean annual evapotranspiration in the Southeast is about 70 percent of the precipitation, or roughly 35 inches per year. For large areas of the Southwest, evapotranspiration is virtually equal to 100 percent of the precipitation, which is only about 10 inches per year. The ratio of estimated mean annual evapotranspiration to precipitation is least in the mountains of the Pacific Northwest and New England where evapotranspiration is about 40 percent of the precipitation (Hanson, 1991). By leaving out these substantial losses, generally 40 percent of precipitation or more, the retention estimates in this study can be considered quite conservative.

Additionally, there was no consideration of many ARCD practices in the Table 1 catalogue that could be applied in site-specific design. For example, there were no refinements of the prevailing building standards to reduce street widths or cluster buildings and reduce their footprints. Further, green roofs were not considered in this study, although they are already making a contribution to runoff reduction around the nation and reflect a significant additional opportunity to retain runoff on-site. The U.S. EPA has stated that “a 3.5-4 in. (8 -10 cm) deep green roof can retain 50% or more of the annual precipitation.” (U.S. EPA, 2009a). For water quality, we did not assume any source control implementation. Thus, actual site design could take advantage of substantial additional capabilities not considered in this study.

In cases where the practices incorporated in the initial level of analysis (infiltration through bioretention) did not, according to the estimates, fully attenuate post-development pollutant discharges, specific attention was directed at ways of extracting additional water from surface discharge by managing roof runoff. This assessment is called the “Full ARCD Analysis” in the report. The options broadly divide into harvesting water for a purpose such as irrigation and/or non-potable indoor supply, or making special provisions to infiltrate or evapotranspire roof runoff even if soil conditions are limiting. Harvesting applies best to relatively large developments having sufficient demand for the collected water. While single-family residences can harvest water into rain barrels or cisterns for lawn and garden watering, these containers may be small in volume relative to runoff production; and though opportunity exists, no credit was taken for them in this study. However, even in poorly infiltrating soils, options exist to disperse house roof runoff as sheet flow for storage in vegetation and soil until evapotranspiration and some infiltration occurs.

## CASE STUDIES

### CLIMATE REGIONS

#### Basis of Selection

The Nationwide Urban Runoff Project divided the nation into nine regions based on differences in volume, intensity, and duration of precipitation and interval between precipitation events (USEPA 1983). For broad representation of the U.S. generally this study chose regions 1 (Northeast-Upper Midwest), 3 (Southeast), 5 (South Central), and 6 (Southwest) for analysis. Table 2 provides the annual precipitation statistics from the NURP compilation.

Table 2. Precipitation Statistics (Means) for Four NURP Regions Selected for Study (USEPA 1983)

Region	Volume (inch)	Intensity (inch/hour)	Duration (hours)	Interval (hours)
1—Northeast-Upper Midwest	0.26	0.051	5.8	73
3—Southeast	0.49	0.102	5.2	89
5—South Central	0.33	0.080	4.0	108
6—Southwest	0.17	0.045	3.6	277

The selected regions represent a volume differential of about a factor of three, intensity variation of approximately two times, and inter-storm interval varying by almost four times. The NURP report shows coefficients of variation (mean/standard deviation) of greater than 1.0 for all of these means, indicating an overall high degree of dispersion.

Figure 1 visually depicts variation in mean annual precipitation across the continental United States. It shows that the selected regions are overall representative of the broadly prevailing range across the nation, particularly its major urban and still urbanizing areas.

Region 7 (Pacific Northwest) was also identified for discussion of research results on ARCD, although not full analysis. It has less intense (mean 0.024 inch/hour) but much more extended (mean 20.0 hours) precipitation compared to any other region in the nation. Mean storm volume ranks with region 3 (mean 0.48 inch); but fewer storms, especially in the summer, yield overall less total annual precipitation in lowland areas holding all urban development in region 7. It was of interest because of the already occurring use of ARCD techniques in a relatively rainy part of the country.

#### Representative Metropolitan Areas and Cities

Once the regions were identified, a metropolitan area within each area was chosen as a basis for assigning specific precipitation and development characteristics. The areas considered were USEPA-designated Urban Areas: "An urbanized area is a land area comprising one or more places – central place(s) – and the adjacent densely settled surrounding area – urban fringe – that together have a residential population of at least 50,000 and an overall population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile" (USEPA 2007). Stormwater regulations would have the most impact in areas that are being quickly developed, redeveloped, or both. Five of the twenty fastest growing counties in the nation from 2000 to 2009 were near Atlanta, GA and five were in the state of Texas (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). These statistics factored into the decision to focus on records from these regions.

Each selected metropolitan area is generally representative of its region in precipitation and development characteristics. Each is also undergoing relatively active new development and redevelopment, offering candidate locations where a prospective stormwater standard would frequently be applied. These metropolitan areas are: region 1—Boston, MA, region 3—Atlanta, GA, region 5—Austin, TX, and region 6—San Diego, CA



Figure 1. Precipitation of the Conterminous States of the United States, National Atlas of the United States, 2011.

Finally, a city with a high rate of development (and often redevelopment) was picked in each metropolitan area for investigation of building patterns and standards. The intent was to match regional patterns of climate, soils (see discussion on physiographic data, below), and land use and land cover realistically. After substantial investigation, the conclusion was that building standards, how land is used, and the relative allocation of impervious and pervious lands do not vary in any systematic way across the nation and cannot be regionally distinguished. Therefore, the variables of interest came down to precipitation and soils.

Alpharetta, about 30 miles north of Atlanta, represents that metropolitan area. In 1981 it was a small town of approximately 3,000 residents but grew to 51,243 by 2007. During the workday, the city swells to more than 120,000 residents, workers, and visitors. Alpharetta is home to large corporations such as AT&T (3500 employees), Verizon Wireless (3000 employees), and ADP, Inc./National Account Services (2100 employees). Infill redevelopment projects are anticipated in the downtown area (City of Alpharetta, 2011).

Round Rock is a typical developing city located 15 miles to the north of Austin, TX. In 1970 there were only 2,700 residents in this town, while today the population exceeds 100,000. Round Rock is the eighth-fastest growing city in the nation and the location of several large corporate campuses.

The Town of Framingham, 20 miles west of Boston, represents the northeastern climate zone. At nearly 67,000 inhabitants, Framingham is the largest entity designated as a "town" in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It is home to three large corporations and overall 2200 businesses providing 45,000 jobs. Differing greatly from the representative communities in

other regions, Framingham was incorporated in 1700 and developed early in the nation's history. Today's activity includes redevelopment of brownfields and downtown revitalization, although some agricultural land still remains within the town limits (Town of Framingham, 2011).

San Marcos, representing the San Diego area and located about 35 miles north of the city, grew from a population of 17,479 in 1980 to 82,743 by 2008. Major institutions in the city include California State University San Marcos and Palomar Community College. At this stage the city is only approximately 72 percent built out, and thus new development continues (City of San Marcos, 2011).

### **Precipitation Data**

Average monthly precipitation data were obtained from the NOAA Hourly Precipitation Data Rainfall Event Statistics<sup>5</sup> for one station with a long-term record in each region: Southeast—Atlanta/Hartsfield International Airport (Station #90451), South Central—Austin/Robert Mueller Municipal Airport (410428), Northeast—Boston/Logan International Airport (190770), and Southwest—San Diego/San Diego International Airport (Lindbergh Field) (47740). Atlanta receives the most precipitation, averaging about 49 inches per year, followed by Boston (47 inches/year), Austin (33 inches/year), and San Diego (10 inches/year). Figure 2 depicts precipitation variations over more than 50 years.

Values for either the 85<sup>th</sup> and 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour storms were available in a number of state-specific resources, including the Georgia Stormwater Standards Supplement (Center for Watershed Protection 2009) and the Integrated Stormwater Management Program (North Central Texas Council of Governments 2010), as well as national publications such as an USEPA's technical guidance documents (USEPA 2009). However, few references had values for both 85<sup>th</sup> and 95<sup>th</sup> percentile storms. Therefore, these values were calculated following the methodology outlined in the USEPA's Technical Guidance on Implementing the Stormwater Runoff Requirements (USEPA 2009, page 30). Daily precipitation and temperature data from the National Climatic Data Center's TD Summary of the Day data set were collected and analyzed for the four stations over a time period of 60 years, January 1, 1950 to January, 31 2010.

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<sup>5</sup> National Climatic Data Center, Hourly Precipitation Data Rainfall Event Statistics (<http://cdo.ncdc.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/HPD/HPDStats.pl>, last accessed December 15, 2011).

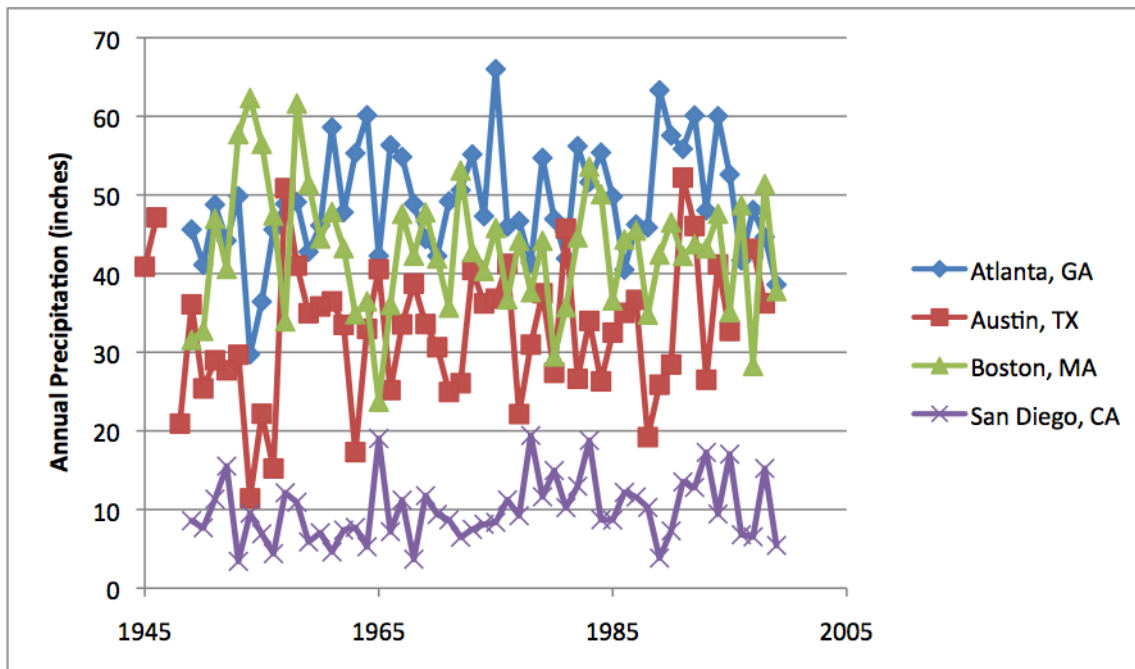


Figure 2. Average Annual Precipitation for Four Climate Regions over the Latter Part of the Twentieth Century (from NOAA Hourly Precipitation Data Rainfall Event Statistics, <http://cdo.ncdc.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/HPD/HPDStats.pl>)

For snowfall days, snow water equivalent (SWE) was calculated according to the guidelines provided by a National Climate Data Center’s (NCDC) document, Estimating the Water Equivalent of Snow, utilizing the reported mean temperature for the day (National Climatic Data Center, accessed December 16, 2011). The NCDC tables calculate that the SWE is at most, about 10 percent of the total snowfall depth. In the methodology for determining the 85<sup>th</sup> and 95<sup>th</sup> percentile events, all days with < 0.1 inch precipitation are removed, lowering the impact of snow on the results. Snowfall had no effect in the Southwest region, a very minor effect in the Southeast and South Central, and still a relatively small effect in the Northeast, as follows: San Diego—0 snow days; Atlanta—74 of 4600 total days having  $\geq 0.1$  inch (1.6 percent), with a contribution ranging 0.01-0.79 inch precipitation; Austin—32 of 2418 days (1.3 percent), contributing 0.01-0.50 inch; and Boston—993 of 4783 days (20.8 percent), contributing 0.01-2.24 inch. Since snow does add to runoff that must be managed in a location like the Northeast, these snow water equivalents were left in the records. Table 3 summarizes precipitation data used in the analyses for the four regions.

Table 3. Precipitation Summary for Study Regions

Region	Average Annual Precipitation (inches)	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile, 24-Hour Event		95 <sup>th</sup> Percentile, 24-Hour Event	
		Depth (inch) <sup>a</sup>	Fraction Covered <sup>b</sup>	Depth (inch) <sup>a</sup>	Fraction Covered <sup>b</sup>
Southeast	49.02	1.13	0.63	1.79	0.87
South Central	32.67	1.19	0.58	1.99	0.82
Northeast	47.03	1.07	0.81	1.72	0.89
Southwest	9.68	0.76	0.62	1.26	0.83

<sup>a</sup> Calculated from National Climatic Data Center’s TD Summary of the Day, for all precipitation days >0.1 inch for period January 1, 1950 – December 31, 2009

<sup>b</sup> Fraction of total annual precipitation covered by event standard

## **Physiographic Data**

### ***General Methods***

This section of the report covers the soils, groundwater, and topographic data underlying the analyses. Soil characteristics are largely a product of climate, geology and topography. The characteristics of most interest for this study were those controlling infiltration of surface water and percolation to an aquifer. Although there is variation within each climate region, the major soil orders can be used to identify regional characteristics. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) website<sup>6</sup> describing the major soil orders and their locations was the initial source of these data. Maps generated by Miller and White (1998) gave information from the State Soil Geographic Database (STATSGO), including characteristics such as soil texture and hydrologic soil group. These resources were employed to gain a broad view of the soils in each of the four regions.

To extend the scope of the study, soils were investigated in the Upper Midwest, in addition to the Southeast, South Central, Northeast, and Southwest climate regions. Upper Midwest and Northeast soils share general similarities. Both regions also have temperate, seasonal, humid climates. While average annual precipitation is overall somewhat greater in the Northeast compared to the Upper Midwest, the two regions were deemed similar enough physiographically and climatologically to be considered together. This report henceforth groups them as the Northeast – Upper Midwest climate region.

To validate the regional patterns emerging from the general sources, custom “soil resource” reports for four cities were generated using the NRCS Web Soil Survey<sup>7</sup> tool. These reports collected characteristics related to infiltration rates and runoff including soil texture, hydrologic soil group, drainage classification, representative slope, and depth to water table. Using this tool requires selecting an “area of interest”. This examination utilized a size of at least 8,000 acres (10,000 acres is the maximum allowed) to insure a representative sample of soil and related conditions.

Hydrologic soil group assignment is a means of generally categorizing soils according to their tendency to admit and transmit water. The hydrologic soil group (HSG) is determined with respect to the water-transmitting soil layer with the lowest saturated hydraulic conductivity and depth to any layer that is more or less water impermeable (such as a fragipan or duripan) or depth to a water table. Box 1 summarizes the characteristics of the four HSGs (NRCS 2007).

The position of the groundwater table is a crucial determinant of whether or not stormwater infiltration should be promoted by applying ground-based ARCD practices. A seasonal high water table too close to the surface results in rapid saturation of a thin soil column and retarded infiltration. Ponding water longer than 72 hours can permit mosquito growth, damage vegetation, and promote clogging of the facility by microorganism growths and polysaccharide organic materials that form in the reduced-oxygen environment accompanying excessive ponding time (Mitchell and Nevo 1964, Ronner and Wong 1996). Also, storm runoff flow through a short soil column or very rapidly through a coarse-textured soil can potentially convey contaminants to groundwater. To avoid entertaining stormwater management strategies threatening development of these problems, data on depth to groundwater was obtained from the U.S. Geological Survey’s (USGS) Groundwater-Level Annual Statistics (USGS 2011).

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<sup>6</sup> Natural Resources Conservation Service, Distribution Maps of Dominant Soil Orders (<http://soils.usda.gov/technical/classification/orders/>, last accessed December 16, 2011).

<sup>7</sup> Natural Resources Conservation Service, 2011, Web Soil Survey (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm>).

Topographic slope influences runoff production by setting incident precipitation in motion downslope, thus producing a horizontal component of velocity vector partially counteracting the tendency to penetrate the soil vertically. This study investigated that importance of that effect by considering two slopes typical of urban development sites. As discussed during the presentation of results, below, this factor did not have a large effect on the analysis.

Box 1. Summary of Hydrologic Soil Groups (NRCS 2007)

**Group A**—Soils in this group have low runoff potential when thoroughly wet. Water is transmitted freely through the soil. Group A soils typically have less than 10 percent clay and more than 90 percent sand or gravel and have gravel or sand textures. Some soils having loamy sand, sandy loam, loam or silt loam textures may be placed in this group if they are well aggregated, of low bulk density, or contain greater than 35 percent rock fragments. The saturated hydraulic conductivity of all soil layers exceeds 5.67 inches per hour. The depth to any water-impermeable layer is greater than 20 inches. The depth to the water table is greater than 24 inches. Soils deeper than 40 inches to a water-impermeable layer are in group A if the saturated hydraulic conductivity of all soil layers within 40 inches of the surface exceeds 1.42 inch per hour.<sup>a</sup>

**Group B**—Soils in this group have moderately low runoff potential when thoroughly wet. Water transmission through the soil is unimpeded. Group B soils typically have between 10 percent and 20 percent clay and 50 percent to 90 percent sand and have loamy sand or sandy loam textures. Some soils having loam, silt loam, silt, or sandy clay loam textures may be placed in this group if they are well aggregated, of low bulk density, or contain greater than 35 percent rock fragments. The saturated hydraulic conductivity in the least transmissive layer between the surface and 20 inches ranges from 10.0 1.42 to 5.67 inches per hour. The depth to any water-impermeable layer is greater than 20 inches. The depth to the water table is greater than 24 inches. Soils deeper than 40 inches to a water-impermeable layer or water table are in group B if the saturated hydraulic conductivity of all soil layers within 40 inches of the surface exceeds 0.57 inch per hour but is less than 1.42 inch per hour.

**Group C**—Soils in this group have moderately high runoff potential when thoroughly wet. Water transmission through the soil is somewhat restricted. Group C soils typically have between 20 percent and 40 percent clay and less than 50 percent sand and have loam, silt loam, sandy clay loam, clay loam, and silty clay loam textures. Some soils having clay, silty clay, or sandy clay textures may be placed in this group if they are well aggregated, of low bulk density, or contain greater than 35 percent rock fragments. The saturated hydraulic conductivity in the least transmissive layer between the surface and 20 inches is between 0.14 and 1.42 inch per hour. The depth to any water-impermeable layer is greater than 20 inches. The depth to the water table is greater than 24 inches. Soils deeper than 40 inches to a restriction or water table are in group C if the saturated hydraulic conductivity of all soil layers within 40 inches of the surface exceeds 0.06 inch per hour but is less than 0.57 inch per hour.

**Group D**—Soils in this group have high runoff potential when thoroughly wet. Water movement through the soil is restricted or very restricted. Group D soils typically have greater than 40 percent clay, less than 50 percent sand, and have clayey textures. In some areas, they also have high shrink-swell potential. All soils with a depth to a water-impermeable layer less than 20 inches and all soils with a water table within 24 inches of the surface are in this group, although some may have a dual classification if they can be adequately drained. For soils with a water-impermeable layer at a depth between 20 and 40 inches, the saturated hydraulic conductivity in the least transmissive soil layer is less than or equal to 0.14 inch per hour. For soils deeper than 40 inches to a restriction or water table, the saturated hydraulic conductivity of all soil layers within 40 inches of the surface is less than or equal to 0.06 inch per hour.

<sup>a</sup> While Group A soils are present across large areas of the country, our analysis considers only Group B, C, and D soils to provide a conservative assessment of infiltration potential in urban areas, and to account for potential issues such as soil compaction that may occur for lawn and other landscaping in urban and suburban development.



### **Southeast Climate Region**

The major soil order found throughout the southeastern United States is Ustisols, sub-order Udufts. The humid climate with frequent rainfall gives the soils an udic moisture regime; soils are rarely dry for more than 45 consecutive days. Ustisols are highly weathered and are deficient in calcium and other bases. Georgia is known for its red soils, which are the unhydrated iron oxides left in the weathered material. Pre-European contact, these soils supported mixed conifer and deciduous woodlands. Due to its relatively flat topography and warmer temperatures, Florida has primarily Spodosols, Alfisols and Histosols (Soil Survey Staff, NRCS 2011).

This region has a variety of soil textures, ranging from sand and sandy loam throughout Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia; silty loam soils near the Appalachian Mountains; and some areas with significant organic materials in Florida. The major soil hydrologic groups of the region are varied as well, with C and D soils dominating the Georgia coastline and most of Florida. Group A and B soils are more prevalent in the interior parts of the region, in central Georgia and Alabama (Miller and White 1998).

A NRCS web soil survey was conducted for an area of interest (AOI) centered in Alpharetta, GA. The selected AOI did not have complete soil survey coverage, and findings were compared with another AOI of 8990.5 acres north of the city in Fulton County. In both AOIs, the leading HSG is B (86 percent of AOI), followed by group C (11 percent of AOI). Approximately 97 percent of the AOI has a sandy loam soil texture. The leading drainage classification was well drained (86 percent of AOI), followed by somewhat poorly drained (10 percent of AOI). The selected AOI was moderately steep, with approximately 70 percent of the AOI having slopes between 8 and 12 percent.

Fulton County, Georgia has four wells in the USGS record, three with depth-to-groundwater data. Two wells have only one recorded depth: site 08CC08 had a depth of 2.447 ft in 1986, and site 10DD01 had a depth of 16.131 ft in 1968. Site 10DD02 has been monitored annually from 1977-2010 and has an annual well-depth average in this time period of 6.292 ft.

### **South Central Climate Region**

The major soil order in Texas is Mollisols, sub-order ustolls. These soils span the sub-humid and semiarid climate zones, and are common on the western Great Plains and throughout the Rocky Mountain States. These soils originally supported grasslands and (in mountainous regions) forests, and now are ranched or farmed. Houston black soils are also characteristic of the region and are important in agriculture and urban areas, occurring throughout central Texas. Dry soils in the Order Aridisols, sub-orders Argids and Calcids, are found in west Texas and large portions of New Mexico as well. These soils were formerly sparsely vegetated areas, now used for rangeland or wildlife habitat (Soil Survey Staff, NRCS 2011).

Soil characteristic maps generated by Miller & White (1998) indicate that the majority of soil types in the South Central climate region are diverse: sandy loam and clay dominate eastern Texas, clay soils are prevalent in central parts of the state and loam soils are in western Texas and New Mexico. Most soils tend to be in the C and D hydrologic groups, however B soils are found in bands in New Mexico (Miller & White, 1998).

A web soil survey was conducted for an area of interest of 8267.5 acres centered in Round Rock, TX. The leading HSG is D (68 percent of AOI), followed by group C (22 percent of AOI) and group B (10 percent). Primary soil textures are clay (33 percent), silty clay (27 percent), extremely stony clay (17 percent), and silty clay loam (10 percent). The leading drainage classification is well drained (79 percent of AOI) followed by moderately well drained (21

percent). The selected AOI is relatively flat; approximately 70 percent of the AOI has slopes under 2 percent, and 20 percent has slopes of 3-4 percent.

Travis County, Texas had three wells that were measured in 2003 and recorded by USGS (site YD-58-50-216) and 2004 (sites YD-58-50-216 and YD-58-25-907). Groundwater is very deep in each location, averaging 220 ft below the ground surface.

### **Northeast – Upper Midwest Climate Region**

This climate region has significant variation in dominant soil orders. The Spodosols order, sub-order Orthods, dominates the northern portions (northern Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Vermont, and Maine) and is generally considered infertile without soil amendments. Inceptisols, sub-order Udepts, are also prevalent in the region, especially in New England states, through the Appalachian Mountains and northeastern Minnesota. Alfisols, sub-order Udalfs, too are prevalent in the region, extending from Minnesota east to New York. These two soils both have an udic moisture regime, and are rarely dry for more than 45 consecutive days due to the year-round precipitation in the area (Soil Survey Staff, NRCS 2011). The state soil of Massachusetts is the Paxton fine sandy loam and also extends into New Hampshire, New York and Vermont. These deep soils were formed in acid subglacial till and are derived from schist, gneiss and granite (NRCS undated).

Based on maps generated by Miller and White (1998), sandy loam and silt loam soils tend to dominate the region, with small areas of clay and silty clay soils. Hydrologic soil group B is most prevalent in the Midwestern states (Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois), and Group C is most common in the rest of the region, spanning from Indiana to Maine. The region primarily supported forest ecosystems before development.

A web soil survey was conducted for an area of interest centered in Framingham, MA with an AOI of 8645.6 acres. The region has relatively equal amounts of each HSG: 20 percent of the AOI in Group A, 19 percent in group B, 20 percent in Group C, and 24 percent in Group D. Soil textures represented are fine sandy loam (49 percent), muck (10 percent), loamy sand (9 percent), and moderately decomposed plant material (8 percent). The leading drainage classification is well drained (32 percent of AOI) followed by very poorly drained (16 percent), somewhat excessively drained (12 percent), and moderately well drained (11 percent). Fourteen percent of the AOI has slopes of 1 percent or less, with 18 percent at 2-5 percent, 23 percent at 6-8 percent, and another 23 percent at 8-12 percent slopes.

There are three wells in the USGS record for Middlesex County, MA including 5 years of record for an Acton well averaging 17.75 ft, 6 years for the Wakefield well with an average depth of 6.59 ft, and 11 years at the Wilmington well with an average of 8.09 ft.

### **Southwest Climate Region**

There are multiple soil orders in California due to its variation in climate, topography and geologic history. Entisols occur in the southern parts of the state; sub-order Psamments is a frequently found sandy soil that makes productive rangeland. Order Mollisols, sub-order Xerolls, are freely drained and dry soils found in the Mediterranean climate along the coast of California. Pre-settlement ecosystems supported by these soils include oak savanna, grasslands, and chaparral. Current soils may be used as cropland or rangeland (Soil Survey Staff, NRCS 2011).

A web soil survey was conducted for an 8267.5-acre area of interest centered in San Marcos, CA. The leading HSG is D (58 percent of AOI), followed by group C (26 percent) and group B (14 percent). Soil texture include sandy loam (19 percent), coarse sandy loam (17 percent), silt loam (15 percent), very fine sandy loam (14 percent), loamy fine sand (12 percent), loam (7

percent), and clay (5 percent). The leading drainage classification is well drained (51 percent of AOI), followed by moderately well drained (34 percent). Approximately 10 percent of the AOI has slopes  $\leq$  5 percent, and 66 percent has slopes of 5-10 percent.

There are no groundwater records for San Diego County available on the USGS website. Data were collected from the California Department of Water Resource Water Data Library<sup>8</sup>. Ten wells west of San Marcos near Escondido were sampled in 1987. The depth to groundwater ranged from 2.0 to 28.1 ft for an average of 11.6 ft.

### **Summary of Physiographic Characteristics**

Due to the large area of land encompassed in each climate region, it is difficult to select one location that is truly “representative” of the entire region. By selecting four cities that are spaced throughout the country with different climate and soil characteristics, however, this study can demonstrate the different potential for ARCD strategies in regions around the nation. Table 4 summarizes the major soils, groundwater, and topographic characteristics for these regions. Figure 3 shows the distributions of hydrologic soil groups in areas of interest investigated in the four metropolitan areas.

Table 4. Summary of Physiographic Data

Characteristic	Southeast	South Central	Northeast – Upper Midwest	Southwest
Main soil types	Sandy loam	Clay, clay loam	Sandy loam, silt loam	Sandy loam, loam
Hydrologic soil group near study site	B (GA, AL, SC)	D (TX)	C (Northeastern states)	D
Other hydrologic soil group in climate region	D (FL)	C (NM)	B (MN, WI, IL, MI)	C
Predominant pre-development land cover	Woods	Semi-arid herbaceous	Woods	Narrow-leaved chaparral
Predominant slopes	70% @ 8-12%	90% < 4%	65% < 12%	76% < 10%

### **LAND USE CASES**

Five cases were selected to represent a range of urban development types considered to be representative of the nation. These cases involved: a multi-family residential complex (MFR), a relatively small-scale (23 homes) single-family residential development (Sm-SFR), a relatively large (1000 homes) single-family residential development (Lg-SFR), a sizeable commercial retail installation (COMM), and an urban redevelopment (REDEV).

Building permit records from the City of San Marcos in San Diego County, California provided data on total site areas for the first three cases, including numbers of buildings, building footprint areas (including porch and garage for Sm-SFR), and numbers of parking spaces associated with the development projects. Information was not as complete for cities in other regions, but what data was available indicated no substantial difference in these site features. Therefore, the San Marcos data were used for all regional case studies. This uniformity had the advantage of placing comparisons completely on the basis of the major variables of interest, climatological and soils characteristics.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.water.ca.gov/waterdatalibrary> (last accessed December 16, 2011).

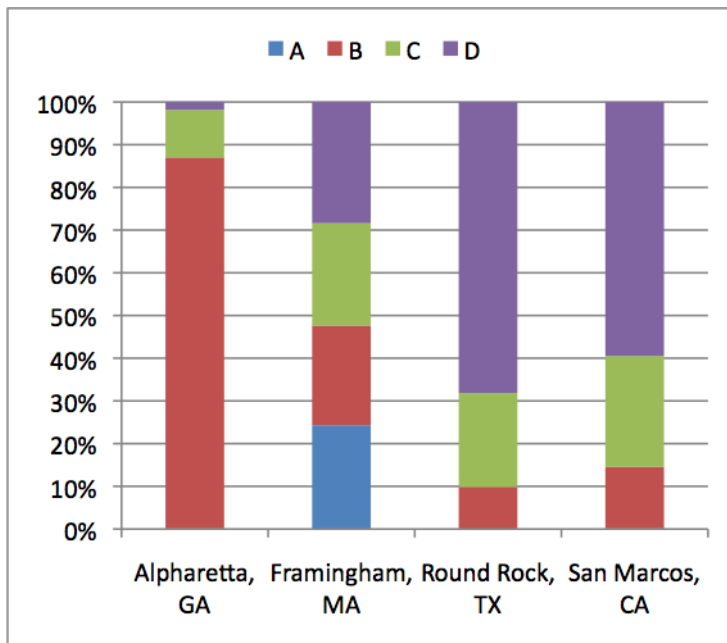


Figure 3. Distribution of Hydrologic Soil Groups in Four Study Cities

The REDEV case was taken from an actual project in Berkeley, California involving conversion of an existing structure, built originally as a corner grocery store, to apartments and addition of a new building to create a nine-unit, mixed-use, urban infill project. Space remained for a large side yard.

Larger developments were not represented in the sampling of building permits from the San Marcos database. To take larger development projects into account in the subsequent analysis, the two larger scale cases were hypothesized. The Lg-SFR scenario scaled up all land use estimates from the Sm-SFR case in the ratio of 1000:23. The hypothetical COMM scenario consisted of a building with a 2-acre footprint and 500 parking spaces. As with the smaller-scale cases, these hypothetical developments were assumed to have roadways, walkways, and landscaping, as described below.

While the building permit records made no reference to features such as roadways, walkways, and landscaping normally associated with development projects, these features were taken into account in the case studies using assumptions described herein. Parking spaces were estimated to be 176 square ft in area, which corresponds to 8 ft width by 22 ft length dimensions. Code requirements vary by jurisdiction, with the tendency now to drop below the traditional 200 square ft average. About 180 square ft is common, but various standards for full- and compact-car spaces, and for the mix of the two, can raise or lower the average (Gibbons, 2009). The 176 square ft size is considered to be a reasonable value for conventional practice.

Roadways and walkways assume a wide variety of patterns. Exclusive of the two SFR cases, simple, square parking lots with roadways around the four sides and square buildings with walkways also around the four sides were assumed. Roadways and walkways were taken to be 20 ft and 6 ft wide, respectively.

Each single-family residences (SFR) was assumed to have a lot area of 5749 square ft., and a driveway 20 ft wide and 30 ft long. Assuming a square lot, each would have a sidewalk 76 feet by 4 feet wide, and a walkway that is 40 feet by 4 feet. .

Exclusive of the COMM case, the total area for all of these impervious features was subtracted from the total site area to estimate the pervious area, which was assumed to have conventional landscaping cover (grass, small herbaceous decorative plants, bushes, and a few trees). For the COMM scenario, an additional 10 percent was added to the building, parking lot, access road, and walkway area to represent the landscaping, on the belief that a typical retail commercial establishment would be mostly impervious.

Table 5 summarizes the characteristics of the five land use cases. The table also provides the recorded or estimated areas in each land use and cover type.

Table 5. Summary of Cases with Land Use and Land Cover Areas

	MFR <sup>a</sup>	Sm-SFR <sup>a</sup>	Lg-SFR <sup>a</sup>	COMM <sup>a</sup>	REDEV <sup>a</sup>
No. buildings	11	23	1000	1	2
Total area (ft <sup>2</sup> )	476,982	132,227	5,749,000	226,529	5,451
Roof area (ft <sup>2</sup> )	184,338	34,949	1,519,522	87,120	3,435
No. parking spaces <sup>b</sup>	438	-	-	500	2
Parking area (ft <sup>2</sup> ) <sup>b</sup>	77,088	-	-	88,000	316
Access road area (ft <sup>2</sup> )	22,212	-	-	23,732	-
Walkway area (ft <sup>2</sup> )	33,960	10,656	463,289	7,084	350
Driveway area (ft <sup>2</sup> )	-	13,800	600,000	-	650
Landscape area (ft <sup>2</sup> )	159,384	72,822	3,166,190	20,594	700

<sup>a</sup> MFR—multi-family residential; Sm-SFR—small-scale single-family residential; Lg-SFR—large-scale single-family residential; COMM—retail commercial; REDEV—redevelopment

<sup>b</sup> Uncovered

## METHODS OF ANALYSIS

### AVERAGE EVENT AND ANNUAL STORMWATER RUNOFF VOLUMES

#### Calculation Methods

Surface runoff volumes produced were estimated for both pre- and post-development conditions for each case study. The pre-development state was considered to be the predominant land cover for each region prior to European settlement.

For impervious areas, average event and annual runoff volumes were computed as the product of event or average annual precipitation, contributing drainage area, and a runoff coefficient (ratio of runoff produced to precipitation received) according to the familiar Rational Method equation. The runoff coefficient was determined from the equation  $C = (0.009) I + 0.05$ , where  $I$  is the impervious percentage. This equation was derived by Schueler (1987) from Nationwide Urban Runoff Program data (USEPA 1983). With  $I = 100$  percent for fully impervious surfaces,  $C$  is 0.95.

The basis for pervious area runoff coefficients, for both the pre-development state and landscaped areas in developments, was the NRCS's Urban Hydrology for Small Watersheds (NRCS 1986, as revised from the original 1975 edition). This model estimates storm event runoff ( $R$ , inch) as a function of precipitation ( $P$ , inch) and a variable representing land cover and soil, termed the curve number ( $CN$ , dimensionless).  $CN$  enters the calculation via a variable  $S$ , which is the potential maximum soil moisture retention after runoff begins. The equations for English units of measurement are:

$$R = \frac{(P - 0.2S)^2}{P + 0.8S} \qquad S = \frac{1000}{CN} - 10$$

The runoff equation is valid for  $P > 0.2S$ , which represents the initial abstraction, the amount of water retained before runoff begins by vegetative interception and infiltration (NRCS 1986). According to this model, larger events are forecast to produce a greater amount of runoff in relation to amount of precipitation, because they more fully saturate the soil. Therefore, use of the model to estimate annual runoff requires selecting some event or group of events to compute an average runoff coefficient representing the year.

Average pre- and post-development pervious area average runoff coefficients were derived by computing runoff from a series of precipitation events ranging from 0.1 inch up to the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour event for the respective metropolitan areas, dividing by the associated precipitation, and averaging for all event amounts  $> 0.2S$ . Average annual runoff volumes for pervious areas were estimated based on these runoff coefficients and average annual precipitation quantities recorded at the respective gauging locations.

#### Curve Number Selection

Pre-development curve numbers were determined from existing studies and NRCS (1986)  $CN$  tables based on pre-European settlement land cover. Before development, woods predominated in Georgia and Massachusetts. Pre-development Texas had principally arid and semi-arid range with herbaceous cover. Chaparral was the predominant land cover in the San Diego area, however, this land cover type is not listed in the NRCS tables. For that region the selection came from a study by Easterbrook (undated) on curve numbers and associated soil hydrologic groups in an investigation of mainly chaparral lands before and after wildfires in the San Diego area.

Conversion to landscaping typical of development modifies soil and water infiltration characteristics by removing topsoil and even subsoil, compacting the remaining soil, and changing the vegetative cover. For pervious landscaping after development, CN was based on 1/8-acre urban development for all building types.

To demonstrate a range of results, runoff estimates were made for two soils in each region falling in B and C, B and D, or C and D HSGs. The more infiltrative soil was assumed to be in “good” condition and the less permeable one in “poor” condition, differentiations made in the NRCS tables. Table 6 summarizes the curve numbers used in the analyses. The paragraphs following the table detail how the selections were made for each region.

Table 6. Summary of Curve Numbers for Study Regions

Hydrologic soil group-condition	Southeast		South Central		Northeast – Upper Midwest		Southwest	
	B-good	D-poor	C-good	D-poor	B-good	C-poor	C-good	D-poor
Pre-development	55	83	74	93	55	77	77	90
Post-development	85	92	90	93	85	90	91	93

The Georgia Stormwater Manual Supplement recommends that watershed managers select curve numbers proposed by the NRCS based on hydrologic soil groups A through D and hydrologic condition of the site (Center for Watershed Protection 2009). As aforementioned, the pre-European land cover of the southeastern United States was forested. A study by Dyke (2001) in Forsyth and Hall Counties northeast of Atlanta confirmed that, immediately prior to development, approximately 50 percent of urban lands were forested, with 22 percent in agricultural use.

Because the region includes B soils in the interior of Alabama and Georgia, and poorly draining D soils in Florida and along the coasts, it was decided, for the purpose of demonstrating a range of results, to base NRCS Curve number values on B soils in good condition and D soils in poor condition. The corresponding pre- and post-development curve numbers are 55 and 83 and 85 and 92, respectively.

Prior to human development, approximately 80 percent of Texas, mostly in the central part, was covered in short and tall grassland communities; the western 10 percent of the state was desert grassland; and the eastern 10 percent was forested (University of Texas 2000). McLendon (2002) conducted a study on the observed and predicted curve numbers in 107 watersheds in Texas. For rural watersheds the CNs ranged from 48 to 88. The range in Austin was 49-89 and in Dallas 60-90. The Texas Department of Transportation’s (2001) Hydraulic Design Manual Section 7 lists values for pre-development curve numbers for arid and semi- arid rangelands. Based on these sources, the respective pre- and post-development CN choices were 74 (C—good soil) and 93 (D—poor soil) and 90 (C—good soil) and 93 (D—poor soil).

Before European development, most of the Northeast – Upper Midwest region was covered in mixed hardwood and coniferous forests. A recent USGS report confirms that most urban development in the region from 1973 to 2000 has converted forestland (47 percent of all changes), followed by farmland (11 percent) (Auch undated). For this study’s pre-development curve number, the woods cover type, soil group B in good condition and C soil in poor condition gave corresponding curve numbers of 55 and 77, respectively. Post-development curve numbers for these soil types at 1/8-acre development size were 85 and 90 for the good B and poor C soils, respectively. These post-development curve numbers are similar to a recent study in the Aberjona River watershed, an urban catchment northwest of Boston, where the authors used an overall CN of 89 to represent the more impervious parts of the watershed (Perez-Pedini et al. 2005).

With the lack of NRCS data for chaparral, CN selection for the San Diego area was based on an analysis performed in the area of the 2003 Cedar Fire in San Diego County by Easterbrook (undated). For pre-development C soils in good condition and D soils in poor condition, the choices were 77 and 90, respectively. Post-development curve numbers were selected from Easterbrook's estimation of CN after a high-burn fire; for good C soils CN = 91, and for poor D soils CN = 93.

### **Effect of Slope on Curve Number**

NRCS documents developing the curve number concept and associated methods did not cover the effect of land slope. Independent researchers have given some attention to the question though. Sharpley and Williams (1990) introduced the empirical equation that has been most often used to adjust CN relative to slope:

$$CN_s = 0.333(CN_w - CN)(1 - 2e^{-13.86s}) + CN$$

where CN is the curve number reported in NRCS tables for an average soil moisture condition and assumed slope  $\leq 5$  percent,  $CN_s$  = slope-adjusted CN,  $CN_w$  = CN in an initially wet soil condition, and  $s$  = slope (ft/ft). Ward and Trimble provided factors to adjust tabulated CN values to obtain  $CN_w$ . Carrying through the analysis in this manner demonstrated that results deviated between two assessed slopes (5 and 10 percent) by only around 2-6 percent. This small difference was considered minimal in the context of the approximations and assumptions inherent in the modeling process. While the results presentation gives some additional data on slope effects, full coverage is given only for 5 percent, the topographic basis of the NRCS model and by far the subject of its greatest application.

## **ESTIMATING INFILTRATION CAPACITY OF THE CASE STUDY SITES**

### **Infiltration Rates**

Infiltrating sufficient runoff to maintain pre-development hydrologic characteristics and prevent pollutant transport is the most effective way to protect surface receiving waters. Successfully applying infiltration requires soils and hydrogeological conditions that will pass water sufficiently rapidly to avoid overly-lengthy ponding, while not allowing percolating water to reach groundwater before the soil column captures pollutants.

The study assumed that infiltration would occur in surface facilities and not in below-ground trenches. The use of trenches is certainly possible. However, the intent of this investigation was to determine the ability of pervious areas to manage the site runoff, and their exclusion is consistent with the conservative approach to modeling taken in this analysis. This inquiry was accomplished by evaluating the ability of the predominant soil types identified for each region to provide an infiltration rate of at least 0.5 inch/hour, the rate often regarded in the stormwater management field as the minimum for the use of infiltration practices (e.g., Geosyntec Consultants 2008). The assessment considered soils that either would provide this rate, at a minimum, in their original condition or could be organically amended to augment soil water storage and increase infiltration, while also safeguarding groundwater. Therefore, prevailing groundwater depths were assessed in relation to runoff percolation times generally regarded as safe.

Infiltration rates were based on saturated hydraulic conductivities (obtained from Leij et al. 1996) typical of the basic soil types incorporated in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA, 1987) soil textural triangle. Sand, loamy sand, sandy loam have conductivities well above 0.5 inch/hour. As Table 4 indicates, three of the four regions have a sandy loam as the dominant soil type. For such a soil in the B HSG in these regions, the infiltration rate was taken as 1.74



inch/hour (Leij et al. 1996). Other textures represented that would generally fall in the C group are mostly loam and silt loam. These soil types either have conductivities in excess of 0.5 inch/hour or, in the first author's experience, can be and have been successfully organically amended to produce such a rate and infiltrate accumulated water within 72 hours, and usually less time. The D soils in some study regions, silty clay and clay, were regarded as not amendable to reach 0.5 inch/hour conductivity to host conventional or ARCD-type facilities designed specifically for infiltration. Still, locations with these soils could distribute sheet flow over pervious areas for evapotranspiration and some infiltration at slow rates and could utilize roof downspout surface or subsurface dispersal.

**Groundwater Protection Assessment**

Avoidance of groundwater contamination was assessed by assuming a hydraulic conductivity generally regarded as the maximum rate for the use of infiltration practices, 2.4 inches/hour (e.g., Geosyntec Consultants 2008), and a minimum spacing to seasonal high groundwater from the bed of an infiltration facility of 4 ft. These conditions would provide a travel time of 20 hours, during which contaminant capture would occur through soil contact. This 20-hour travel time was regarded as a minimum for any soil type. For example, infiltrating on loamy sand with a hydraulic conductivity of 5.7 inches/hour would require minimum spacing from the infiltration surface to groundwater of 10 ft. This consideration did not actually become an issue for analyses in any region in this study, because all predominant soil types have infiltration rates under 2.4 inches/hour and groundwater spacings that exceed 4 ft.

**Site Infiltration Capacities**

Runoff volumes were estimated for the 85<sup>th</sup> and 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour events as described previously. Bioretention cell surface area to accommodate these volumes was calculated based on a method in the City of Santa Barbara's Storm Water BMP Guidance Manual (Geosyntec Consultants 2008) (adapted from the Georgia Stormwater Manual (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2001)):

$$A = \frac{(V_{\text{design}})(l)}{(t)(k_{\text{design}})(d + l)}$$

where:

$V_{\text{design}}$  = design volume of runoff to be infiltrated (ft<sup>3</sup>);

$k_{\text{design}}$  = design infiltration rate (in/hr), taken as 0.5 times the typical rate for the soil type naturally or amended as a safety factor;

$d$  = ponding depth (ft), assumed as 0.25 ft for a shallow landscape feature on the recommendation of the Georgia manual;

$l$  = depth of planting media (ft), assumed as 4 ft on the recommendation of the Georgia manual;

$t$  = required drawdown time (hr), taken as 48 hours.

The design variable selections are conservative in applying a safety factor to hydraulic conductivity, using minimum depths for economy and limiting site disruption, and applying a drain time lower than the maximum of 72 hours.

In considering the long-term capacity of a facility designed to infiltrate, the potential for groundwater mounding below or aside the unit is a concern. To avoid this problem a basic analysis was made using a groundwater rise equation from Zomorodi (2005):

$$\text{Rise} = 0.86 \frac{(K_v)(W)}{(K_h - K_v)}$$

where:

Rise = mounding occurring in a year of use (ft);

$K_v$  = vertical saturated hydraulic conductivity (ft/year);

W = bioretention cell width (ft); and

$K_h$  = horizontal saturated hydraulic conductivity (ft/year).

This equation was solved for  $K_v$  for computation of the allowable annual infiltration rate, assuming a rise limited to 1 ft. It was assumed that the bioretention surface area would be broken up to have no more than one basin for each 5 acres of total site area, another measure safeguarding against groundwater mounding. Also assumed was a square cell (i.e., W was computed as the square root of the surface area calculated according to the equation for A above). Horizontal hydraulic conductivities for loams such as represented among the B and C soils in the study regions tend to run in the range of 10 to 1000 meters/year (0.1 to 9 ft/day). A conservative value of 3 ft/day was used in the analysis.

The yearly rate of infiltration from a bioretention cell can be expressed in terms of volume of runoff per unit infiltrating surface area, acre-ft/acre-year, which is equivalent to  $K_v$  expressed as ft/year. The  $K_v$  value avoiding groundwater monitoring was therefore used to assess maximum annual infiltration capacity by multiplying by the total available pervious surface area. However, the  $K_v$  value was capped at a rate found in a study of infiltration capacity and benefits for Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley by Chralowicz et al. (2001). The Los Angeles study posited providing 0.1-0.5 acre for infiltration basins to serve each 5 acres of contributing drainage area. At 2-3 ft deep, it was estimated that such basins could infiltrate 0.90-1.87 acre-ft/year of runoff in San Fernando Valley conditions. Three types of soils predominate in the study area: sandy loams (35 percent of the area), a clay loam (23 percent), and a silty clay loam (29 percent). The balance of 13 percent includes small amounts at both ends of the textural spectrum, a clay and loamy sands. Infiltration rates are in the approximate range of 0.5-2.0 inches/hour, within the span generally regarded as ideal for successful infiltration without threatening groundwater. Computing the ratios of the rate and basin size data of Chralowicz et al. (2001),  $K_v$  maximized at approximately 20 acre-ft of runoff/acre infiltration surface-year under the most limiting conditions of soils and basin dimensions. This value was applied in this study if calculated rates were higher, another conservative feature to obtain the most realistic projections of infiltration potential.

In some cases analyzed, the maximum annual infiltration capacity was estimated at greater than post-development runoff volume production. In these instances complete retention would be possible with excess capacity left, and only a fraction of the available pervious area would have to be devoted to bioretention. That fraction was expressed as the ratio of annual runoff production to infiltration capacity.

## STORMWATER RUNOFF VOLUME AND POLLUTANT DISCHARGES

### Urban Land Use Pollutant Yields

Annual pollutant mass loadings prior to application of any stormwater management practices were estimated as the product of annual runoff volumes produced by the various land use and cover types and pollutant concentrations typical of those areas. General land use types (e.g., single-family residential, commercial) have typically been the basis for measuring and reporting stormwater pollutant data. However, an investigation of ARCD practices of the type of interest in this study demands data on specific land coverages. The literature offers few data on this basis. Those available and used herein were assembled by a consultant to the City of Seattle for a project in which the author participated. They appear in Attachment A (Herrera Environmental Consultants, Inc. undated). Table 7 summarizes the representative values used in the analysis.

Table 7. Pollutant Concentrations in Runoff from Developed Land Uses (after Herrera Environmental Consultants, Inc. undated)

Land Use	Total Suspended Solids (mg/L)	Total Copper (µg/L)	Total Zinc (µg/L)	Total Phosphorus (µg/L)
Residential roof	25	13	159	110
Commercial roof	18	14	281	140
Access road/driveway	120	22	118	660
Parking	75	36	97	140
Walkway	25	13	59	110
Landscaping	213	13	59	2040

Pollutant concentrations expected to occur typically in the mixed runoff from the several land use and cover types making up a development were estimated by mass balance; i.e., the concentrations from the different areas of the sites were combined in proportion to their contribution to the total runoff.

### Estimating Retention

The principal interest of this study was to estimate how much of the post-development runoff volume for the various land use cases could be retained by ARCD measures and prevented from discharging from the site on the surface. The analyses initially evaluated the runoff volume that could potentially be infiltrated by using a portion or all of the available pervious area for bioretention facilities. In some instances judicious use of the pervious area could infiltrate the full volume. In other cases use of the pervious area for as much infiltration as possible plus special management of roof runoff would fully attenuate post-development runoff.

Complete retention would, of course, exceed any ordinary regulatory standard intended to govern discharge quantity and quality. To the extent that full retention could not be expected, the study was interested in assessing the degree to which bioretention and roof runoff management could meet the specific potential standards outlined earlier. Performance was estimated in terms of volume retained versus released, the extent to which pre-development groundwater recharge would be preserved, and the pollutant loading reduction accompanying volume retention in comparison to the quantities that would enter receiving waters with no stormwater management actions. These measures expressed in equation form are:

$$\text{Runoff retention (\%)} = \frac{(\text{Volume with no practices} - \text{Volume with ARCD practices})}{\text{Volume with no practices}} \times 100$$

(expresses amount of the theoretical maximum post-development runoff prevented from discharging by ARCD)

$$\text{Recharge retention (\%)} = \left[ 1 - \frac{(\text{Predevelopment recharge} - \text{Postdevelopment recharge with ARCD})}{\text{Predevelopment recharge}} \right] \times 100$$

Pre-development recharge = Rainfall volume – Predevelopment runoff volume

Post-development recharge = The smaller of rainfall volume or post-development infiltration volume

$$\text{Loading reduction (\%)} = \frac{(\text{Loading with no practices} - \text{Loading with ARCD practices})}{\text{Loading with no practices}} \times 100$$

It should be noted that runoff retention and recharge retention express different quantities and are not equal numerically.

When infiltration alone (Basic ARCD) could not accomplish full retention, roof runoff management strategies were selected as appropriate for the land use case (Full ARCD). For the retail commercial development (COMM), roof runoff management was assumed to be accomplished by harvesting, temporarily storing, and applying water to use in the building. To this end, the assumption was made that the commercial development would be able to manage and would have capacity to store and make use of the entire roof runoff volume. While this particular assumption is, on its own, speculative, the commercial development would, as discussed in the section on Application of ARCD Practices, earlier, see a reduction in runoff as a result of evapotranspiration, and would have the option to employ ARCD site design principles to reduce impervious surface area, to install a green roof to retain runoff, or to implement any of a number of other ARCD practices designed to reduce runoff volume and pollutant loading. As a result, the overall analysis of the commercial site remains conservative in its assessment of the potential to retain runoff onsite.

In the three multi-family and single-family residential cases it was assumed that the roof water would be dispersed on or within the pervious area according to accepted and standardized practices. For example, the Washington Department of Ecology's (2005) Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington provides design criteria for two methods: splash blocks followed by vegetated dispersion areas and gravel-filled trenches. These devices can be used wherever space is sufficient regardless of infiltration rates, as they operate by evapotranspiration and slow infiltration. Even clay can infiltrate at an approximate rate of 0.2 inch/hour or higher (Leij et al. 1996; Pitt, Chen, and Clark 2002). Care was taken to assure that pervious area already allocated to infiltration would not also be counted upon for dispersion. While dispersion was assumed for simplification of the study analyses, in reality a site designer would have the option of using rain barrels, cisterns, and/or green roofs instead of or along with ground dispersion to manage roof water. Analyses for the final case, the redevelopment scenario (REDEV), assumed dispersion and/or small-scale harvesting of roof runoff above whatever level of infiltration could be accomplished given the soil condition.

### **Additional Analyses When Full Retention Cannot Be Expected**

Retaining runoff from impervious and pollutant generating pervious surfaces is the best stormwater management policy, because it prevents the introduction of urban runoff pollutants

to receiving waters as well as serves quantity discharge control requirements. Maintaining pre-development peak flow rates, volumes, and elevated flow durations prevents stream channel and habitat damage, flooding, and loss of groundwater recharge. When conditions were expected to render full retention technically infeasible for the study cases, estimates were made of the volume and pollutant loadings that would be discharged assuming the remaining surface runoff is released to a receiving water with and without treatment. Treatment was assumed to be provided by bioretention discharging either directly on the surface or via an underdrain. While not as environmentally beneficial as retention, such treatment is superior to conventional stormwater management practices like ponds and sand filters. It captures pollutants through a number of mechanisms as contaminants are held for a time in the facility and contact vegetation and soil, such as sedimentation, filtration by plants, and adsorption and ion exchange in soil.

The effectiveness of bioretention in removing pollutants from surface runoff was estimated according to measurements by Chapman and Horner (2010). This study was performed on a linear bioretention device located on a slope and made up of a number of cells separated by weirs (termed a “cascade”). While an estimated 74 percent of all entering runoff infiltrated or evapotranspired before discharging, the flows reaching the end in the larger storms would have less residence time in the facility than in a unit on flat ground percolating water through soil before surface discharge via an underdrain. Therefore, pollutant concentrations exiting such a unit could be less yet. On the other hand, some bioretention facilities bypass the relatively rare higher flows, affording no treatment, while the cascade was designed to convey all runoff, even beyond its water quality design storm flow, and provide some treatment. On balance between the advantage and disadvantage of the facility providing the data, the discharge concentrations are considered to be representative of bioretention.

Chapman and Horner (2010) computed volume-weighted average discharge pollutant concentrations by multiplying concentrations times flow volumes for each monitored storm, summing, and dividing by total volume. The resulting values for the contaminants considered in this study are: total suspended solids (TSS)—30 mg/L, total copper—6.3 µg/L, total zinc—47 µg/L, and total phosphorus—133 µg/L. In a few instances these concentrations are higher than those in Table 7, an expression of the observation sometimes made in stormwater management that treatment cannot reduce concentrations in relatively “clean” flows below certain minimum values. In these situations the concentrations in Table 8 were also used in computing discharge loadings; i.e., no concentration reduction was applied in estimating discharge loadings, although flow volume would still be decreased to the extent infiltration could occur.

## RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS

### ASSESSMENT OF MAXIMUM ARCD CAPABILITIES

#### Runoff Retention and Groundwater Recharge

##### **Basic ARCD**

One goal of this exercise was to determine if ARCD practices could eliminate post-development runoff production, and the pollutants it transports, and maintain pre-development groundwater recharge. The first assessment, termed the Basic ARCD analysis in this report, was to estimate if each site's pervious area is sufficient for full infiltration if given to this purpose to the extent necessary without compromising other uses. Accordingly, shallow, unobtrusive bioretention cells (i.e., rain gardens) are envisioned, dispersed through sites at no more than one for each 5 acres. It bears reemphasis that no credit was taken for water loss through evapotranspiration in this assessment, although a substantial, but not necessarily easily quantifiable, amount would undoubtedly occur. Estimates of runoff retention are therefore conservative.

Table 8 presents comparisons, for the Southeast climate region, between estimated annual runoff volumes generated before development and then post-development with and without Basic ARCD stormwater management. The table also gives annual groundwater recharge estimates for these same conditions.

Table 8. Runoff and Groundwater Recharge Volumes with Basic ARCD: Southeast Climate Region<sup>a</sup>

Period	Volume (acre-ft) or Percentage Measure	MFR	Sm-SFR	Lg-SFR	COMM	REDEV
<b>B soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	0.046	0.013	0.56	0.022	0.001
	Recharge	44.7	12.4	539	21.2	0.51
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	29.5	6.85	298	18.7	0.45
	Runoff retained with Basic ARCD	29.5	6.85	298	8.30	0.21
	Runoff released with Basic ARCD	0	0	0	10.4	0.25
	Runoff retention (%)	100%	100%	100%	44%	45%
	Recharge without stormwater practices	15.3	5.55	241	2.53	0.06
	Recharge with Basic ARCD	44.7	12.4	539	8.30	0.21
	Recharge retention (%)	100%	100	100%	39%	40%
	Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>	36%	22%	22%	100%	100%
<b>D soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	13.5	3.76	163	6.43	0.16
	Recharge	31.2	8.64	376	14.8	0.36
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	Full ARCD needed to maximize retention on D soil				
	Runoff retained with Basic ARCD					
	Runoff released with Basic ARCD					
	Runoff retention (%)					
	Recharge without stormwater practices	11.6	4.17	181	2.12	0.05
	Recharge with Basic ARCD	Full ARCD needed to maximize retention on D soil				
	Recharge retention (%)	37%	48%	48%	14%	14%
Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>	Full ARCD needed to maximize retention on D soil					

<sup>a</sup> Pre-dev.—pre-development; post-dev.—post-development; ARCD—aquatic resources conservation design; MFR—multi-family residential; Sm-SFR—small-scale single-family residential; Lg-SFR—large-scale single-family residential; COMM—retail commercial; REDEV—infill redevelopment; Basic ARCD—infiltrating bioretention; runoff—quantity of water discharged from the site on the surface; recharge—quantity of water infiltrating the soil

<sup>b</sup> Proportion of the total pervious area on the site required for bioretention to achieve given results

In all cases the majority of the infiltration that would recharge groundwater in the undeveloped state would be lost to surface runoff after development. These losses would approach 90 percent in the most impervious developments. The greatly increased surface flow would raise peak flow rates and volumes in receiving water courses, increase flooding risk, and transport pollutants.

Basic ARCD could retain all post-development runoff and pre-existing groundwater recharge in the three residential cases on the B soils, using from less than one-fourth to just over one-third of the available pervious area for bioretention cells. Taking all available pervious area for the more highly impervious COMM and REDEV cases on B soil, bioretention would retain about 45 percent of the runoff generated and save about 40 percent of the pre-development recharge. To illustrate the relatively small role that slope increase from 5 to 10 percent plays in runoff retention, full retention would still be expected in the three residential cases and for the remaining two cases (COMM and REDEV) would decrease from 44-45 percent only slightly to 40-41 percent (not shown in table).

On the D soil, infiltrating bioretention may not be technically feasible and was not relied upon for retention estimates. Without the use of additional measures in the Full ARCD category, only incidental post-development runoff would be retained; and most pre-development recharge would be lost.

Tables 9-11 are companions to Table 8 for the South Central, Northeast – Upper Midwest, and Southwest climate regions, respectively. Results for the Northeast - Upper Midwest B soil are very close to those for the Southeast B soil, as would be expected given the similar precipitation quantities and soil characteristics. In the three regions having C soils, Basic ARCD can retain all runoff for the MFR, Sm-SFR, and Lg-SFR residential cases. With these soils, except in the Southwest, achieving full retention requires more of the available pervious area than with B soils, up to 69 percent, but is still fully attainable.

The effect of lower rainfall is evident in the South Central and, especially, the Southwest regions. In the latter location, not only the residential cases but also the COMM and REDEV scenarios can achieve full runoff retention with Basic ARCD on the C soil. The residential cases need much smaller percentages of the available pervious area for bioretention than for the same cases on C and even B soils elsewhere. Applying Basic ARCD to the South Central, C soil, REDEV case results in higher runoff retention than for the B soil cases in higher rainfall regions.

The study cases demonstrated two interesting points about groundwater recharge. First, with effective infiltrating bioretention it is possible for post-development annual recharge to exceed the pre-development quantity. This phenomenon is most evident in comparing the two amounts for cases with 100 percent runoff retention on C soils, which in the natural state produce much less recharge in relation to runoff than B soils. The B soils have a recharge-to-runoff ratio of about 500, whereas that ratio is only 4-6 for the C soils studied. One reason for higher post-compared to pre-development recharge is that bioretention is set up to hold water, increasing the time for infiltration to occur, instead of letting it run off. Another is that soils, especially in the C HSG, are often improved by organic amendments to yield both more water storage capacity and higher infiltration rates than the pre-existing soils.

A related point is that the percentage of pre-development recharge retained after development can be higher with C than B soils. This situation can best be seen in cases without full runoff retention, COMM and sometimes REDEV. In terms of recharge, installing bioretention conveys a greater advantage to the C than the B soils, which already have more pore space for water storage and higher infiltration and recharge rates.

Table 9. Runoff and Groundwater Recharge Volumes with Basic ARCD: South Central Climate Region<sup>a</sup>

Period	Volume (acre-ft) or Percentage Measure	MFR	Sm-SFR	Lg-SFR	COMM	REDEV
<b>C soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	4.10	1.14	49.4	1.95	0.05
	Recharge	25.7	7.13	310	12.2	0.29
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	21.2	5.15	224	12.7	0.31
	Runoff retained with Basic ARCD	21.2	5.15	224	4.33	0.21
	Runoff released with Basic ARCD	0	0	0	8.32	0.10
	Runoff retention (%)	100	100	100	34	67
	Recharge without stormwater practices	8.62	3.11	135	1.51	0.03
	Recharge with Basic ARCD	29.8	8.3	359	4.33	0.21
	Recharge retention (%)	100	100	100	38	70
	Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>	51	23	30	100	100
<b>D soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	18.5	5.14	223	8.80	0.21
	Recharge	11.3	3.13	136	5.36	0.13
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	Full ARCD needed to maximize retention on D soil				
	Runoff retained with Basic ARCD					
	Runoff released with Basic ARCD					
	Runoff retention (%)					
	Recharge without stormwater practices	7.23	7.59	112	1.35	0.03
	Recharge with Basic ARCD	Full ARCD needed to maximize retention on D soil				
	Recharge retention (%)	64	83	83	25	24
	Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>	Full ARCD needed to maximize retention on D soil				

Table 10. Runoff and Groundwater Recharge Volumes with Basic ARCD: Northeast – Upper Midwest Climate Region<sup>a</sup>

Period	Volume (acre-ft) or Percentage Measure	MFR	Sm-SFR	Lg-SFR	COMM	REDEV
<b>B soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	0.04	0.01	0.54	0.02	0.001
	Recharge	42.9	11.9	517	20.4	0.49
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	28.3	6.68	286	18.0	0.44
	Runoff retained with Basic ARCD	28.3	6.68	286	8.53	0.21
	Runoff released with Basic ARCD	0	0	0	9.43	0.23
	Runoff retention (%)	100	100	100	48	47
	Recharge without stormwater practices	14.6	5.32	231	2.42	0.06
	Recharge with Basic ARCD	42.9	11.9	517	8.53	0.21
	Recharge retention (%)	100	100	100	42	42
	Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>	34	21	21	100	100
<b>C soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	7.87	2.18	94.8	3.74	0.09
	Recharge	35.1	9.72	422	16.6	0.40
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	30.5	7.42	323	18.2	0.44
	Runoff retained with Basic ARCD	30.5	7.42	323	4.57	0.21
	Runoff released with Basic ARCD	0	0	0	13.6	0.24
	Runoff retention (%)	100	100	100	25	47
	Recharge without stormwater practices	12.4	4.48	195	2.17	0.05
	Recharge with Basic ARCD	42.9	11.9	517	4.57	0.21
	Recharge retention (%)	100	100	100	27	51
	Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>	69	31	40	100	100



Table 11. Runoff and Groundwater Recharge Volumes with Basic ARCD: Southwest Climate Region<sup>a</sup>

Period	Volume (acre-ft) or Percentage Measure	MFR	Sm-SFR	Lg-SFR	COMM	REDEV
<b>C soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	1.62	0.45	19.5	0.77	0.02
	Recharge	7.22	2.00	87.0	3.43	0.08
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	6.41	1.57	68.5	3.77	0.09
	Runoff retained with Basic ARCD	6.41	1.57	68.5	3.77	0.09
	Runoff released with Basic ARCD	0	0	0	0	0
	Runoff retention (%)	100	100	100	100	100
	Recharge without stormwater practices	2.43	0.88	38.1	0.43	0.01
	Recharge with Basic ARCD	8.84	2.45	107	4.20	0.10
	Recharge retention (%)	100	100	100	100	100
	Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>	12	5	7	69	44
<b>D soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	4.47	1.24	53.8	2.12	0.05
	Recharge	4.37	1.21	52.7	2.08	0.05
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	Full ARCD needed to maximize retention on D soil				
	Runoff retained with Basic ARCD					
	Runoff released with Basic ARCD					
	Runoff retention (%)					
	Recharge without stormwater practices	2.14	0.77	33.3	0.40	0.01
	Recharge with Basic ARCD	Full ARCD needed to maximize retention on D soil				
	Recharge retention (%)	49	63	63	19	18
	Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>	Full ARCD needed to maximize retention on D soil				

**Full ARCD**

Infiltration is one of a wide variety of ARCD-based source reduction techniques. Where site conditions such as soil quality or available area limit a site’s infiltration capacity, other ARCD measures can enhance a site’s runoff retention capability. Such practices can also be used where infiltration capacity is adequate, but the developer desires greater flexibility for land use on-site. Among those techniques, this study considered special management of roof water in those cases where bioretention could not infiltrate all post-development runoff.

Specifically, water harvesting for supply of irrigation and/or non-potable indoor uses was investigated for the retail commercial development. In residential cases with insufficient capacity for infiltrative bioretention but remaining space not already devoted to infiltration, efficiently directing roof runoff into the soil through downspout dispersion systems was the method of choice. Such cases invariably occurred with HSG D soils. The Full-ARCD scenario applied to the redevelopment case was roof water dispersion, harvesting, or a combination of the two practices. Generally speaking, infiltration consumed all available pervious area in the REDEV cases on B and C soils, making roof runoff harvesting the mechanism to retain more water. With no bioretention facility on D soil, the pervious area would be available for dispersion. Of course, harvesting could be applied instead of or along with dispersion. Again, it was assumed that that the commercial and, as needed, redevelopment sites had capacity to harvest and make use of the full volume of roof runoff generated, however, the analysis remains conservative in terms of the potential for onsite retention as it does not consider the use of ARCD site design principles to reduce impervious surfaces, green roofs, and evaporation/evapotranspiration from surfaces other than rooftops.

Table 12 gives Southeast climate region results with the addition of Full ARCD techniques: roof runoff management, consisting of harvesting for reuse in the COMM case, dispersion on or within pervious land for the three residential cases, and a combination of these measures for REDEV. On the B soil runoff retention would approximately double for the retail commercial

land use and reach 100 percent for the redevelopment. Groundwater recharge would not be expected to increase over the Basic ARCD case, though; because harvesting still keeps water out of the soil system.

For development on the D soil, use of roof runoff management techniques was estimated to increase runoff retention from zero to about one-third to two-thirds of the post-development runoff generated, depending on the land use case. Groundwater recharge would not materially benefit, however; because harvest does not contribute to it. Also, no recharge credit was taken for dispersion, since infiltration is restricted and loss by ET would tend to occur before infiltration. Some small amount of recharge would still be likely though. To illustrate further the small role of topography, in this D soil, Full ARCD scenario runoff retention is forecast to decrease by only 1-2 percent at a 10 percent slope compared to a 5 percent slope (not shown in table).

Table 12. Runoff and Groundwater Recharge Volumes with Full ARCD: Southeast Climate Region<sup>a</sup>

Period	Volume (acre-ft) or Percentage Measure	MFR	Sm-SFR	Lg-SFR	COMM	REDEV
<b>B soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	0.046	0.013	0.56	0.022	0.001
	Recharge	44.7	12.4	539	21.2	0.51
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	Complete retention possible with Basic ARCD			18.7	0.45
	Runoff retained with Full ARCD				16.1	0.45
	Runoff released with Full ARCD				2.66	0
	Runoff retention (%)				86%	100%
	Recharge without stormwater practices				2.53	0.06
	Recharge with Full ARCD				8.30	0.21
	Recharge retention (%)				39%	40%
Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>	100%	100%				
<b>D soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	13.5	3.76	163	6.43	0.16
	Recharge	31.2	8.64	376	14.8	0.36
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	33.1	8.23	358	19.1	0.46
	Runoff retained with Full ARCD	16.4	3.11	135	7.76	0.31
	Runoff released with Full ARCD	16.7	5.12	222	11.4	0.16
	Runoff retention (%)	50%	38%	38%	41%	66%
	Recharge without stormwater practices	11.6	4.17	181	2.12	0.05
	Recharge with Full ARCD	11.6	4.17	181	2.12	0.05
	Recharge retention (%)	37.2%	48.3%	48.3%	14.3%	13.6%
Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

<sup>a</sup> Pre-dev.—pre-development; post-dev.—post-development; ARCD—aquatic resources conservation design; MFR—multi-family residential; Sm-SFR—small-scale single-family residential; Lg-SFR—large-scale single-family residential; COMM—retail commercial; REDEV—infill redevelopment; Full ARCD—infiltrating bioretention, roof runoff harvesting, and/or roof runoff dispersion; runoff—quantity of water discharged from the site on the surface; recharge—quantity of water infiltrating the soil

<sup>b</sup> Proportion of the total pervious area on the site required for bioretention to achieve given results

Tables 13-15 give data analogous to Table 12 for the South Central, Northeast – Upper Midwest, and Southwest climate regions, respectively. Results are similar to those reported for the Southeast region. Full ARCD can approximately double runoff retention from the Basic ARCD level for the COMM case and extend runoff retention to 100 percent for the redevelopment on both B and C soils. Once again, application of Full ARCD to the D soil cases increases runoff retention from zero to one-third to two-thirds of the volume produced, depending on land use case.

Table 13. Runoff and Groundwater Recharge Volumes with Full ARCD: South Central Climate Region<sup>a</sup>

Period	Volume (acre-ft) or Percentage Measure	MFR	Sm-SFR	Lg-SFR	COMM	REDEV
<b>C soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	4.10	1.14	49.4	1.95	0.05
	Recharge	25.7	7.13	310	12.2	0.29
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	Complete retention possible with Basic ARCD			12.7	0.31
	Runoff retained with Full ARCD				9.51	0.31
	Runoff released with Full ARCD				3.15	0
	Runoff retention (%)				75	100
	Recharge without stormwater practices				1.51	0.03
	Recharge with Full ARCD				4.33	0.21
	Recharge retention (%)				35	72
	Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>				100	100
<b>D soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	18.5	5.14	223	8.80	0.21
	Recharge	11.3	3.13	136	5.36	0.13
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	22.6	5.68	247	12.8	0.31
	Runoff retained with Full ARCD	11.0	2.08	90.3	5.17	0.20
	Runoff released with Full ARCD	11.6	3.60	157	7.63	0.11
	Runoff retention (%)	49	37	37	40	66
	Recharge without stormwater practices	7.23	2.59	112	1.35	0.03
	Recharge with Full ARCD	7.23	2.59	112	1.35	0.03
	Recharge retention (%)	64	83	83	25	24
	Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>	100	100	100	100	100

Table 14. Runoff and Groundwater Recharge Volumes with Full ARCD: Northeast – Upper Midwest Climate Region<sup>a</sup>

Period	Volume (acre-ft) or Percentage Measure	MFR	Sm-SFR	Lg-SFR	COMM	REDEV
<b>B soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	0.04	0.01	0.54	0.02	0.001
	Recharge	42.9	11.9	51.7	20.4	0.49
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	Complete retention possible with Basic ARCD			18.0	0.44
	Runoff retained with Full ARCD				16.0	0.44
	Runoff released with Full ARCD				2.00	0
	Runoff retention (%)				89	100
	Recharge without stormwater practices				2.42	0.06
	Recharge with Full ARCD				8.53	0.21
	Recharge retention (%)				42	43
	Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>				100	100
<b>C soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	7.87	2.18	94.8	3.74	0.09
	Recharge	35.1	9.72	422	16.6	0.40
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	Complete retention possible with Basic ARCD			18.2	0.44
	Runoff retained with Full ARCD				12.0	0.44
	Runoff released with Full ARCD				6.19	0
	Runoff retention (%)				66	100
	Recharge without stormwater practices				2.17	0.05
	Recharge with Full ARCD				4.57	0.21
	Recharge retention (%)				28	43
	Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>				100	100

Table 15. Runoff and Groundwater Recharge Volumes with Full ARCD: Southwest Climate Region<sup>a</sup>

Period	Volume (acre-ft) or Percentage Measure	MFR	Sm-SFR	Lg-SFR	COMM	REDEV
<b>C soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	1.62	0.45	19.5	0.77	0.02
	Recharge	7.22	2.00	87.0	3.43	0.08
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	Complete retention possible with Basic ARCD				
	Runoff retained with Full ARCD					
	Runoff released with Full ARCD					
	Runoff retention (%)					
	Recharge without <i>stormwater</i> practices					
	Recharge with Full ARCD					
	Recharge retention (%)					
Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>						
<b>D soil</b>						
Pre-dev.	Runoff	4.47	1.24	53.8	2.12	0.05
	Recharge	4.37	1.21	52.7	2.08	0.05
Post-dev.	Runoff without stormwater practices	6.70	1.68	73.2	3.80	0.09
	Runoff retained with Full ARCD	3.25	0.62	26.8	1.53	0.06
	Runoff released with Full ARCD	3.45	1.07	46.5	2.26	0.03
	Runoff retention (%)	49	37	37	40	66
	Recharge without stormwater practices	2.14	0.77	33.3	0.40	0.01
	Recharge with Full ARCD	2.14	0.77	33.3	0.40	0.01
	Recharge retention (%)	49	63	63	19	18
Pervious area needed (%) <sup>b</sup>	100	100	100	100	100	

### Pollutant Loading Reductions

The examination of maximum ARCD capabilities considered the reductions of annual mass loadings of four water pollutants that would accompany runoff retention. Since retention means no surface discharge, these loading reductions are, at a minimum, equal to the percentages of runoff retention. In those cases with less than full runoff retention, there is good reason to expect pollutant loading reductions higher than the percentage of runoff retained. The early runoff (“first flush”), occurring when the soils are least saturated, is more likely to be retained than later runoff. It is frequently observed that the first flush has higher pollutant concentrations than later runoff, particularly in the wash off after relatively extended dry periods.

For the B and D soil and the residential cases on C soils, the reductions were very consistent among regions:

- B and C soils, Basic ARCD, residential cases—100%;
- B soil, Basic ARCD, COMM and REDEV cases—44-45%;
- B soil, Full ARCD, COMM and REDEV cases—86-100%;
- D soil, Full ARCD, SFR and COMM cases—38-41%;
- D soil, Full ARCD, MFR case—50%; and
- D soil, Full ARCD, REDEV case—66%.

For the most highly impervious cases, COMM and REDEV, on C soils reduction was variable and dependent on precipitation. With Basic ARCD the range was from 25 to 100 percent, going from relatively high to low precipitation. Full ARCD is expected to raise the lowest reductions to 100 percent for REDEV and at least 66 percent for COMM.

Therefore, taking the greatest advantage of what ARCD offers could prevent the addition to receiving waters of all or almost all pollutant mass that would otherwise discharge from a range

of urban developments on B and C soils. With D soils, Full ARCD can accomplish loading reductions approaching or somewhat exceeding 50 percent.

## **ABILITY TO MEET POTENTIAL STANDARDS**

### **General Summary**

This section evaluates the ability of the Basic and Full ARCD strategies to meet each of the five potential stormwater management standards enumerated in the beginning of the report. It also examines the extent of pollutant loading reduction if the standards are just met; i.e., if runoff is retained at the minimum needed to meet the standard. It has already been demonstrated that retention of all post-development runoff and full pollutant attenuation is possible in some circumstances. Table 16 summarizes the results for all regions and cases and both ARCD strategies.

### **Ability to Meet Standards**

The projected ability to meet the standards overall varies mostly in relation to soil type (B or C versus D) and the relative imperviousness of development, and much less across climate regions. The one exception to this generality is that implementing Basic ARCD practices on the Southwest region C soil would meet all five standards. This uniformity does not occur elsewhere on either B or C soils, and is apparently primarily a function of the relatively low precipitation in the region.

Setting aside the Southwest region, success in complying with standards is mostly comparable among the various B and C soils, with a small number of instances where a development type meets a standard on B but not on C soil. Basic ARCD methods invariably can meet all standards on B and C soils for the residential development cases (MFR and Sm- and Lg-SFR). Full ARCD practices are forecast to meet all standards for the redevelopment case on B soils but only standards 1 and 5 consistently on C soils. The combination of infiltration and roof runoff management applied to the retail commercial development allows meeting these same two standards on B soils but only the latter on both of the C soils occurring outside the Southwest region. The only standards that cannot be met on B and C soils by the ARCD methods considered are standards 2-4 for the COMM case. Therefore, of the 125 standards assessments, ARCD practices are projected to meet 113 (90.4 percent) with B and C soils.

The ability to meet these standards is much reduced on D soils. Standard 1 can be met occasionally with Full ARCD used in the redevelopment. All cases with Full ARCD comply with standard 4 on this soil where pre-development runoff is estimated to be relatively high, reflecting a low overall requirement for retention volume. Standard 5 can be met with Full ARCD with the exception of one COMM case. Standards 2 and 3 were never estimated to be met in any D soil case. All in all, with this soil 26 of the 75 scenarios (34.7 percent) are expected to meet a standard.

Table 16. Ability to Meet Potential Regulatory Standards with Basic/Full ARCD Practices

Region-Case <sup>a</sup>	Standards Met— Basic ARCD <sup>b</sup>	Standards Met— Full ARCD <sup>b</sup>	Runoff Retention and Pollutant Loading Reduction (%) <sup>b, c</sup>				
			Std. 1	Std. 2	Std. 3	Std. 4	Std. 5
SE(B)-MFR Sm-SFR Lg-SFR COMM REDEV	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		63	87	90	>99	63
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		63	87	90	>99	63
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		63	87	90	>99	63
		1, 5	63	86	86	86	63
		1, 2, 3, 4, 5	63	87	90	>99	63
SE(D)-MFR Sm-SFR Lg-SFR COMM REDEV		5	50	50	50	50	37
		5	38	38	38	38	34
		5	38	38	38	38	34
			41	41	41	41	41
		1, 5	63	66	66	66	42
SC(C)-MFR Sm-SFR Lg-SFR COMM REDEV	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		58	82	90	81	47
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		58	82	90	78	45
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		58	82	90	78	45
		1, 5	58	75	75	75	49
		1, 2, 3, 4, 5	58	82	90	84	49
SC(D)-MFR Sm-SFR Lg-SFR COMM REDEV		4, 5	49	49	49	18	10
		4, 5	37	37	37	10	6
		4, 5	37	37	37	10	6
		4, 5	40	40	40	31	18
		1, 4, 5	58	66	66	32	18
NM(B)-MFR Sm-SFR Lg-SFR COMM REDEV	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		81	89	90	>99	81
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		81	89	90	>99	81
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		81	89	90	>99	81
		1, 2, 5	81	89	89	89	81
		1, 2, 3, 4, 5	81	89	90	>99	81
NM(C)-MFR Sm-SFR Lg-SFR COMM REDEV	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		81	89	90	74	60
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		81	89	90	71	57
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		81	89	90	71	57
		5	66	66	66	66	64
		1, 2, 3, 4, 5	81	89	90	80	64
SW(C)-MFR Sm-SFR Lg-SFR COMM REDEV	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		62	83	90	75	46
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		62	83	90	72	44
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		62	83	90	72	44
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		62	83	90	80	49
	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		62	83	90	80	49
SW(D)-MFR Sm-SFR Lg-SFR COMM REDEV		4, 5	49	49	49	33	21
		4, 5	37	37	37	27	16
		4, 5	37	37	37	27	16
		5	40	40	40	40	27
		1, 4, 5	62	66	66	44	28

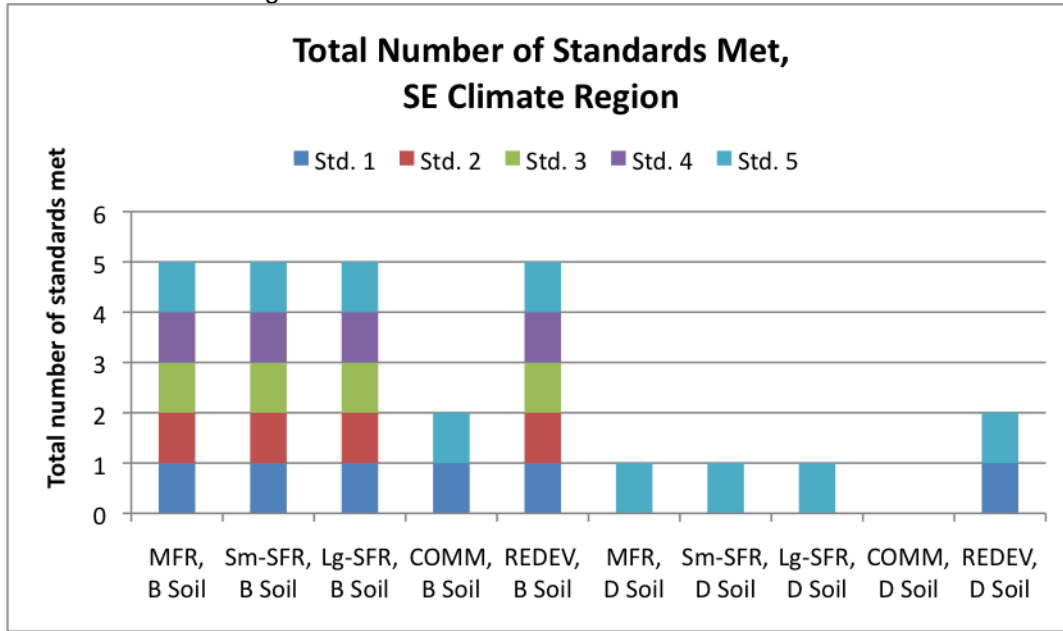
<sup>a</sup> Region (hydrologic soil group)—land use; regions: SE—Southeast, SC—South-central, NM—Northeast-Upper Midwest, SW—Southwest; land uses: MFR—multi-family residential, Sm-SFR—small single-family residential, Lg-SFR—large single-family residential, COMM—retail commercial, REDEV—redevelopment

<sup>b</sup> Standard (Std.) 1—Retain the runoff produced by the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event  
 Standard 2—Retain the runoff produced by the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event  
 Standard 3—Retain 90 percent of the average annual post-development runoff volume  
 Standard 4—Retain the difference between the post- and pre-development average annual runoff volumes

Standard 5—Retain the difference between the post- and pre-development runoff volumes for all events up to and including the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event

<sup>c</sup> Reduction estimated to result from meeting the standard, to the extent it can be met (fully met if so indicated in preceding columns), without treatment of remaining discharge. Where a standard can be met using Basic or Full ARCD application it is indicated in black, where a standard cannot be met using Basic or Full ARCD it is highlighted red.

Figure 4a. Ability to Meet Potential Regulatory Standards with Basic/Full ARCD Practices for Southeast Climate Region



MFR—multi-family residential, Sm-SFR—small single-family residential, Lg-SFR—large single-family residential, COMM—retail commercial, REDEV—redevelopment. Standard (Std.) 1—Retain the runoff produced by the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event; Standard 2—the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event; Standard 3—90 percent of the average annual post-development runoff volume; Standard 4—the difference between the post- and pre-development average annual runoff volumes; and, Standard 5—the difference between the post- and pre-development runoff volumes for all events up to and including the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event

Figure 4b. Ability to Meet Potential Regulatory Standards with Basic/Full ARCD Practices for South Central Climate Region

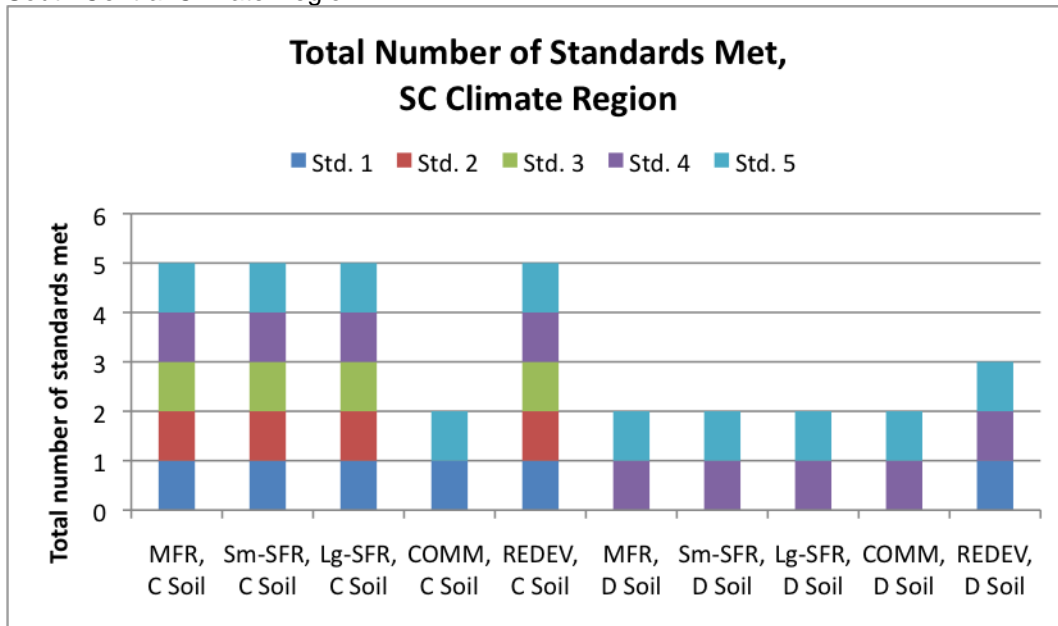


Figure 4c. Ability to Meet Potential Regulatory Standards with Basic/Full ARCD Practices for Northeast-Midwest Climate Region

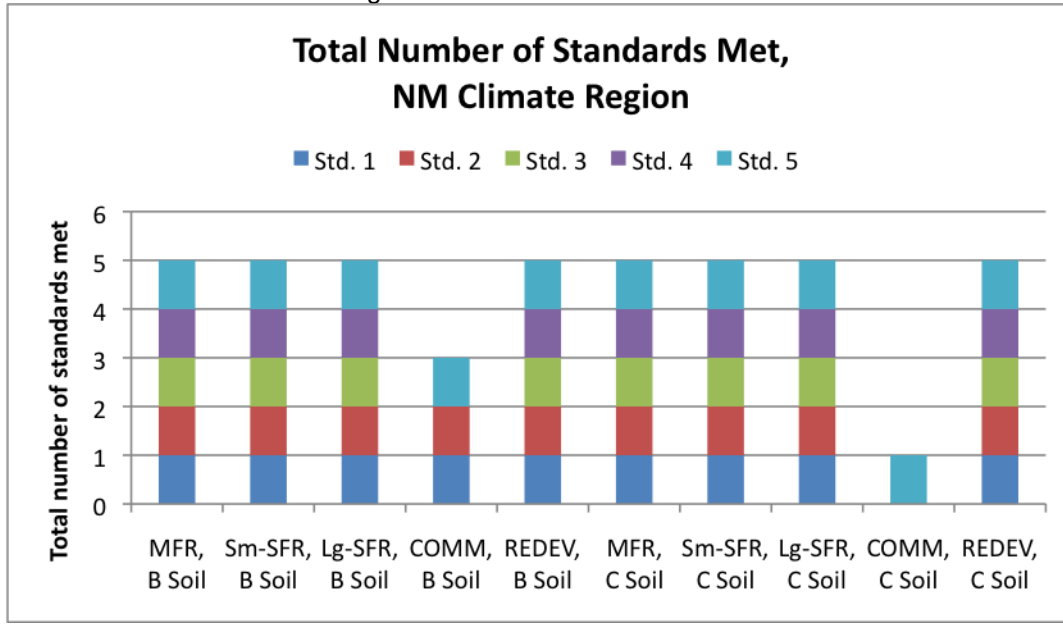


Figure 4d. Ability to Meet Potential Regulatory Standards with Basic/Full ARCD Practices for Southwest Climate Region

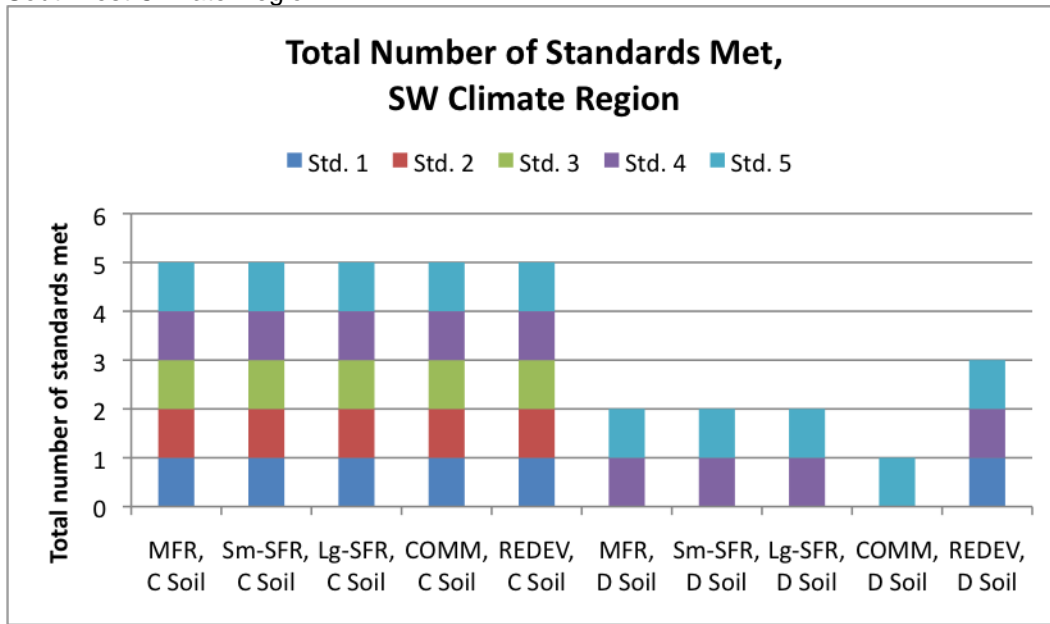
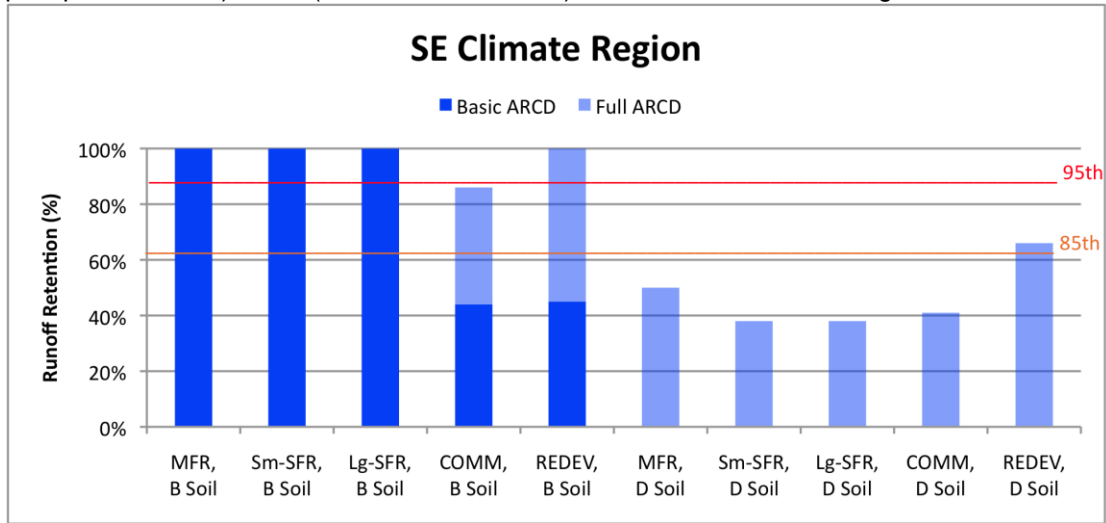




Figure 5a. Percentage of Runoff Retained Relative to Standards 1 (85<sup>th</sup> Percentile, 24-hour precipitation event) and 2 (95<sup>th</sup> Percentile event) for Southeast Climate Region



MFR—multi-family residential, Sm-SFR—small single-family residential, Lg-SFR—large single-family residential, COMM—retail commercial, REDEV—redevelopment. Standard (Std.) 1—Retain the runoff produced by the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event; Standard 2—the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event; Standard 3—90 percent of the average annual post-development runoff volume; Standard 4—the difference between the post- and pre-development average annual runoff volumes; and, Standard 5—the difference between the post- and pre-development runoff volumes for all events up to and including the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event

Figures 5a-d show the percentage of runoff that can be retained for each development type, in each region, using either Basic or Full ARCD practices, in comparison with Standard 1 (retention of the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event) and Standard 2 (retention of the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24 hour event). Even where Standards 1 and 2 cannot be met in full, ARCD practices can still result in substantial compliance, and retention of significant runoff volume.

Figure 5b. Percentage of Runoff Retained Relative to Standards 1 (85<sup>th</sup> Percentile, 24-hour precipitation event) and 2 (95<sup>th</sup> Percentile event) for South Central Climate Region

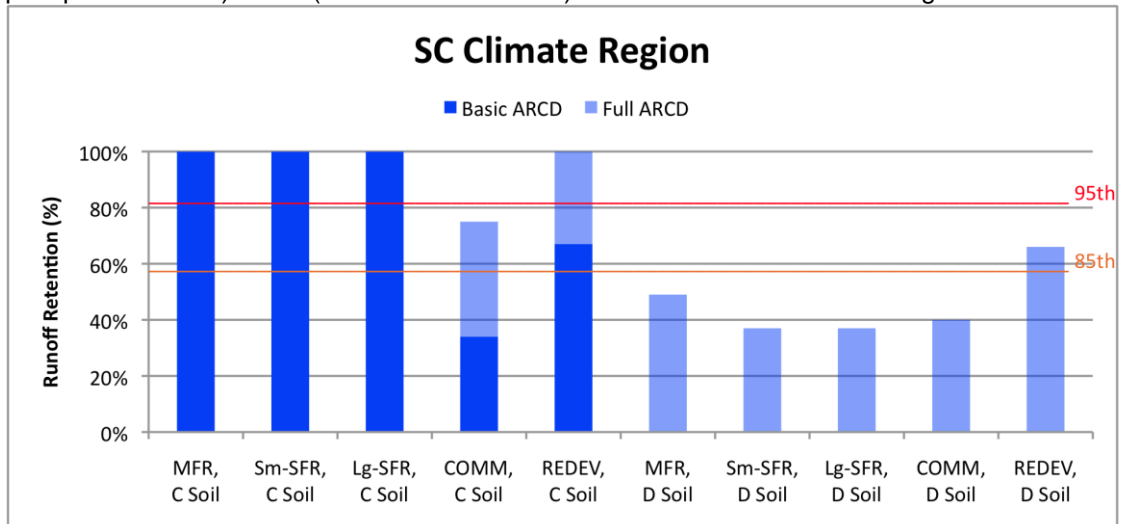


Figure 5c. Percentage of Runoff Retained Relative to Standards 1 (85<sup>th</sup> Percentile, 24-hour precipitation event) and 2 (95<sup>th</sup> Percentile event) for Northeast-Midwest Region

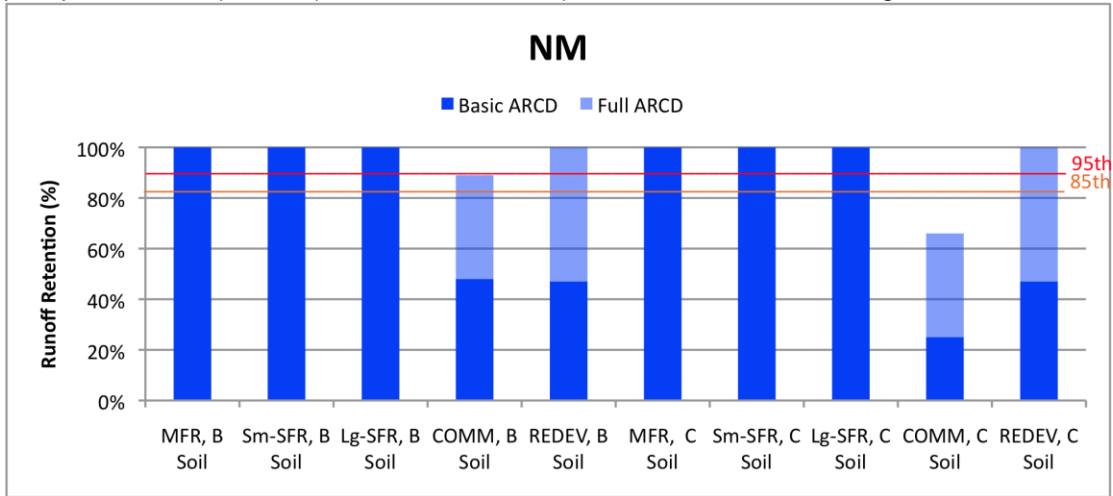
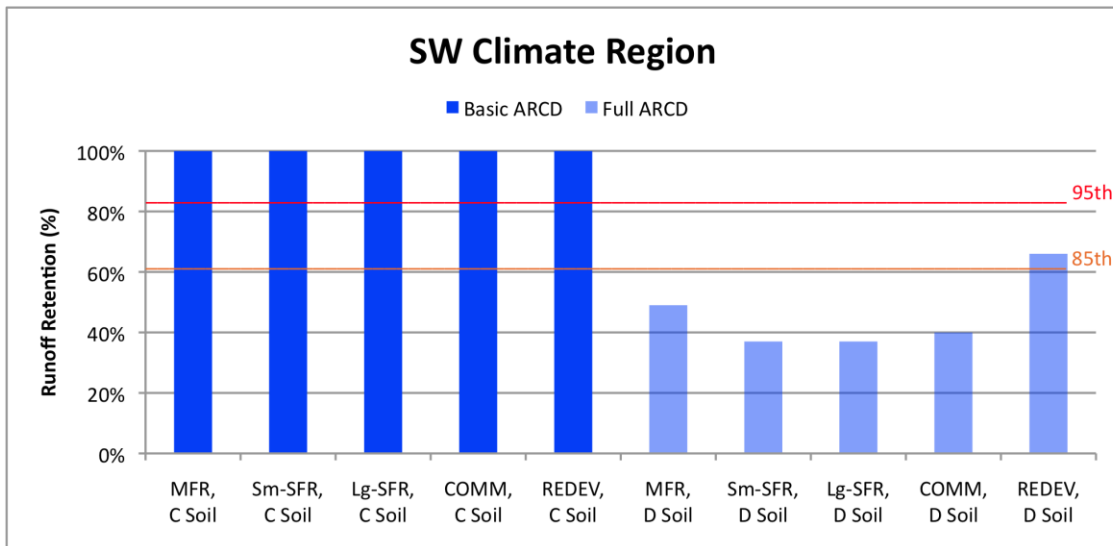


Figure 5d. Percentage of Runoff Retained Relative to Standards 1 (85<sup>th</sup> Percentile, 24-hour precipitation event) and 2 (95<sup>th</sup> Percentile event) for Southwest Region



**Effectiveness of Standards in Environmental Protection**

Standard 3 (retain 90 percent of the average annual post-development runoff volume) would be the most protective standard. Meeting or coming as close as possible to meeting, but not exceeding, this standard is estimated to lead to 66-90 percent runoff retention and pollutant loading reduction on B and C soils and 37-66 percent on D soil. Standard 2 (retain the runoff produced by the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event) would yield only slightly less protection with B and C soils and, with D soil, retention and loading reduction equivalent to standard 3.

Standards 4 and 5, based on the differential between pre- and post-development runoff volume, are highly inconsistent in retaining runoff and reducing pollutants, in that they are relatively protective where pre-development runoff is estimated to be very low relative to post-development flow, but result in progressively lower retention and pollutant loading reduction as pre- and post-development volumes converge, such as in several cases on D soils. Standard 5 is especially weak in this regard. The potentially low level of retention and pollutant loading reduction renders these standards based on the change in pre- versus post-development runoff volume poor candidates for national application, at least as formulated in these terms.

Fully meeting standard 1 (retain the runoff produced by the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event) would yield runoff retention and pollutant mass reduction ranging from 58 to 81 percent, depending on climate region. This level of inconsistency decreases the utility of this standard for widespread use. Standard 2, based on the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile event, is much better in this respect, with variability in runoff retention and loading reduction across the nation in the much narrower 82-89 percent range. However, standard 1 remains more consistent across regions, and more protective of water quality for development on D soils than either standard 4 or 5, and is preferable to those standards in this regard.

In summary, standards 2 and 3 are clearly superior to the other three options. Standard 3 is entirely consistent from place to place in degree of environmental protection, and standard 2 does not deviate much. Analysis of the five development cases on two soil groups in each of four regions demonstrated the two standards are virtually identical in the runoff retention and pollutant loading reduction they would bring about.

**Management of Runoff in Excess of Standards Requirements**

All of the analysis reported above assumed that any remaining runoff after the application of ARCD and meeting, or coming as close as possible to meeting a standard, would discharge with no treatment. In fact, additional treatment could further decrease pollutant loadings. Treatment without further runoff retention could be accomplished by many conventional or ARCD methods designed to lower contaminant concentrations. The most effective of the alternatives is probably bioretention discharging non-retained runoff either on the surface or through an underdrain, assumed in the analysis conducted for this study according to the methods cited above. Treatment of all remaining runoff with underdrained bioretention cells where space remains but all infiltration capacity is used can raise the pollutant removals given in Table 16 to the levels in Table 17. These estimates apply to the four pollutants considered, TSS and total copper, zinc, and phosphorus. Space would most likely be available in the three MFR and SFR cases but not the COMM and REDEV scenarios.

While there is substantial variability in these results, they demonstrate that discharging effluent of relatively consistent, high quality can be accomplished with a comprehensive ARCD strategy. This strategy would embrace, first, retaining as much urban runoff as possible and then utilizing treatment based on soil and vegetative media to capture contaminants from the remainder.

Table 17. Estimated Pollutant Loading Reduction Benefits of Bioretention Treatment of Runoff Remaining After ARCD Implemented to Meet or Approach Standards

Range of Table 16 Values (%)	Approximate Pollutant Removal Increase (%)	Total Estimated Pollutant Removal Range (%)
35-45	30-45	65-90
45-55	25-35	70-90
55-65	20-30	75-95
65-75	15->20	80->95
75-85	10->15	85->95
>85	5->10	90->95

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### STUDY DESIGN

This study was performed to investigate the degree to which low-impact development ARCD practices can meet or exceed the requirements of various potential stormwater management facility design standards and the resulting environmental benefits. The investigation was performed by estimating the stormwater retention possible with full application of ARCD practices to five land use cases in four representative climatic regions in the United States on two prominent soil types in each region. Retention is defined as preventing the conversion of precipitation to surface runoff. Retaining runoff from impervious and pollutant generating pervious surfaces prevents the introduction of urban runoff pollutants to receiving waters as well as reduces runoff volume to prevent stream channel and habitat damage, flooding, and loss of groundwater recharge. Infiltrating bioretention was first applied in the analysis of each case, a strategy termed Basic ARCD. When Basic ARCD could not fully retain post-development runoff, a Full ARCD strategy was added, involving roof runoff harvesting in the most impervious development cases and roof water dispersion in those with substantial pervious area. Benefits were assessed with respect to reduction of the annual average surface runoff volume from the quantity estimated without any stormwater management practices, and associated maintenance of pre-development groundwater recharge and water quality improvement through preventing discharge to receiving waters of pollutants generated with developed land uses.

A number of conservative assumptions were built into the analysis to ensure that the capabilities and benefits of ARCD would not be over-estimated. In summary, these assumptions are:

- No retention credit for evapotranspiration in the Basic ARCD strategy, although generally a substantial amount would occur, and consideration of evapotranspiration only for roof runoff in the Full ARCD strategy;
- Letting aside many available ARCD practices and site design principles that could be employed to reduce the runoff quantity, and the pollutants it transports, by reducing impervious surface area or directing the runoff to bioretention, harvesting, and dispersion facilities;
- The assumption of no infiltration on hydrologic soil group D soils, although some infiltration occurs at finite rates even on clay;
- Application of a safety factor to estimated infiltration rates;
- Minimum bioretention cell depths, so that these facilities would not be disruptive to site design and could be put to other uses;
- Requiring a 48-hour drawdown time for bioretention, instead of the 72-hour maximum;
- An analysis to guard against groundwater mounding under bioretention cells, with conservative assumptions for horizontal and vertical hydraulic conductivity rates; and
- An analysis demonstrating that doubling topographic slope changes results by only a few percent.

## **CAPABILITIES OF FULL ARCD APPLICATION**

Comparison of estimated runoff production in the pre- and post-development states demonstrated that the majority of the infiltration that would recharge groundwater in the undeveloped state would be lost to surface runoff after development with no stormwater management practices. These losses would approach 90 percent in the most impervious developments. These observations apply in all climate regions and with the full range of soil conditions.

Basic ARCD could retain all post-development runoff and pre-existing groundwater recharge, as well as attenuate all pollutant transport, in the three residential cases on B soils in the two climate regions where these soils were analyzed. Bioretention cells to accomplish this retention would use from less than one-fourth to just over one-third of the available pervious area for infiltration. Taking all available pervious area for the more highly impervious COMM and REDEV cases, bioretention would retain about 45 percent of the runoff and pollutants generated and save about 40 percent of the pre-development recharge. Adding Full ARCD measures in these cases would approximately double retention and pollutant reduction for the retail commercial land use and raise it to 100 percent for the redevelopment. Groundwater recharge would not increase, however, because the additional retention is accomplished by harvesting or dispersion.

In the three regions having C soils, Basic ARCD can again retain all runoff and reduce urban runoff pollutant mass loading to zero for the MFR and Sm-SFR and Lg-SFR residential cases, although generally requiring more of the available pervious area to do so than in B soil cases. The effect of lower rainfall is evident in the South Central and, especially, the Southwest regions. In the latter location, not only the residential cases but also the COMM and REDEV scenarios can achieve full runoff and groundwater recharge retention and pollutant loading attenuation with Basic ARCD on C soil. Full ARCD can approximately double runoff retention and pollutant removal from the Basic ARCD level for the COMM case and extend these measures to 100 percent for the redevelopment.

For development on the D soils in all climate regions, use of roof runoff management techniques was estimated to increase runoff retention and pollutant reduction from zero to between about one-third to two-thirds of the post-development runoff generated, depending on the land use case. These strategies would offer little groundwater recharge benefit with this soil condition, but would still have the potential to significantly reduce runoff volume and pollutant loading.

Therefore, taking the greatest advantage of what ARCD offers is expected to retain the great majority of post-development runoff and pre-development groundwater recharge. This strategy would also prevent the addition to receiving waters of all or almost all pollutant mass that would otherwise discharge from a range of urban developments on B and C soils. With D soils, Full ARCD can accomplish runoff retention and loading reductions approaching or somewhat exceeding 50 percent, and opportunities to use ARCD practices or site design principles not modeled in this analysis can further increase runoff retention volume.

## **ABILITY TO MEET STANDARDS**

ARCD methods were assessed for their ability to meet five potential regulatory standards, the first two pertaining to retention of the 85<sup>th</sup> and 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation events, the third to retain 90 percent of the post-development runoff, and the last two to retain the difference between the post- and pre-development runoff, the final standard capped at the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour event. The projected ability to meet the five standards varies mostly in relation to soil type (B or C versus D) and the relative imperviousness of development, and much less across climate regions, except for the relatively arid Southwest.

The only standards that cannot be fully met on B and C soils by the ARCD methods considered are standards 2-4 for the COMM case. Of the 125 standards assessments, ARCD practices are projected to meet 113 (90.4 percent) with B and C soils. The ability to meet these standards is much reduced on D soils. Only standards 1 (85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event, and 4 and 5 (related to the difference between the post- and pre-development runoff) can be met occasionally and under limited conditions using Full ARCD methods. However, even on D soils, all cases for Standard 1 were able to retain greater than 50 percent of the required runoff volume.

Standard 3 (retain 90 percent of the average annual post-development runoff volume) would be the most environmentally protective standard. Meeting or coming as close as possible to meeting, but not exceeding, this standard was estimated to lead to 66-90 percent runoff retention and pollutant loading reduction on B and C soils and 37-66 percent on D soil. Standard 2 (retain the runoff produced by the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event) would yield equivalent protection on D soils and only slightly less protection with B and C soils.

Standards 4 and 5, based on the differential between pre- and post-development runoff volume, are very inconsistent in retaining runoff and reducing pollutants. They are highly protective where pre-development runoff is estimated to be very low relative to post-development flow, and then to result in progressively lower retention and loading reduction as pre- and post-development volumes converge. Standard 5 is especially weak in this regard. This inconsistency makes these standards poor candidates for national application, at least as formulated in these terms.

Fully meeting standard 1 (retain the runoff produced by the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour precipitation event) would yield runoff retention and pollutant mass reduction ranging from 58 to 81 percent, depending on climate region. This level of inconsistency decreases the utility of this standard to some degree. Standard 2, based on the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile event, is much better in this respect, with variability in runoff retention and loading reduction across the nation in the much narrower 82-89 percent range. However, standard 1 remains more consistent across regions, and more protective of water quality for development on D soils than either standard 4 or 5, and is preferable to those standards in this regard.

In summary, standards 2 and 3 are clearly superior to the other three options. Standard 3 is entirely consistent from place to place in degree of environmental protection, and standard 2 does not deviate much. Analysis of the five development cases on two soil groups in each of four regions demonstrated the two standards are virtually identical in the runoff retention and pollutant loading reduction they would bring about.

All five standards are based on some stipulated runoff retention. Pollutant mass loading reduction is at least equal to the amount of retention that occurs. It is possible to decrease loadings further by treating excess runoff. Analysis showed that subjecting that runoff to bioretention treatment before discharge could reduce loadings of TSS and total copper, zinc, and phosphorus by at least two-thirds and as much as over 95 percent. This conclusion applies to all climate regions and soil types for land use cases where space is available for the additional bioretention cells. The three residential cases are in this group but not the COMM or REDEV cases, where all pervious land would have already been used for retentive or roof water dispersion practices.

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**ATTACHMENT A**

**POLLUTANT CONCENTRATIONS FOR URBAN SOURCE AREAS (HERRERA ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS, INC. UNDATED)**

Source Area	Study	Location	Sample Size (n)	TSS (mg/L)	TCu (µg/L)	TPb (µg/L)	TZn (µg/L)	TP (mg/L)	Notes
<b>Roofs</b>									
Residential	Steuer, et al. 1997	MI	12	36	7	25	201	0.06	2
Residential	Bannerman, et al. 1993	WI	~48	27	15	21	149	0.15	3
Residential	Waschbusch, et al. 2000	WI	25	15	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.07	3
Residential	FAR 2003	NY		19	20	21	312	0.11	4
Residential	Gromaire, et al. 2001	France		29	37	493	3422	n.a.	5
<b>Representative Residential Roof Values</b>				<b>25</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>0.11</b>	
Commercial	Steuer, et al. 1997	MI	12	24	20	48	215	0.09	2
Commercial	Bannerman, et al. 1993	WI	~16	15	9	9	330	0.20	3
Commercial	Waschbusch, et al. 2000	WI	25	18	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.13	3
<b>Representative Commercial Roof Values</b>				<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>0.14</b>	
<b>Parking Areas</b>									
Res. Driveways	Steuer, et al. 1997	MI	12	157	34	52	148	0.35	2
Res. Driveways	Bannerman, et al. 1993	WI	~32	173	17	17	107	1.16	3
Res. Driveways	Waschbusch, et al. 2000	WI	25	34	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.18	3
Driveway	FAR 2003	NY		173	17		107	0.56	4
<b>Representative Residential Driveway Values</b>				<b>120</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>0.66</b>	
Comm./ Inst. Park. Areas	Pitt, et al. 1995	AL	16	110	116	46	110	n.a.	1
Comm. Park. Areas	Steuer, et al. 1997	MI	12	110	22	40	178	0.2	2
Com. Park. Lot	Bannerman, et al. 1993	WI	5	58	15	22	178	0.19	3
Parking Lot	Waschbusch, et al. 2000	WI	25	51	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.1	3
Parking Lot	Tiefenthaler, et al. 2001	CA	5	36	28	45	293	n.a.	6
Loading Docks	Pitt, et al. 1995	AL	3	40	22	55	55	n.a.	1
Highway Rest Areas	CalTrans 2003	CA	53	63	16	8	142	0.47	7

Park and Ride Facilities	CalTrans 2003	CA	179	69	17	10	154	0.33	7	
Comm./ Res. Parking	FAR 2003	NY		27	51	28	139	0.15	4	
<b>Representative Parking Area/Lot Values</b>				<b>75</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>0.14</b>		
<b>Landscaping/Lawns</b>										
Landscaped Areas	Pitt, et al. 1995	AL	6	33	81	24	230	n.a.	1	
Landscaping	FAR 2003	NY		37	94	29	263	n.a.	4	
<b>Representative Landscaping Values</b>				<b>33</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>n.a.</b>		
Lawns - Residential	Steuer, et al. 1997	MI	12	262	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.33	2	
Lawns - Residential	Bannerman, et al. 1993	WI	~30	397	13	n.a.	59	2.67	3	
Lawns	Waschbusch, et al. 2000	WI	25	59	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.79	3	
Lawns	Waschbusch, et al. 2000	WI	25	122	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.61	3	
Lawns - Fertilized	USGS 2002	WI	58	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.57	3	
Lawns - Non-P Fertilized	USGS 2002	WI	38	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.89	3	
Lawns - Unfertilized	USGS 2002	WI	19	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.73	3	
Lawns	FAR 2003	NY	3	602	17	17	50	2.1	4	
<b>Representative Lawn Values</b>				<b>213</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>2.04</b>		

Notes:

Representative values are weighted means of collected data. Italicized values were omitted from these calculations.

1 - Grab samples from residential, commercial/institutional, and industrial rooftops. Values represent mean of DETECTED concentrations

2 - Flow-weighted composite samples, geometric mean concentrations

3 - Geometric mean concentrations

4 - Citation appears to be erroneous - original source of data is unknown. Not used to calculate representative value

5 - Median concentrations. Not used to calculate representative values due to site location and variation from other values.

6 - Mean concentrations from simulated rainfall study

7 - Mean concentrations. Not used to calculate representative values due to transportation nature of land use.