

Identifying and Overcoming Barriers to Implementation of Low Impact Development Practices in Florida

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In twelve of the last fifteen years, Florida has led the country in new single-family residential home construction, most of which has occurred in master-planned community developments. This rapid pace of urbanization using standard land development practices has altered historical hydrologic regimes and intensified loading of pollutants to receiving water bodies. Conventional approaches to mitigate pollutant loads in stormwater runoff, even those classified as best management practices, have succeeded in slowing the rate of water quality degradation. However, the increasing number of impaired water bodies listed and TMDLs issued raises uncertainty regarding the sufficiency of conventional practices to meet protective state water quality criteria.

Amid these growing concerns, Low Impact Development (LID) has emerged as a promising yet seldom used stormwater management strategy in Florida. Other states around the country have quickly adopted LID practices that mimic pre-development hydrologic characteristics and reduce contaminant loading to surface waters. Although a leader in stormwater management policies and practices since the founding of its five Water Management Districts, Florida has been slow to integrate LID into its suite of stormwater management strategies.

This presentation will report on findings from workshops, targeted surveys, and interviews with key regulatory and management personnel in Florida regarding barriers to LID implementation and ways to promote the use of LID practices in the future. Funding for this research was made possible in part by a grant from the University of Florida Water Institute.

Key Words: Development, Water Quality, Stormwater, Low Impact Development, LID

Challenge: Population growth and land use change impacts to water resource sustainability

Issue: Public perceptions, values and attitudes toward water issues, or
Nutrient enrichment of surface, ground and coastal waters