Habitat-Friendly Design Solutions

Residential Applications

One of the most important habitat-friendly actions a landowner can take is to reduce stormwater runoff from roofs, driveways, parking lots and sidewalks.

Urban stormwater runoff is a major contributor to degraded water quality and habitat conditions in our urban streams and rivers.

Roof runoff

Downspout disconnection is a simple and effective way to keep rainwater on-site. Here a short extension and a splash block direct the water to a grassy area where rainwater can be absorbed into the ground instead of draining into storm pipes. Other methods for collecting rooftop runoff include rainbarrels and cisterns.

A rain garden can be used to absorb a majority of an apartment building's stormwater runoff. Also called a "vegetated infiltration basin," they can be planted with native plants and serve to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the building grounds.

Street curbs

Rainwater collected on streets is a major contributor to urban stormwater runoff. "Curb cuts" help prevent this rainwater from harming our streams and rivers.

Curb cut-outs allow stormwater to drain into off-street vegetated areas. This allows street runoff to be absorbed into the ground instead of draining into storm pipes.

Pervious paving materials

Pervious material allows water to pass through it.

Pervious paving material is becoming a viable alternative to traditional concrete and asphalt surfacing materials for roads, driveways parking lots and sidewalks. Pervious paving materials allow rainwater to pass through and be absorbed into the ground.

Pervious asphalt allows rainwater to pass through the asphalt and be absorbed into the ground below.

Vegetated swales

Vegetated swales capture stormwater runoff from nearby residential development. Swales can be a variety of different sizes and include many different planting schemes. Rainwater from streets, parking lots, sidewalks and buildings drains into the vegetated swale and is absorbed into the ground.

Pervious pavers are blocks of stone, concrete or plastic used to construct streets, driveways, parking lots and sidewalks. The spaces between the blocks help absorb rainwater.

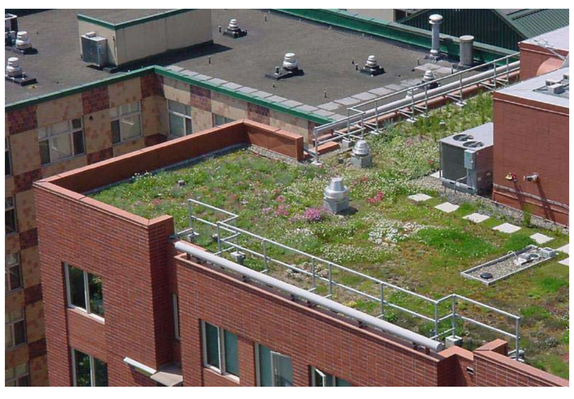
Pervious paver blocks

Trees

Street trees have been proven to significantly reduce harmful stormwater impacts. Large, evergreen, or broad-leaf trees tend to capture the most rainfall.

In addition to their stormwater benefits, trees also provide habitat, aesthetic appeal, visual screening and windbreaks. They also increase property values.

Some types of pavers known as "grasscrete" allow grass to grow in the spaces to enhance water absorption capacity.



Greenroofs

Greenroofs or roof gardens significantly reduce the amount of strormwater runoff from buildings. They also provide aesthetic appeal and help keep the building cooler in the summer, increasing energy efficiency.

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