

TREE TALKS

Georgia Urban Forest Council



SPRING 2011



Good music, Low Country barbeque, the famous brews of Atlanta's Sweetwater Brewing Company, and friends – what better formula for a fundraising night could there be? Join us at Sweetwater Brewing Company, 195 Ottley Drive, Atlanta, **May 10, 6-9 p.m.** for the **2nd annual ArborJam event** benefitting the ongoing operation of the Georgia Urban Forest Council. *Attendees will also enjoy a fantastic silent auction featuring great deals on unique items.* Tickets are \$35 and must be purchased in advance at www.gufc.org.



Decatur musician John Zedd performs at ArborJam May 10.

GUFC SECOND QUARTERLY PROGRAM

Trees, Sustainable Landscape Design and Stormwater April 14



The Georgia Urban Forest Council will hold its Second Quarterly Educational Program on April 14, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the **Johns Creek Environmental Campus**, a unique state-of-the-art wastewater treatment/educational facility located at 8100 Holcomb Bridge Road, Roswell. With a strong emphasis on the sustainable landscape design of the campus, **Steve Sanchez, ASLA**, of Hughes, Good, O'Leary & Ryan Landscape Architects and Planners will discuss bioswales, pervious pavement, sustainable landscape design, design for drought conditions, a functioning landscape vs. a purely aesthetic one, stormwater mitigation, and tree and plant choices. **Horticulturist Dan Whitehead** will discuss what makes a tree sustainable, current conditions in the nursery industry and how sustainability will be affected in the next few years. Then we'll tour around the facility and explore the tree species found in the mature bottomland forest adjacent to this facility at Garrad Landing along the Chattahoochee River. Lunch is included. 3 ISA CEUs, 3 SAF Forester Contact Hours. Certificates of Attendance for all. \$35 member, \$45 non-member. Register at www.gufc.org. (A free workshop about the Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program will immediately follow. RSVP for this grant workshop to Joan Scales at jscales@gufc.state.ga.us.)

President's Letter



Well, it is springtime in the Southeast again, and you all know what that means. Yep - it's pollen season once again. I guess it's not so bad if you don't have seasonal allergies and you drive a yellow car. But for those of us that can't stop sneezing and prefer not to drive a yellow car, it makes for some long days. Except for the allergy thing, spring is my favorite time of the year. It is so neat to see the trees that looked so drab looking in the fall and winter to be busting with new life and beautiful blooms. If this time of the year doesn't get you excited about trees and the outdoors, then you might want to have your heart checked.

This is the time of the year where the temperatures are starting to get a little more favorable, and it's a great time to get out and enjoy the outdoors. Whether you're camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, or just spending time with your family, our state has some fantastic opportunities for everyone to enjoy. You had better enjoy them while you can because if you are like me, it won't be long before we will all be complaining about how hot and humid it is.

Remember to keep an eye on your plants and trees at this time because not only are the plants starting to wake up, but so are the insects that are sure to have a ferocious appetite after this long hard winter. You have to take the good with the bad, and if you can keep your trees and plants healthy to begin with, then they stand a much better chance in defending themselves from these little pesky and seasonal invaders. If there is ever any doubt, be sure to call in a Certified Arborist to inspect your trees and plants and develop a plan to combat the intrusion.

As I always say, be sure to take a child with you as you enjoy the outdoors so that they too can appreciate what Mother Nature has created for us.

Rusty Lee

Funds for this project were provided by the Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program administered by the Georgia Forestry Commission. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political belief, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communications of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-A, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410.

From the Executive Director

As Rusty says above, it's a great time to be outdoors in Georgia. The exquisite beauty of the trees and plants and the just-right temperatures make spring a favorite season in the South. We'll be outdoors some of the time for two of our upcoming events. At our 2nd Quarterly Program on April 14, we'll tour the grounds of the Johns Creek Environmental Campus in Roswell, learning about sustainable landscaping. Then, on May 10, we invite you to gather with us for a mild spring evening outdoors (indoors if it rains) at the Sweetwater Brewery. ArborJam is a fun evening just being with others who care about trees and want to support the ongoing programs of the Georgia Urban Forest Council. Featured musician John Zedd, a rising star from Decatur who left the world of law to pursue a music career, will entertain us with his diverse repertoire of songs. And you never know what interesting jewelry, artwork, gift item, service.... or tree you might be able to take home at an unbelievable price from our fantastic silent auction. All proceeds help GUF teach the treekeepers what they need to know. Get your \$35 tickets today at www.gufc.org.

Want to be a beetle detective? The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service invites you to report positive and negative signs of Emerald Ash Borer Beetle at www.BeetleDetectives.com – Help protect our trees.

Tree Maintenance Workshops for Local Governments Bring Urban Forestry Expertise to Communities

Consulting Urban Forester **Connie Head** and Landscape Architect **Gretchen Musser** spent quality time with communities in North and South Georgia recently, bringing comprehensive tree care expertise to city and county personnel, certified arborists, and tree board members. Presented by the Georgia Urban Forest Council and sponsored with funding from the Georgia Forestry Commission, these workshops focused on the proper establishment, maintenance, protection, and evaluation of trees and were held in **Richmond Hill, Dahlonega, Oxford and Woodbine.**



Connie demonstrates proper pruning of existing trees



Root Excavation Demonstration



With Gretchen for indoor Class time



Discussing mulch

At the recent *Tree Maintenance for Local Governments* workshops, instructors **Connie Head and Gretchen Musser** ended the program by telling attendees, “YOU have the most impact on tree health in your community. Take this pledge and make a commitment to have a positive impact on your community’s trees.” **We invite you to print this page out for handy reference and to share with others!**

Tree Maintenance Pledge

- **I WILL** plant trees where they have room to grow to maturity, without restriction, and I WILL only plant small maturing trees beneath overhead utility lines to avoid future conflicts.
- **I WILL** handle trees with care while they are transported from the nursery to the planting site, cover them during transport, avoid wounding the trunk or limbs, store them in a cool environment, keep the root ball moist at all times, and I WILL NEVER lift or move them by the trunk.
- **I WILL** remove all wire, burlap, straps, and twine from root balls prior to filling the planting hole to avoid eventual root and stem girdling or water wicking out of the planting hole.
- **I WILL** plant trees at the depth they would be if naturally occurring (first order roots within 2 inches of the soil surface) to avoid conditions favorable for the development of stem girdling roots.
- **I WILL** mulch trees annually with good quality organic mulch for the benefit of tree roots, expanding the mulch area as the tree and its roots grow, and I WILL NEVER pile mulch around the trunk “volcano” style to avoid trunk decay and discourage stem girdling roots.
- **I WILL** water newly planted trees regularly in the absence of rainfall until they are well established (up to 3 years) to ensure survival and reduce tree planting costs. I WILL NOT create a soil ring around the trunk unless runoff is unavoidable.
- **I WILL** only stake trees if necessary and I WILL remove all staking and wires after one year to avoid girdling the stem and reducing tree health and longevity.
- **I WILL** prune young trees to train their structure beginning one year after planting, removing forked stems which could later develop included bark, and then prune as needed thereafter to increase their long-term health, strength, and safety.
- **I WILL** prune all trees properly according to standards, I WILL NOT flush cut or leave stubs, and I WILL NEVER TOP TREES, INCLUDING CRAPEMYRTLES; I WILL provide good examples of pruning to my community.
- **I WILL** protect tree roots within the critical root zone (CRZ)—the soil and rooting area around the trunk that extends out a distance of 1.5 feet for every one inch of trunk diameter, and I WILL NEVER compact the soil by driving equipment, parking vehicles, or storing materials within a tree’s CRZ, thereby preserving tree health and increasing longevity.
- **I WILL** protect tree trunks by NEVER wounding them with mowers, weed trimmers, or other equipment (especially young, recently planted trees) thereby avoiding trunk decay and I WILL instead control grass and weeds around the tree trunk with mulch and hand removal.
- **I WILL** continue to learn more about trees, teach others about trees, and explain to them the benefits, needs, and proper maintenance of trees in our community.

Deer Ticks and Lyme Disease Endanger Outdoor Professionals!

By Gail Meads, Soil Scientist, GSM Services and Thomas Macfie, Soil Scientist, Soil Science, Inc.

Soil Scientists and other outdoor professionals in Georgia are exposed to deer ticks for many months of the year. Walking about in dense woods, briars, old fields, and kudzu patches are obvious places of tick infestations. However, relaxing in the backyard or working in the garden also expose us to many of nature's little creatures.

The Deer Tick is the carrier for Lyme Disease. The disease is actually caused by the bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi* which attacks the central nervous system. The tick usually takes 24 hours to attach and another day or two to feed. The bacteria is transmitted towards the end of this feeding period. An unattached or flat tick does not transmit Lyme disease. The infection does not show up immediately. Sometimes, but not always, a distinctive bulls-eye circles the tick bite.

Another two to six week into the cycle takes place before medical tests can detect Lyme Disease. Often, medical personnel do not detect Lyme's Disease until later stages when it is much more difficult to control and cure. Early symptoms are fever, malaise, fatigue, headache, muscle aches and joint aches. Typical later symptoms may mimic multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, fever and even Alzheimer's Disease.

Prevention

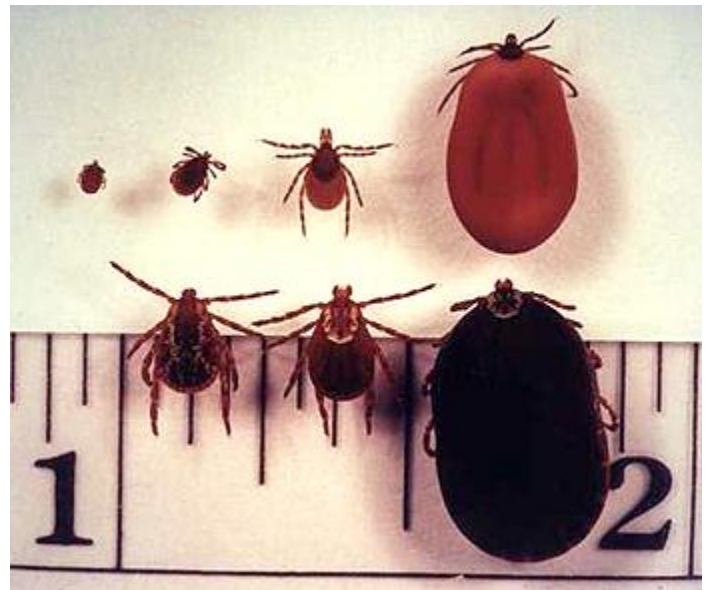
- Tick checks when coming in from the outdoors
- Bathing with a washcloth to dislodge ticks
- Insect repellent
- Protective clothing such as high socks, long sleeved shirts, and long pants.

Safe Tick Removal

- Use fine tweezers to grasp tick as close as possible to the skin.
- Pull backwards gently but firmly, using an even, steady motion. Do not jerk or twist.
- Do not squeeze, crush or puncture the body of the tick as body fluids transmit.
- Wash the skin with soap and water.
- Leave remaining body parts alone, the skin will naturally expel them. Removal may cause significant skin trauma.

Testing

- Seek professional medical help immediately and point out possible Lyme Disease exposure. Be persistent! Igenex Testing often finds infection that other tests miss. There are over forty types of Lyme Disease and they vary in available detection and severity.



*Feeding Deer Ticks, top
Note longer mouth parts*

For more information, visit <http://www.ilads.org> or contact Gail Meads at gm@plantationcable.net. Gail is the secretary for the Soil Science Society of GA.

A Tree Here, a Tree There – Pretty Soon It All Added Up for Atlanta's "Tree Lady"

Unlikely Urban Forester with World Credentials Will End 26 Years of Trees, Trees, Trees

By Joe Ledlie, The Ledlie Group

This spring, right about the time the dogwoods bloom again, Marcia Bansley will leave her LEED-certified office in a corner of Atlanta's urban landscape and close 26 years as head of Trees Atlanta, one of the nation's oldest and--friends and foes alike would say--most vigorous tree planting and preservation organization.

In Atlanta they're serious about trees, and Ms. Bansley carries the campaign banner, the legion standard, with high seriousness, taking time out occasionally for her famous toccata laugh, of course.

“Marcia was present at the creation of Trees Atlanta and has devoted 26 years of her life to building it into one of the premiere tree organizations in the country,” said Trees Atlanta Board President, C. Edward Dobbs. He continued, “Atlantans have been the beneficiary of her great leadership and advocacy for trees and the environment.”



Ahead in her career when she departs in May are the formal study of architecture and the development of her growing but largely invisible practice as an international non-profit consultant and “Appleseed” advocate to the world. She will also continue to be involved with Trees Atlanta as an advocate and fundraiser as Ms. Connie Veates steps in as Interim Director. Ms. Bansley “feels very confident about the involved board, the committed long-serving staff, and passionate volunteers at Trees Atlanta as they continue protecting and improving Atlanta’s urban forest for the next 26 years and beyond.”

She will leave behind in America's historically fastest growing urban area a hardwood tapestry of her own making: hundreds of groves of new and, now, not so new trees. Oaks and elms mostly, the 81,000 trees she counts as her legacy will continue to bring soft green touches to busy boulevards, the marble hard faces of corporate towers, and asphalt parking lots by the score.

Not bad for a city that was losing up to 50 acres of trees a day to development in the 1980s and 1990’s, so said NASA in its satellite scans of the American landscape in those go-go days.

Everybody in Atlanta knows Marcia Bansley, if not by name, then as “the Tree Lady.” CEOs send large checks. The Junior League and a powerful group of downtown property owners known as Central Atlanta Progress joined in alarm to start it all a quarter of a century ago. (Tree huggers here often appear in Anne Taylor dresses or Brooks Brothers suits.)

Developers howled as one municipality after another installed tree protection ordinances that originated with Ms. Bansley and her lawyer friends. She is, after all, an Emory University School of Law graduate who ran a family firm for 10 years before turning to trees. Over time, some of those same developers joined her growing list of followers and friends. *(continued on next page)*

Marcia Bansley once stood down a bulldozer to save a tree. A surgeon's daughter and onetime debutante, she has spent a life making her way from one trouble spot to another across the "city in a forest," smiling or speaking to everyone she met along the way in the old Southern fashion, collecting checks and occasionally making headlines.

In the 1990s the billboard industry attempted to curb state protection of highway rights of way and thereby threatening trees even remotely near the roads. But Ms. Bansley, who loves a challenge, quietly began a grassroots campaign of garden clubber effrontery directed at legislators in their hometown offices and country clubs that culminated in a lethal column by the Atlanta Constitution's widely beloved Celestine Sibley about the latest Bansley campaign, called Everybody's Trees. Protests poured in to government offices and the bill failed.

(A similar bill, lubricated by the efforts of the state's most powerful lobbying firm, is back this year and faring much too well for Ms. Bansley's taste. This bill is currently on its way to the governor for signature.)

Unbeknownst to the folks back home (personal publicity is not in the Bansley bag), she aided in the creation of spinoffs both near (Trees Covington in a quiet Georgia town 40 miles away) and far (Trees New York, Trees Utah).

In between and unheralded at home were stints on various community projects across Georgia and consulting stints across the nation and in Europe, especially Italy, which she regards as her second home.

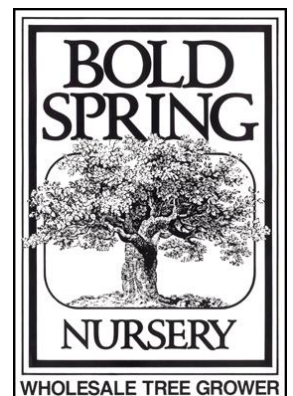
Trees Atlanta is a nationally recognized citizens group dedicated to protecting and improving Atlanta's urban forest by planting, conserving and educating. The non-profit organization was formed by the Atlanta Commissioner of Parks, Central Atlanta Progress, and The Junior League of Atlanta to address Downtown Atlanta's lack of trees. Since 1985, Trees Atlanta has planted and distributed more than 81,000 trees. Trees Atlanta plants trees in barren in-town communities where pavement is more prominent than nature. They care for all of the trees they plant for at least 2-years to ensure their good health and longevity. In addition, Trees Atlanta also safeguards Atlanta's majestic older trees by protecting and improving important green spaces and by educating citizens and policy makers about the importance of trees. Trees Atlanta offers weekly volunteer opportunities around the city, forging positive relationships among citizens and building community.



Own Root Only? Not so Fast!

By John Barbour, owner, Bold Spring Nursery

In recent decades traditional seedling propagation of ornamental trees has given way increasingly to the use of cultivars through clonal propagation. Many seedling-grown trees display significant genetic variation and the resultant lack of uniformity in a population can be, for some, troublesome in mass planting in a modern landscape. The desire for uniformity in the commercial landscape and the selection of superior varieties has contributed to the demand for cultivars. Through propagation techniques such as grafting, budding, rooted cuttings, and tissue culture, the inherent qualities of a single specimen can be genetically replicated and displayed predictably in the landscape.



However, clonal propagation in and of itself must not be considered the end-all solution for tree production. When thinking of the long term health of the urban forest, here seed-propagated trees offer advantages. Biodiversity is an important aspect in controlling widespread damage due to constantly evolving pest problems in any given ecosystem. The use of seedling-grown trees insures the broadest gene pool to offer resistance to insects and pathogens. For this reason alone, seedling production should and will remain an important segment of our industry.

(continued on next page)

Still, it is that very diversity that provides the opportunity for selecting cultivars which seem to stand out from the rest. The need for improved selections varies between species. Many oaks offer very good uniformity when grown from seed and may be effectively substituted for clonal trees in many situations. Yet ***Acer rubrum***, our native red maple, from seed, exhibits great genetic elasticity and provides a dramatic array of characteristics among seedlings. But, in fact, many representatives are not the most attractive landscape trees. Superior selections of ***Acer rubrum*** have been made and, when the clones are used in mass, they offer a powerful visual effect of repetition of color and form in the landscape. The success of outstanding red maple cultivars such as October Glory® has led to a wave of cultivar development within a number of species. It is to be hoped that new cultivars are chosen carefully to offer characteristics superior to their species. The creation of a clone should be a means to that end and not, of itself, the end goal.



Fall color on October Glory® red maple at
Bold Spring Nursery

At Bold Spring Nursery we grow trees from a variety of propagation techniques: rooted cuttings, seedlings, tissue culture, budding, and grafting. Though the majority of our trees are produced from rooted cuttings, we are constantly evaluating the pros and cons of various techniques in order to optimize the quality of each tree in our inventory. There are no absolute rules.

Depending on the tree, the results are varied. Some species, such as ***Acer palmatum*** (Japanese maple) cultivars, have been grafted successfully for hundreds of years. We have produced them from grafts and also from rooted cuttings and, in most cases, grafts have proven to be more vigorous. Several other species, ***Carpinus betulus*** (European hornbeam) and ***Zelkova serrata*** (Japanese Zelkova) for example, have shown similar results, with budded plants out-performing rooted cuttings. A few species, such as ***Nyssa sylvatica*** (black gum), rarely produce good root systems from rooted cuttings but perform very well when budded. Occasionally, as with red oak types and our native red maple, graft incompatibility problems preclude that method and rooted cuttings become the technique of choice. Even in those cases there are many exceptions and, sometimes, a variety is so difficult to root from cuttings that the root system is insufficient to provide long-term stability. In such cases rooted cutting propagation does not make sense; the benefits offered by that particular cultivar are outweighed by the need for the best possible root system.

The advantages of grafting and budding were, perhaps, illustrated most inspirationally by the late Frank Santamour, Harvard PhD, and renowned research geneticist at the National Arboretum. Dr. Santamour was recognized as the world's leading authority on the genetics, breeding and development of superior landscape trees. He once described the 3 methods for making a better tree for the world. The first method is *to find* a better tree. This method has been exemplified often in the nursery trade with such introductions as Red Sunset® maple and Athena® Classic elm resulting from the fortunate observation of a discerning plantsman. The second method is *to breed* a better tree. Although landscape trees have not been bred nearly to the extent of shrubs and herbaceous plants, there have been many outstanding breeding success stories, none more brilliant than the series of tree-form crape myrtles bred by the late great Dr. Don Egolf during his career at the National Arboretum. The products of his work, including Natchez, Muskogee and many others, extended the use of crape myrtles by improving their cold hardiness, disease resistance and ultimate stature. The third method is *to build* a better tree. This method has been utilized extensively by the fruit industry for centuries. Long ago fruit growers recognized that the best top of a plant, in some cases, might not produce the best root system. They learned to select root systems for different purposes, dwarfing effect on apples and root-rot resistance on grapes, for example. Through the techniques of grafting and budding the growers refined their ability to combine the best rootstock with the best top. Because of the economies of scale in the fruit (continued on next page)

industry, they have far surpassed the ornamental industry in this regard and they have enjoyed the long-lasting benefits on millions of trees for hundreds of years. The landscape tree industry is only beginning to explore the potential of this next frontier.

The choice of a particular method of propagation is not simple. We are fortunate to have many methods at our disposal. At Bold Spring Nursery we will continue to optimize all viable methods of propagation to offer the best possible mix of trees to the landscape trade. Each tree has unique propagation needs and we are on a quest to know each tree and grow each according to its unique needs.



Bold Spring Nursery 

*if you can't
come here*

then come here 



www.boldspring.com

ARBOR DAY IN GEORGIA COMMUNITIES



Communities around Georgia celebrated our state's Arbor Day in February with tree planting ceremonies and dedications. Pictured are GUFCA President Rusty Lee (right) who guided Lilburn's Arbor Day tree plantings, organized by the Lilburn's Woman's Club and Mandy McManus (below right), conservation chair. For this year's Arbor Day celebration, the City of Doraville dedicated a tree in loving memory of Mayor Ray Jenkins. Pictured (top left) are Doraville Arborist Steven Strickland and tree board members Susan Fraysee, Jennifer McLaurin, Jimmy Cushman and future arborist Grayson McLaurin. Rome's Arbor Day (bottom left) was celebrated with the planting of two American Liberty Elms at the confluence of the Oostanaula and Etowah Rivers in downtown Rome, with tree board members, Keep Floyd Beautiful staff, Master Gardeners, Garden Club members, city and county officials and management, and many others present.



Green Infrastructure – A Move Toward Sustainability

By Terri L Turner, AICP, CFM

Innovative green practices have become increasingly popular in recent years, offering not only environmental benefits, but ecological, economic and social benefits, as well. From use on a small scale by an individual homeowner, a medium scale in the construction of a subdivision, to large scale uses in municipal stormwater management, green infrastructure is still developing in the market place and proves to provide long term sustainable benefits.

Green infrastructure has been found to help offset the negative effects of a changing globe – namely catastrophic flooding, extreme temperature records (both high and low temperatures) and other devastating natural hazards.

Recent reports released by the Center for Clean Air Policy Urban Leaders Adaptation Initiative suggest that utilizing green infrastructure into land use planning within communities can have positive effects on community resilience, human health, air quality, energy demand and economic prosperity. The two reports, **The Value of Green Infrastructure for Urban Climate Adaptation** and **Lessons Learned on Local Climate Adaptation from the Urban Leaders Adaptation Initiative**, document the ways in which pioneering communities have developed and applied proactive approaches to increase community resilience by planning for and adapting to emerging climate change impacts. (Center for Clean Air Policy (CCAP) Press Release – February 28, 2011 – Press Contact, Marielle Walter)

Whether required by regulation or part of a sustainable design, practices such as green roofs, tree planting, bioretention and infiltration, permeable pavement, and water harvesting are but a few of the green infrastructure techniques that can be used to reduce our stormwater footprint. The benefits of green infrastructure practices are many, but for the purposes of this article we will only outline a few:

Benefit	Reduces Stormwater Runoff				Reduces Energy Use	Improves Air Quality	Improves Community Livability		Improves Habitat
	Reduces Water Treatment Needs	Im[proves Water Quality	Reduces Grey Infrastructure Needs	Reduces Flooding			Improves Aesthetics	Improves Recreational Opportunities	
Practice									
Green Roofs	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Maybe	●
Tree Planting	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Bioretention & Infiltration	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Permeable Pavement	●	●	●	●	Maybe	●			
Water Harvesting	●	●	●	●	Maybe	Maybe			

(The Value of Green Infrastructure; Center for Neighborhood Technology 2010)

Progressive communities all over the United States such as Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Denver, Colorado are finding that there are huge pluses for the use of green infrastructure. For example, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) has found that for managing its stormwater, flooding and sewer overflow problems in their urban areas, purchase of upstream conservation areas and the use of green infrastructure is cheaper than building capital infrastructure (“pipes and traps”) (*The Value of Green Infrastructure*; Center for Neighborhood Technology 2010). “Green infrastructure is so much more sustainable than capital infrastructure”, states Dave Fowler of the MMSD. “While it will never completely replace capital infrastructure, it goes a long way in reducing the overall costs on operation and maintenance.”

“We have seen other positive effects, as well,” states Fowler. “In urban areas, it encourages the property owners to become a stakeholder in the process. When they find out the money that can be saved, they want to be a part of it.”

Another green infrastructure proponent is the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District (UDFCD) of Denver, Colorado. The UDFCD was created in 1969 to assist local governments in the Denver Metropolitan Area with multijurisdictional drainage and flood control problems. The UDFCD has found the Natural and Beneficial Functions (NBF) of many of their projects, such as trail corridors, parks, recreation, wildlife habitat, flood storage, and groundwater recharge areas can serve as amenities to adjacent neighborhoods and entire communities. “We recognize that nature can protect us from the extremes of nature. Stream corridors are truly community treasures”, states David Mallory of UDFCD.

Probably the easiest, the least costly, and one of the most long term sustainable green infrastructure initiatives, is the planting of trees. Trees, especially as part of a regional or urban green ecosystem, help create a better quality of life and are cost-effective, sustainable and environmentally friendly. Urban forests conserve natural ecosystems and sustain clean air and water. Urban forests also reduce stormwater runoff, cool the urban heat island effect, reduce energy consumption, reduce air pollution, and provide wildlife habitat. Communities, through wise land use practices, can offset the ecological impact of land development by utilizing the urban forest's natural capacity to mitigate negative environmental impacts. Urban forests also provide social and health benefits for individuals through outdoor recreation, as well as economic benefits for communities in increased land values for properties surrounding these green areas. (*Planning the Urban Forest*, James Schwab, APA Planning Advisory Service, 2009)

Green infrastructure is a great flood fighting mechanism, as well. Green infrastructure reduces stormwater runoff volumes and reduces peak flows by utilizing the natural retention and absorption capabilities of vegetation and soils. By increasing the amount of pervious ground cover, green infrastructure techniques increase stormwater infiltration rates, thereby reducing the volume of runoff entering our combined or separate sewer systems, and ultimately our lakes, rivers, and streams. Green infrastructure can also improve the rate at which our groundwater aquifers are “recharged” or replenished, which, in turn, increases the base flow in our rivers and streams. This in turn, can boost the supply of drinking water for private and public uses. (US Environmental Protection Agency, *Managing Wet Weather with Green Infrastructure*, http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program_id=298)

Statisticians tell us that the built environment will increase by an astounding 50% in the next 15 years and that many of those structures will be built in high risk areas. Additionally, at full build out, flood heights are projected to increase dramatically, while sea level rise is expected to continue. As we move into the next decade, the gatekeepers of our natural environment will be met with challenges like they have never witnessed before. At the same time, we, the users of our natural environment, will be called on, to become better stewards of our natural resources. The use of green infrastructure just makes good common sense. Hopefully, if we all work together to promote sustainability and resiliency, by the use of green infrastructure, we will find a green legacy in our footprints and leave our planet a little better off than how we found it.

The author, Terri L Turner, AICP, CFM is Assistant Zoning and Development Administrator for the Augusta-Richmond County Planning Commission in Augusta, Georgia. Terri is the past Chair of the Georgia Association of Floodplain Management (GAFM), the current Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) Region 4 Director, the current ASFPM No Adverse Impact (NAI) Committee Co-Chair and was awarded the 2010 ASFPM Local Floodplain Manager of the Year Award. Terri also serves as the Deputy Executive Director of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Association (NHMA).

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May 10, 6-9 p.m. Don't miss the fun!
See page 1 for details.

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