

Web Site Showcases East Bay Low-Impact Development Protecting Watersheds

Most of the pollution flowing to San Francisco Bay and Bay Area creeks today comes from urban runoff – the toxic soup of gasoline and oil, heavy metals, pesticides, soaps and more that washes from city surfaces. Urban “hardscape” also causes the flash-flood-like storm flows and too warm, too low summer flows that make creeks destructive to property and lethal to wildlife.

Friends of Five Creeks has assembled a web site, www.bluegreenbldg.org, showcasing more than 50 East Bay projects that seek to minimize urban-runoff pollution and its harmful effects of flooding, erosion, incision, and lowering of the water table. The projects shown include permeable paving, planters that filter out pollutants, shallow swales and sunken gardens that let rain soak into soil, engineered ponds, and green roofs. They range from malls, condominiums, office complexes, roads, and parks to traditional subdivisions, senior and low-income housing, and small home gardens.

Please take a look at the www.bluegreenbldg.org. If you are interested in healthy watersheds, clean creeks and Bay, or ecologically sound cities, please consider the potential and importance of projects like those shown. (As this is written, no comparable information exists for other areas of the Bay.) If you have a web site that promotes healthy watersheds or ecologically sound cities, please link to this site. Above all, think about the possibilities for your area and community, and how you can promote low-impact development and retrofits that protect or even restore our environment.

The web site is an ongoing effort. New projects will be added as they are completed. Methods will change – there is much to learn as techniques are tested in our local soils, vegetation, and climate. We will link to technical information and monitoring reports as they become available.

If you would like more information, please contact f5creeks@aol.com. The pictures and information on www.bluegreenbldg.org are expressly not copyright and may be used freely. Friends of Five Creeks will give slide presentations on this topic and welcomes suggestions for projects and links that should be added.