

SOIL AND PLANTS ABSORB RAIN

in a natural environment. But when streets, buildings, and parking lots cover the ground, rain can wash over the hard surfaces creating stormwater runoff.

Stormwater runoff that's not properly managed carries dirt, oil and other pollutants to rivers and streams; causes erosion and flooding; and harms property and wildlife habitat. And stormwater that flows into the sewer system reduces the capacity of the pipes to carry sanitary sewage, causing sewage backups into basements and streets.

What Portland is Doing

Urban streams, forests and wetlands manage stormwater naturally. The way green streets, ecoroofs and rain gardens manage stormwater is similar.

Trees and ecoroofs absorb rain to reduce stormwater runoff. Green streets and rain gardens collect runoff from streets, parking lots, and homes allowing water to soak into the ground and preventing it from flowing into the sewer system. Soil and vegetation filter stormwater pollutants.



Green Infrastructure Benefits Portland's green infrastructure keeps stormwater out of the city's combined sewer system, provides urban green spaces, creates habitat and cools the air. Green infrastructure also protects Portland's aging sewer system and makes it operate more efficiently. Over one-third of the city's 2,500 miles of sewer pipes are more than 80 years old. Multnomah County Central Library Ecoroo