



2017 National Watershed & Stormwater Conference

Center for Watershed Protection

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2017 National Watershed & Stormwater Conference

Center for Watershed Protection

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**Webcast Team**



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Natural Infrastructure for Water  
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Center for Watershed Protection

**Blueprint Columbus:**  
An Integrated Plan for Reducing Sewer  
Overflows and Improving Stormwater



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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

**BLUE PRINT COLUMBUS**  
Clean streams. Strong neighborhoods.

**Agenda**

- Background/Timeline
- Blueprint Approach
- Benefits
- Vacant Lot Repurposing Pilot
- Getting Started
- Lessons Learned So Far

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**Background**

- Columbus under two state consent orders
- 2002 CSO Order
  - Plan submitted in 2005
  - Largely complete except for tunnel
  - CSO volumes have reduced dramatically
- 2004 SSO Order
  - Requires elimination of sanitary sewer overflows and basement back-ups
  - Original plan submitted in 2005
  - Included two 14-mile long deep sewer tunnels

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**SSOs**

- Unlike combined sewer overflows
- Sanitary sewers much smaller and not designed to carry rain
- Nonetheless, rain can infiltrate thru cracks, leaks, illicit connections, foundation drains of older homes, etc.
- Original plan to build overflow tunnels
  - Allow problem (infiltration) to continue

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**Why Integrated Planning?**

- CSO work is almost complete
  - Spent a billion dollars to capture a billion gallons of overflow
- SSOs are a fraction of the overflow volume, but three times the cost
  - SSO tunnels do little for water quality as they do not improve stormwater
  - SSO tunnels do not create local jobs or much investment in local economy

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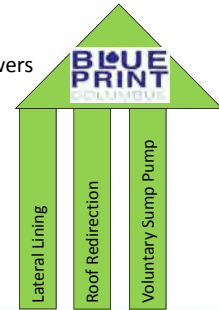
### Blueprint Approach

- Instead of building more infrastructure, invest in fixing our infrastructure
- Root of problem is rainwater getting into sanitary system
  - Invest in sanitary system, public and private to keep rainwater out
  - Focus on residential areas
- Creates opportunity to improve stormwater discharges
  - Route water away from houses to streets
  - Treat with green infrastructure before discharging
- Improve rivers, neighborhoods, local economy

### The Four Pillars

Keep rain water out of sanitary sewers

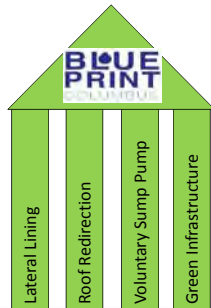
- Lateral lining
- Roof redirection
- Sump pump



### The Four Pillars

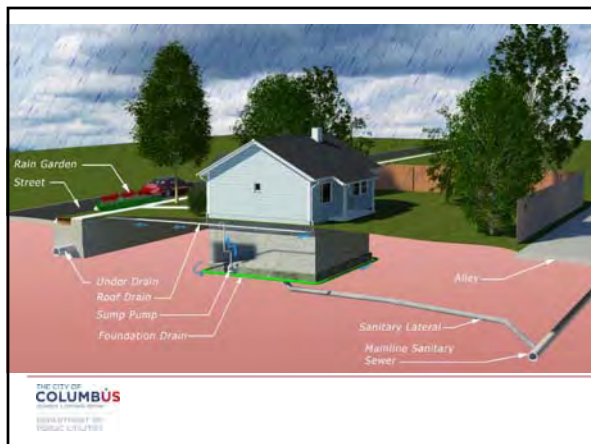
Improve stormwater discharges

- Green infrastructure



### The Fourth Pillar: Green Infrastructure

- Redirecting rainwater away from sanitary into streets may make localized flooding worse
- Adding more stormwater to storm sewer could further impair water quality
- Solution: install enough GI to meet “do no harm” plus create a significant water quality benefit



### Benefits of Blueprint Plan

- Job Creation
  - GI maintenance jobs
  - Smaller construction projects
- Neighborhood Impacts
  - Green amenities
  - Renewed laterals
- Addressing the problem rather than the symptom



### Benefits of Blueprint Plan

- Blueprint includes \$959 M in renewed infrastructure
  - Approximately half of this will go towards lining laterals
  - Solving the source of the problem that will only get worse if left alone
- The gray plan only includes \$390 M in renewed infrastructure
  - Gray depends on building new assets rather than fixing the existing assets
  - Does not include the liability that homeowners face with lateral failures
  - Rates will be the same but homeowners will incur more costs

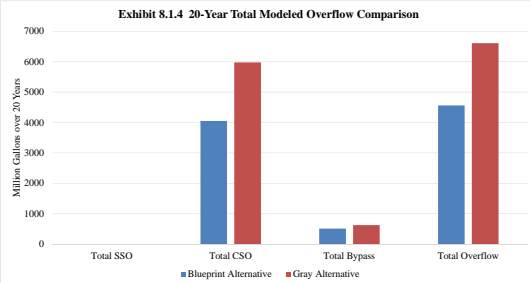
### Blueprint Has Significant Water Quality Advantages

- In addition to do no harm, City is currently designing GI to remove 20% of TSS from controlled areas
- If that remains do-able, Blueprint will remove 342 tons of sediment annually once full buildout occurs
- That's 44 Hanks!



Columbus Zoo's Hank weighs 15,600 pounds

### Blueprint Provides Additional Water Quality Benefits



### Repurposing Vacant Lots

- In original agreement with Ohio EPA, agreed to do pilot on vacant lots
- Purpose was to determine feasibility, cost effectiveness, public acceptability
- Constructed 4 installations
- Largest is Southside Settlement Heritage Park

### Repurposing Vacant Lots

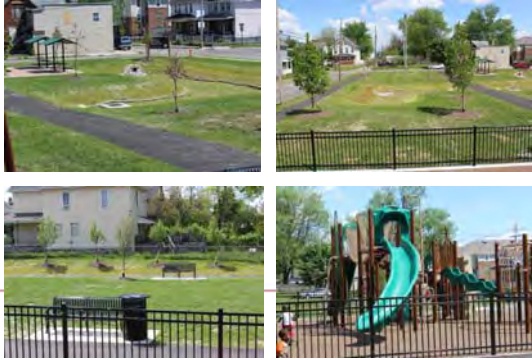


### Before and After SSHP





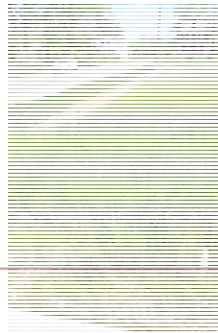
### Created neighborhood amenity



### South Side Vacant Lot Repurposing



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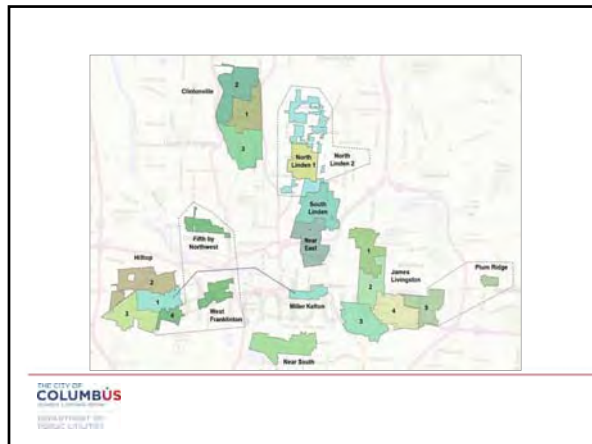


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### Getting Started!

- Blueprint plan identifies the areas of the City that need to have Infiltration reduction
  - Total of approximately 18,000 acres
- Divided into 20 project areas
- Prioritized based on several factors

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### First Project Area: Clintonville

- Approximately 997 acres and 2875 homes
- Divided area into six sub sewer sheds
- GI Engineering started with surveying in 2014
- Construction began 2017



### Clintonville Green Infrastructure

- Building approximately four acres of GI
- 430 separate installations
- Construction costs approximately \$18M
- In addition, three impervious roads (pavers)



### Construction is Underway



### Next Area: Linden

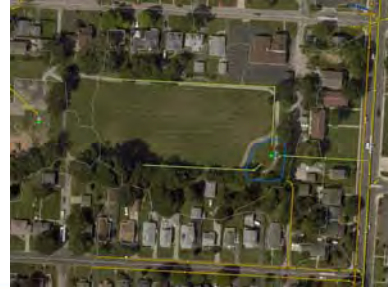
- GI is in design
- Neighborhood very different demographics
  - Much higher percentage of rentals
- Chance to repurpose some vacant lots and improve parks

### Kenlawn Park



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### Kenlawn Park Solution



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### Lessons Learned

#### Public Outreach Critical

- SSSH Park – met with every civic group and area commission multiple times resulting in very supportive community
- Clintonville outreach has been very intensive – mostly positive
  - Big and small meetings, door to door lit drops, area meetings, road shows
  - Sump pump volunteers – everything from social media to church bulletins



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### Lessons Learned

#### Southside Settlement Heritage Park

- Adding playground equipment and other park amenities
  - Modest increase in construction cost and huge win for neighborhood

#### Clintonville

- Included pervious pavement on a street which neighbors have been asking for sidewalk
  - was a small investment that generated a lot of support
  - Public Service Department able to finish the sidewalk to the school

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### Lessons Learned

Solicit public input, be open to making changes

- Moving location of rain gardens
- Remain sensitive to neighborhood aesthetics and safety concerns

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### Questions?

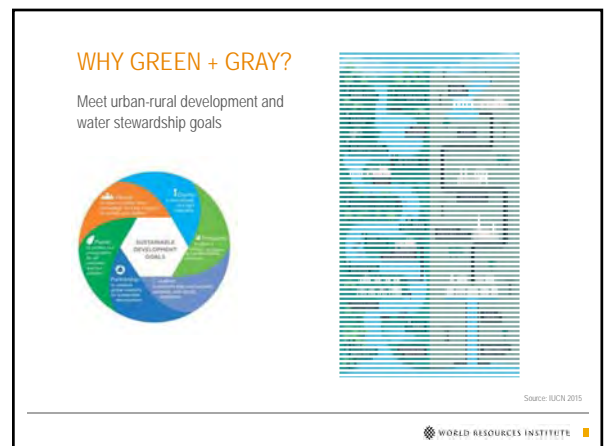
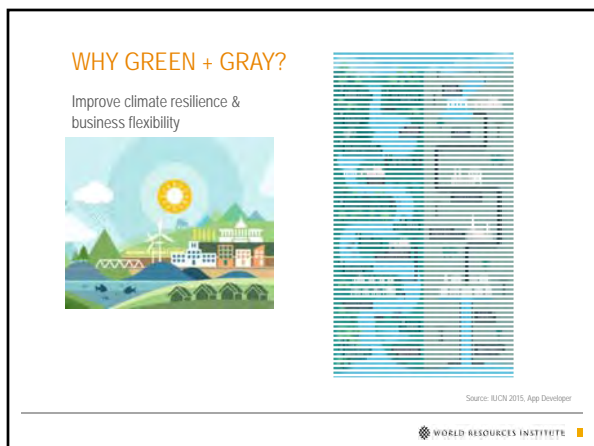
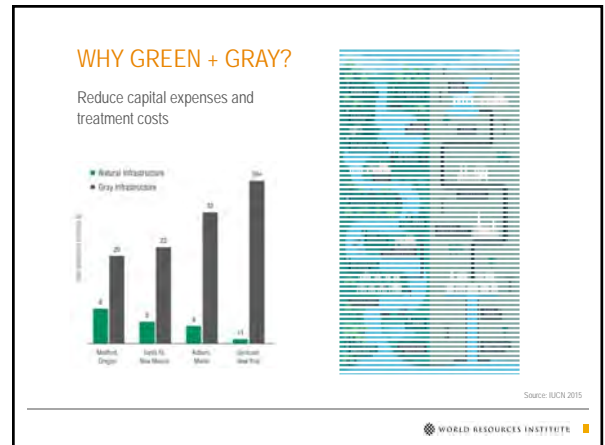
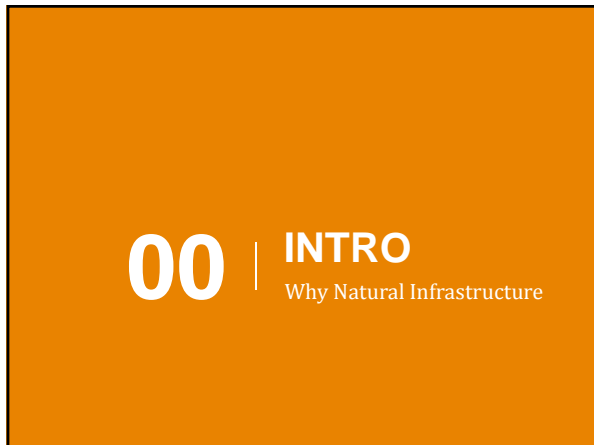
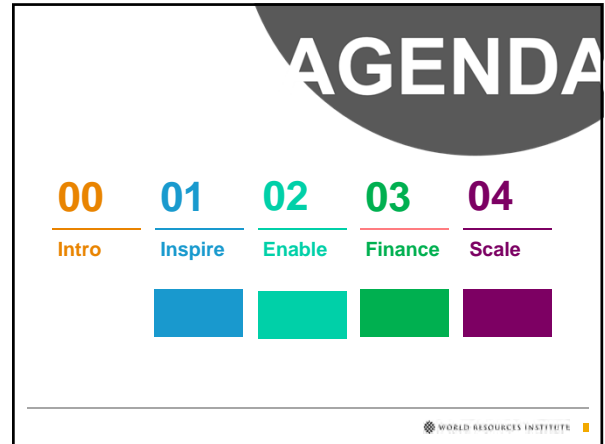
Learn more at: [Columbus.gov/Blueprint](http://Columbus.gov/Blueprint)

Susan E. Ashbrook

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614-645-0807

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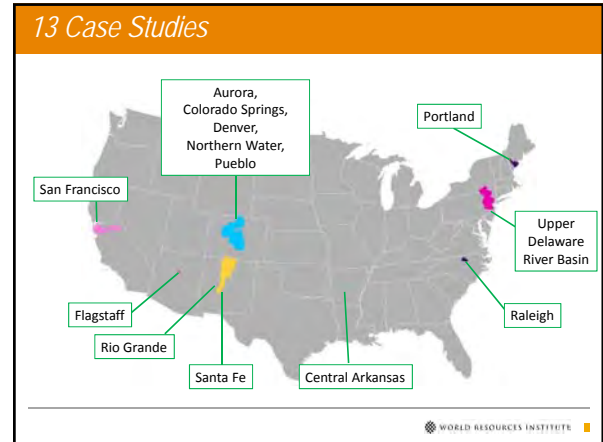


### Enabling Conditions for Success



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**U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities**  
**NRCS** Natural Resource Conservation Service  
**Colorado State University**

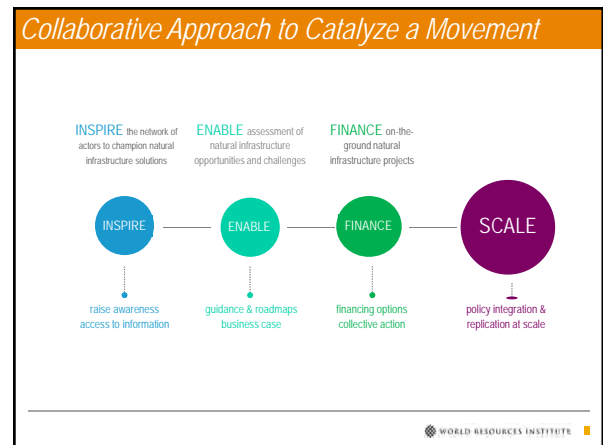
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### Key Lessons & Enabling Conditions for Success

Phase of Program	Lessons
Building Momentum	1. Identify risks and opportunities to rally support
	2. Build partnerships to fill essential roles and responsibilities
	3. Articulate a clear vision of success
	4. Cultivate champions and advocates
Designing the Program	5. Develop a scientifically informed plan for the land
	6. Evaluate the business case for investment
	7. Identify funding sources and financing mechanisms
Implementing the Action Plan	8. Engage landowners to protect and restore natural infrastructure
	9. Manage and administer the program
	10. Monitor performance to demonstrate results

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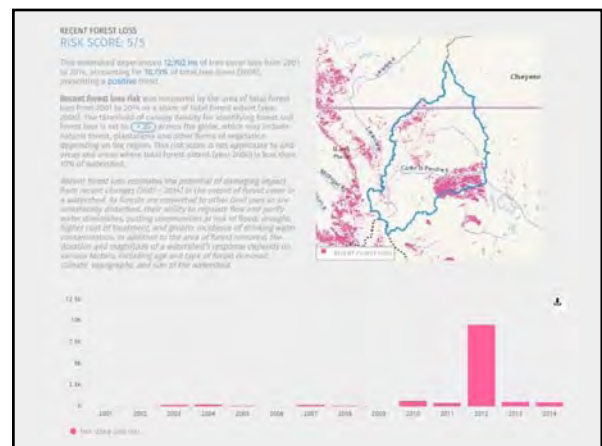
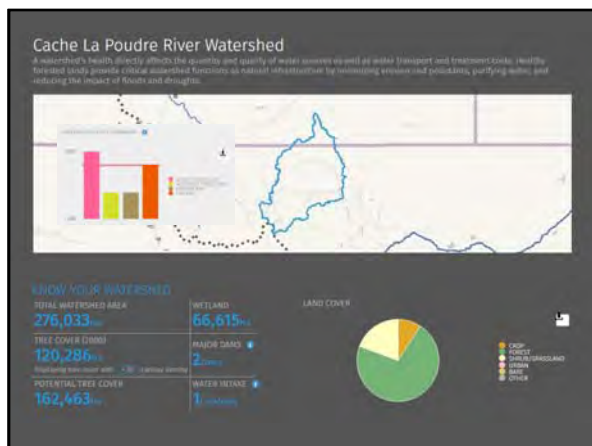
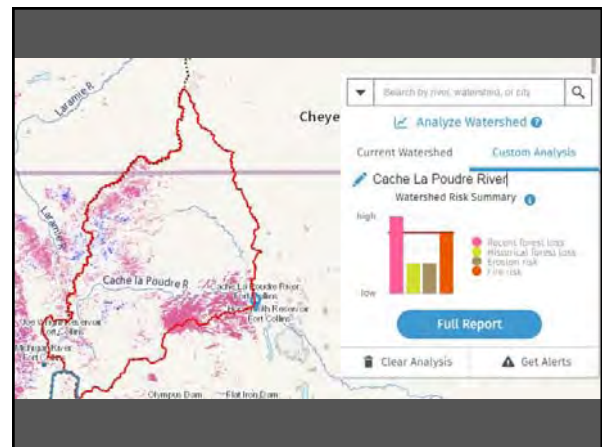
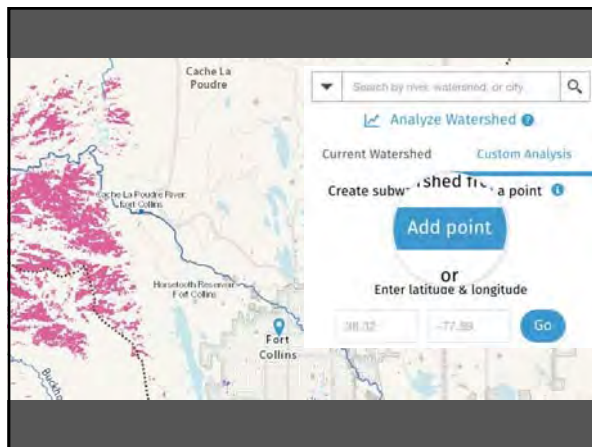
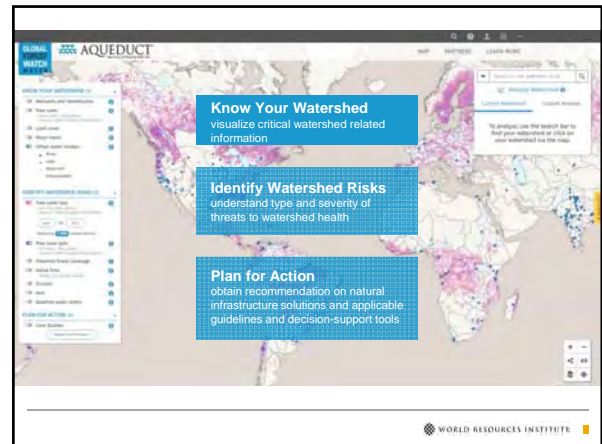
# 01 | INSPIRE

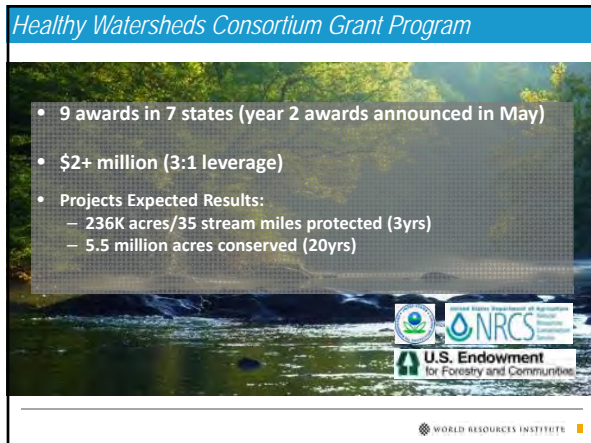
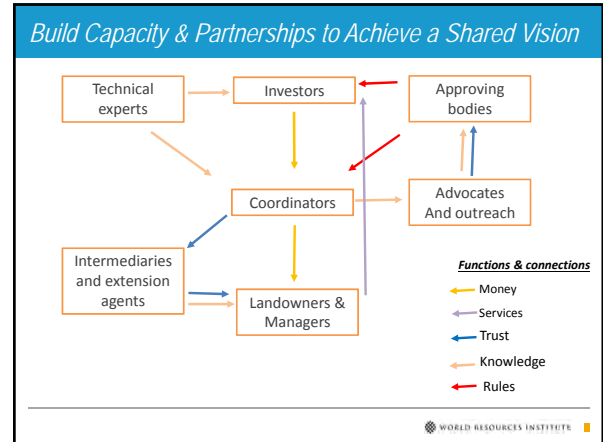
Awareness & Information

### Catastrophic Events → Pipeline of Investable Projects



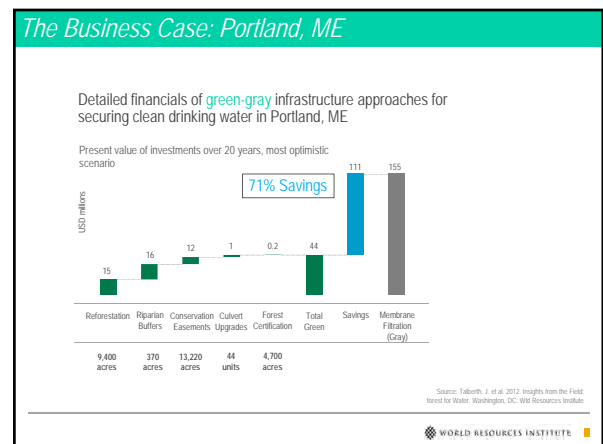
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## 02 | ENABLE

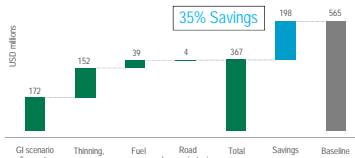
### Guidance & Business Case



### The Business Case: Northern Front Range, CO

Preliminary summary financials for natural infrastructure  
Approaches for managing fire risks in Northern Front Range, CO

Present value of investments over 20 years, Base Case Scenario



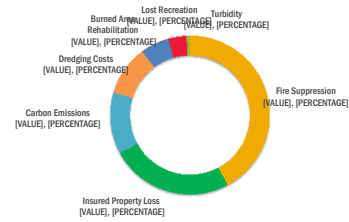
Source: Taberth, J. et al. 2014. Analysis of the Cache la Poudre and Big Thompson Watersheds of Colorado Front Range - Preliminary Report. WRI and CSE.

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### The Business Case: Northern Front Range, CO

Preliminary summary financials for Northern Front Range, CO  
Distribution of (real-time) Savings, USD millions

Base Case Scenario



Source: Taberth, J. et al. 2014. Analysis of the Cache la Poudre and Big Thompson Watersheds of Colorado Front Range - Preliminary Report. WRI and CSE.

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### Monitor Performance to Demonstrate Results

Type of metric	Practice-based	Performance-based
Ecological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acres treated/protected/restored</li> <li>- Miles of streambanks restored or protected</li> <li>- Length of fire fuel breaks created</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water quality (e.g. turbidity, temperature)</li> <li>- Reservoir level and tributary flow volume</li> <li>- Amphibian and fish populations</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Funds raised</li> <li>- Dollars spent (annual total and per acre)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Treatment cost reduction</li> <li>- Number of jobs created</li> <li>- Forest health harvest revenue</li> </ul>

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## 03 | FINANCE

Financing sources & mechanisms

### Sustainable Funding & Financing Mechanisms

Program name	Years funded	Funds invested	No. of investors	Primary financing mechanisms
Delaware River	5	\$1.9 million	3	Grants
Central Arkansas	8	\$27.7 million	5+	Watershed protection fee; nutrient impact fee; government cost-share
Portland, Maine	2	\$400,000	2	Allocation from utility's general operating fund
Upper Neuse, North Carolina	10	\$5.6 million	5+	Watershed protection fee; nutrient impact fee; grants and donations
Rio Grande	2	\$1 million	multiple	Grants
Santa Fe	7	\$9.5 million	4	Congressional earmark; water rate increase; municipal bond
Flagstaff	7	\$12 million	12	Municipal bond
San Francisco	10	\$50 million	2	Municipal bond & utility operating budget

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www.conservationfinancenetwork.org/2016/06/22/green-bonds-a-new-source-of-financing-for-water-security

## CONSERVATION FINANCE NETWORK

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### Green Bonds Are a New Source of Financing for Water Security

Logan Porten | June 22, 2016

Topic: Water

In this interview, Todd Gartner, senior associate and natural infrastructure for water manager at World Resources Institute (WRI), provided a high-level perspective on how green bonds can support natural infrastructure for water security.

**Q: When do you see as the major players in the space right now with regard to green bonds for natural infrastructure?**

Gartner: There have been a lot of enthusiasm and conversation increasingly over the last couple of years with actual issuance in the green-bonds space.

Within the last month, San Francisco issued a bond related to water security. Also, DC has clearly been receiving a lot of attention for its green century bond, even though that bond was primarily focused on built infrastructure, Connecticut and

Climate Bonds | AGWA | Ceres | WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE



### Western Forests in Crisis

**PROBLEM:**  
**OVERGROWN**  
**FORESTS**

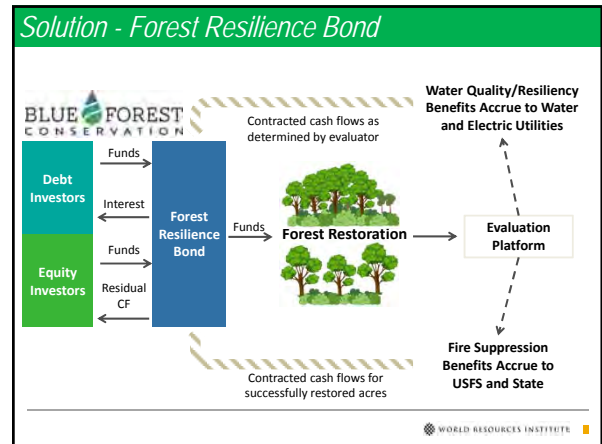
- Overgrowth intensifies drought and wildfire
- Water quality threatened
- Hydropower generation severely affected
- US Forest Service facing rising suppression costs

1929

Today

Photo Credit: US Forest Service, Viewing Forests Through a Historical Lens, Fall 2009

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### Collaborating with

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# 04 | SCALE

Scale up to meet water challenge

### Moving from Pilot to Policy - AB 2480

PACIFIC FOREST TRUST

Why Forests Matter What We Do

**POLICY**

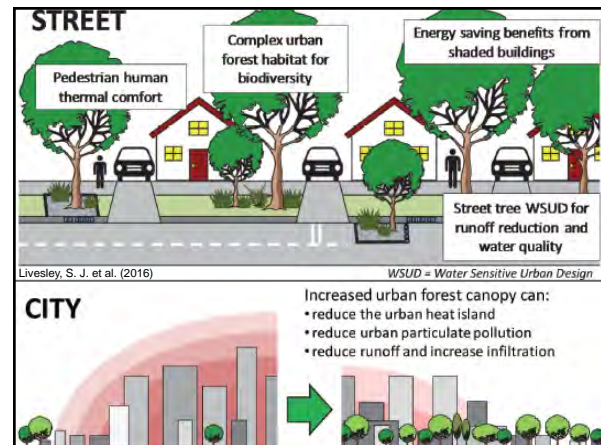
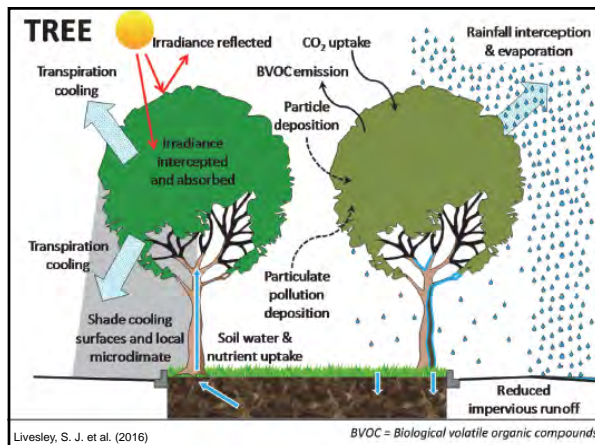
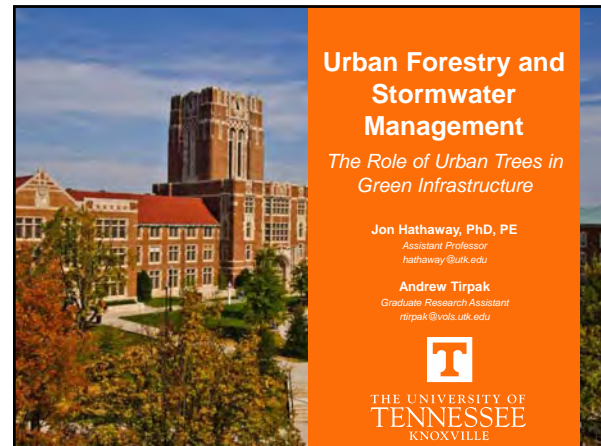
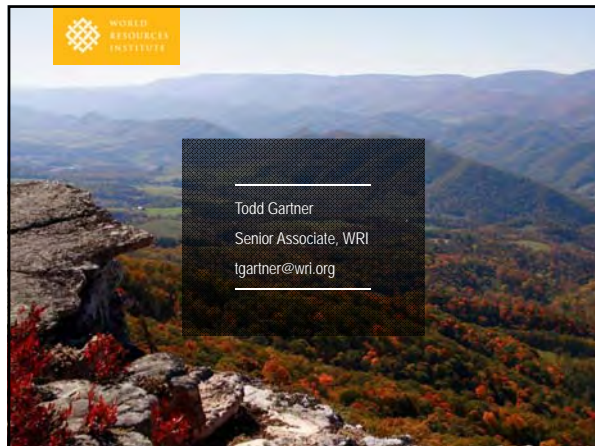
**PROMOTING WATER SECURITY, NATURALLY**

California's population is projected to hit 50 million by 2050, increasing demand for an already scarce resource—cool, clean water. This increased demand in a warmer and drier state dramatically highlights the critical need to improve the reliability of our primary water supply. To help address this, Pacific Forest Trust is working closely with California Assemblymember Richard Bloom on his pioneering legislation, AB 2480, which recognizes source watersheds as infrastructure and a critical component of the state's water system. AB 2480 also calls for a prioritized and comprehensive investment plan to restore and conserve key

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### Major Near Term Policy Opportunities

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### Urban Trees: Stormwater Benefits

- **Hydrology**
  - Interception
  - Transpiration
  - Infiltration
- **Water Quality**
  - Linked to N and P reduction
  - Limited research

Inkilainen, E. N. M. et al. (2013)

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### Research Gaps

- Tree function in urban environment vs natural/forested environment
- Localized vs watershed-scale tree canopy effects on urban hydrology and water quality
- Canopy impacts on runoff and infiltration from impervious/pervious urban areas
- Role of urban trees in green infrastructure, stormwater management, regulations and policy

Kuehler et al. (2016)

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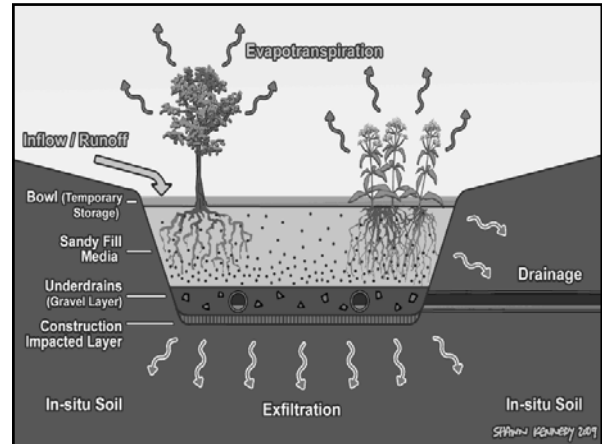


## Suspended Pavement Systems

- Pavement support structure
- Promotes healthy urban trees



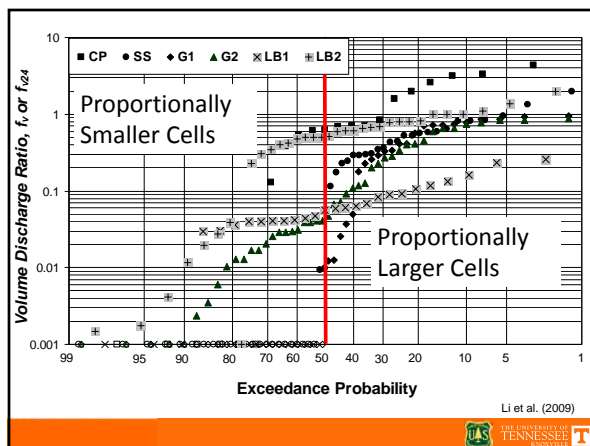
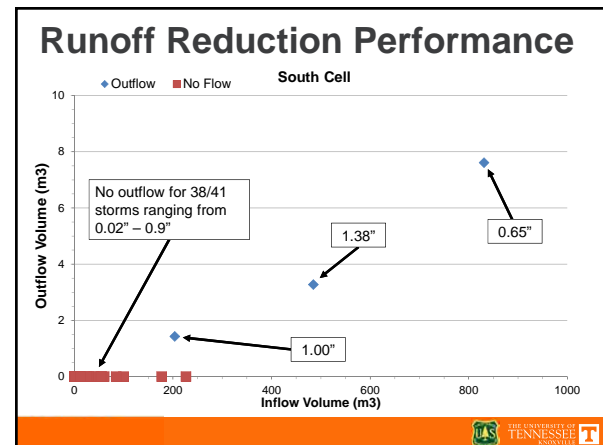
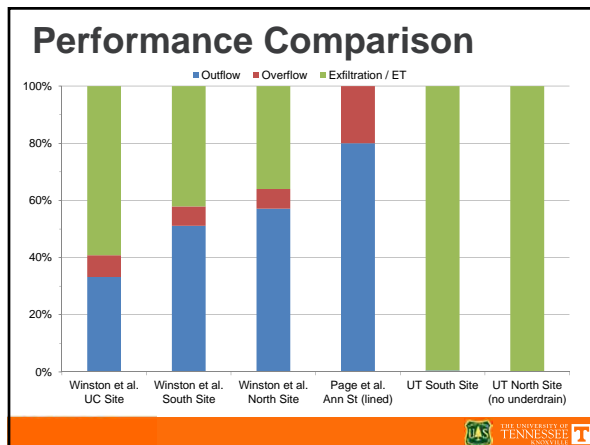
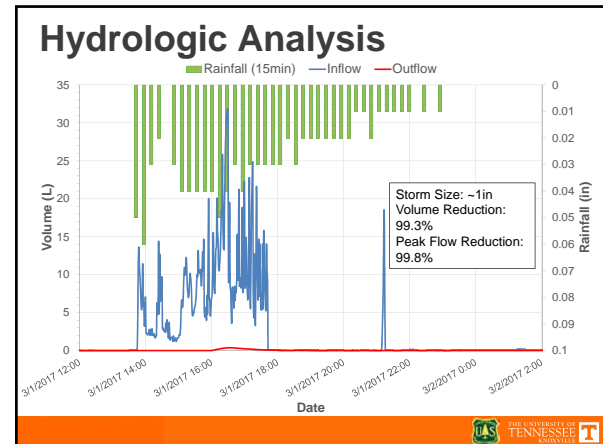
- Non-compacted soil allows roots to grow and access air/water



## Construction and Installation



	Davis et al. 2012	Winston et al. 2016	Page et al. 2015*	UT Cells
Watershed (m <sup>2</sup> )	1836 - 5261	1900 - 3600	2242 - 2873	128 - 133
Bioretention area (m <sup>2</sup> )	102 - 149	57 - 182	27.6	22 - 27
Bioretention area (%)	2.8 - 6.6	2.9 - 5.0	5.5 - 6.6	17.4 - 20.6
Bowl Volume (m <sup>3</sup> )	23.6 - 36.0	35 - 60	1.38	2.3 - 2.8
Media Depth (m)	0.9 - 1.2	0.6 - 0.9	0.8	0.7
Soil texture	Sandy loam / Sand	Loamy sand	Loamy sand	Loamy sand
Sand / Clay (%)	70/20 - 96/4	87/9	87/7	85/10
Organic Matter (%)	-	1 - 4	3 - 6	5



### Preliminary Conclusions

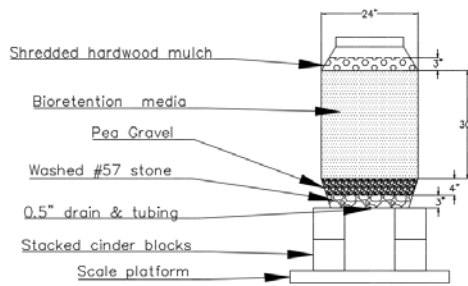
1. Suspended pavement systems are effective at reducing runoff volumes and peak flows
2. Limited storage volume ("bowl volumes") in suspended pavement systems can lead to oversized practices – design storm critical

### Future Work:

- Characterize ET contributions to water balance via sap flow sensors
- Analyze water quality benefits associated with trees in suspended pavement systems



## Bioretention Column Study

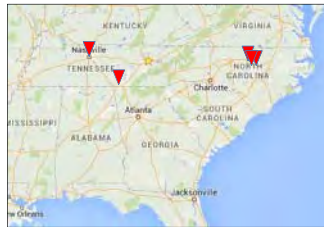


## Bioretention Column Study

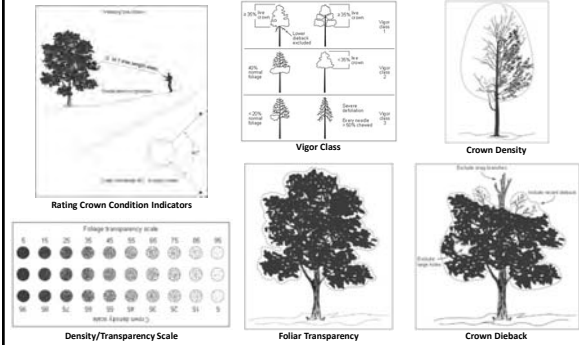


## Bioretention Tree Health Surveys

- Jun-Aug '15
- 5 cities
- 38 practices
- 97 trees



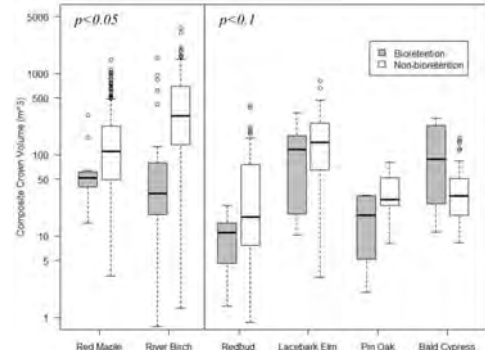
## Tree Crown Condition Indicators



**How does the health of bioretention trees compare to other urban trees?**



## Bioretention vs Non-bioretention Trees



## Comparing Tree Health

- Many tree species appear to be *less healthy*
- Incompatibility with species-specific growing preferences:

Species	Soil pH	Saturated or very wet soil	Moist, well-drained soil	Occasionally dry soil	Very dry soil
Bald Cypress	4.5-6.0				
Pin Oak	4.5-6.5				
River Birch	3.0-6.5				
Red Maple	4.7-7.3				
Redbud	5.0-7.9				
Lacebark Elm	4.8-7.0				

Bassuk et al. (2009)

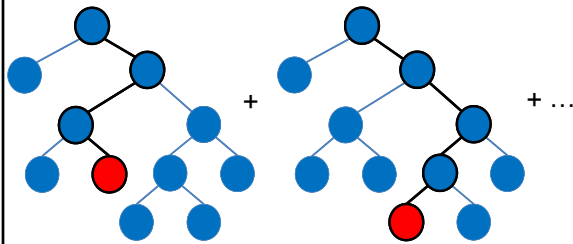


## What bioretention parameters influence tree health?



## randomForest Algorithm

- Ensemble learning-based regression technique using numerous decision trees



## High-Importance Parameters

Category	Predictor Variable	Comments
Bioretention Media Composition	Fines (%)	Reinforces findings in tree health comparison study; media should align with species-specific habitat preferences
	Sand (%)	
	Organic Matter (%)	Influences soil fertility, structure; OM standards vary
Bioretention Media Chemistry	Buffer pH	Controls change in bioretention media pH over time
	Copper	Micronutrient; deficiency leads to crown defoliation and dieback (other micronutrients are also key)
	Potassium	Vital to plant functions (photosynthesis, water regulation, cell expansion); req'd in large amounts
Tree Selection and Planting	Planting Location	Should reflect tree tolerance to inundation
	Species Selection	Species should be tolerant of bioretention environment



## Tree Health Survey Conclusions

- Trees should be selected based on their ability to tolerate the unique conditions found in bioretention practices. Species-specific preferences for growing conditions should be considered.
- Species selection should be guided by analysis of bioretention media composition, prioritizing the high-importance parameters.



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