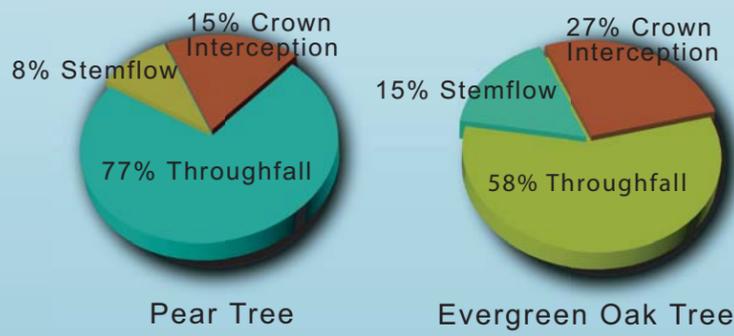
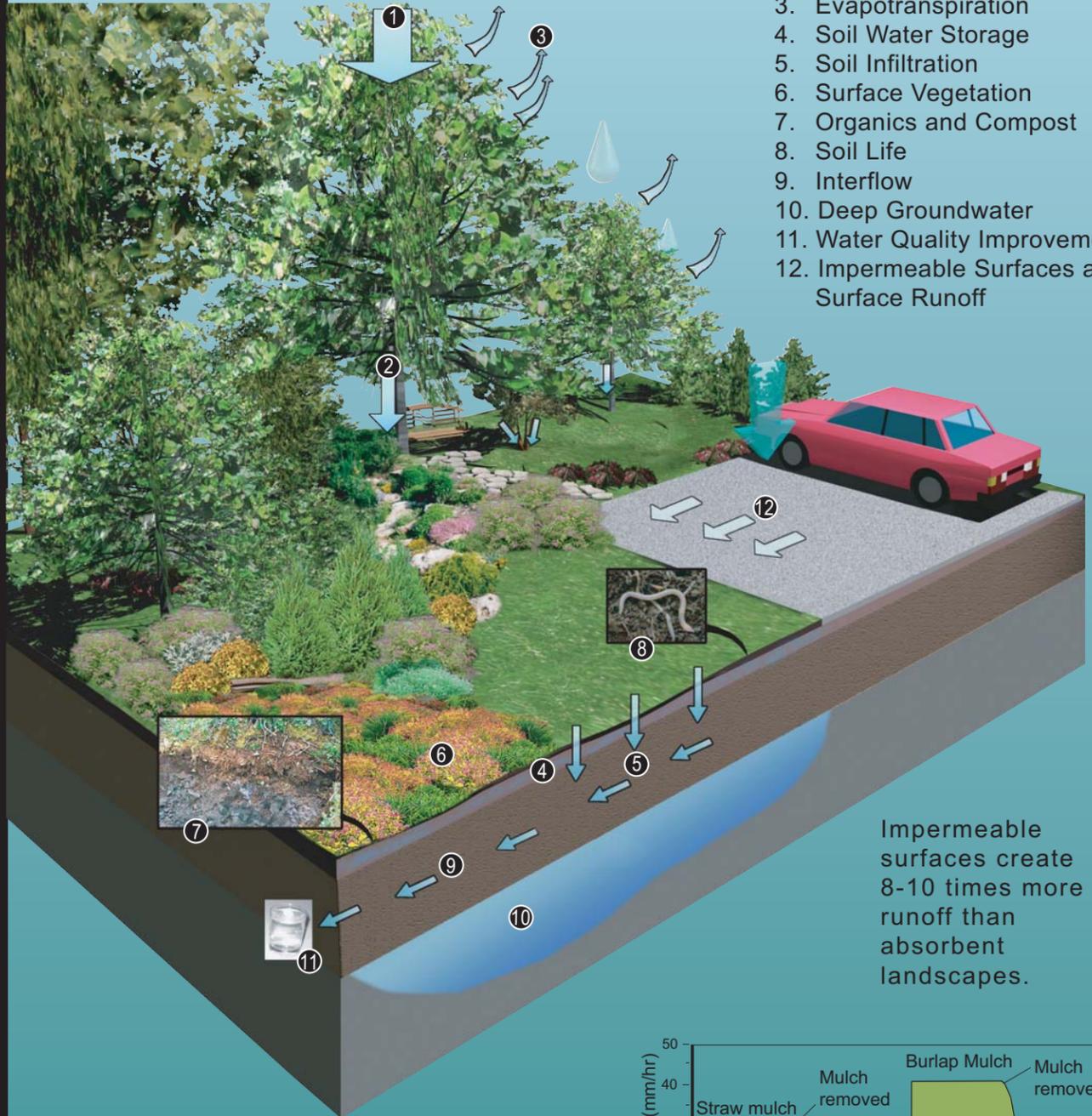


DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Maximize the area of absorbent landscape – either existing or constructed – on the site. Conserve as much existing vegetation and undisturbed soil as possible.
- Minimize impervious area by using multi-storey buildings, narrower roads, minimum parking, larger landscape areas, green roof, and pervious paving.
- Disconnect impervious areas from the storm sewer system, having them drain to absorbent landscape.
- Design absorbent landscape areas as dished areas that temporarily store stormwater and allow it to soak in, with overflow for large rain events to the storm drain system.
- Maximize the vegetation canopy cover over the site. Multi-layered evergreens are ideal, but deciduous cover is also beneficial for stormwater management.
- Ensure adequate growing medium depth for both horticultural and stormwater needs – a minimum 150mm for lawn areas, and 450mm depth for shrub/tree areas. In wetter climates with till subsoils, a minimum depth of 300mm for lawn is required to store 60mm of rainfall.
- Cultivate compost into surface soils to create minimum 8% organic matter for lawns, and 15% for planting beds.
- To avoid surface crusting and maintain surface permeability, install vegetative (grass, groundcovers, shrubs, trees) or organic cover (mulch, straw, wood fibre) as early as possible in the construction process, and prior to winter storms.
- Provide effective erosion control during construction, including erosion control on upstream sites that may flow into the absorbent landscape.



Winter tree canopies intercept 15% to 27% of rainfall.



In most natural wooded conditions in the GVRD, 90% of rainfall volume never becomes runoff, but is either soaked into the soils or evaporates / transpires. Trees, shrubs, grasses, surface organic matter, and soils all play a role.

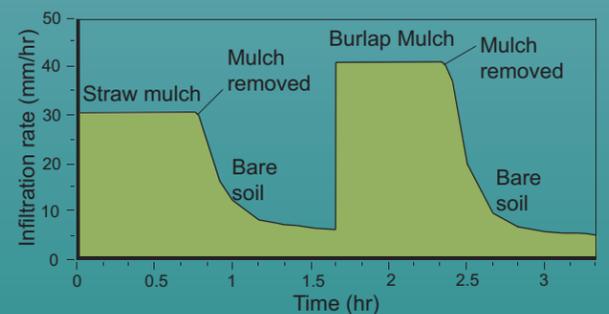
Variables of **Absorbent Landscape**

1. Crown Interception
2. Throughfall and Stemflow
3. Evapotranspiration
4. Soil Water Storage
5. Soil Infiltration
6. Surface Vegetation
7. Organics and Compost
8. Soil Life
9. Interflow
10. Deep Groundwater
11. Water Quality Improvement
12. Impermeable Surfaces and Surface Runoff

Impermeable surfaces create 8-10 times more runoff than absorbent landscapes.

Organic matter and soil micro-organisms are vital to maintaining soil infiltration rates.

Rainfall storage in soil is 7% to 18% of soil volume.



Influence of surface cover on infiltration rate of sandy loam

Absorbent Landscapes



Greater Vancouver Regional District

Stormwater Source Control Design Guidelines 2005



Detailed design guidelines can be found in the Design Guidelines 2005 report, available at www.gvrd.bc.ca



Compost Demonstration at UniverCity
At SFU's community development, a 75mm compost layer over absorbent soils has demonstrated effectiveness in erosion control and runoff interception. It has also supported rapid vegetation establishment.