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To: Susan Boynton
Subject: The Stormwater Report: A retrospective on stormwater in 2016
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Stormwater Report

Storm Feature

A retrospective on stormwater in 2016

By Chris French

The first few months of every year seem to encourage stepping back to reflect upon the opportunities and changes that the last year brought. This time of reflection helps us put into context those changes and what they might mean moving forward.

For the stormwater sector, 2016 and early 2017 offered many changes in regulations. These changes will have a lasting effect in how the sector implements its work to protect and improve the water environment.

Some of these changes occurred at the national level; others occurred within the states (but have potential effects beyond the states in which they occurred).

This brief analysis recaps some of the most notable regulatory updates and provides the context of what they could mean for the future. **Read more.**

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Storm News

Key stormwater detention site construction to begin at former Houston golf course

The City of Houston, Texas, and the Harris County Flood Control District (HCFD; Houston) are teeing up to build 10 stormwater detention basins on the site of the now-defunct Inwood Forest Golf Course. Once completed, officials expect the network of basins to detain more than 1.3 billion L (350 million gal) of stormwater.

The project responds to a need for effective flood control measures in the White Oak Bayou watershed, highlighted by a severe storm in mid-April of last year. The storm dropped almost 457 mm (18 in.) of rain across the Houston metro area in a single day. The flooding caused the death of eight people; necessitated the rescue of more than 1800 residents from high water; and damaged more than 1000 homes, apartments, and businesses. **Read more**

Billions spent worldwide to improve “natural” green infrastructure

The term green infrastructure generally refers to manmade structures that mimic the absorptive water control properties of nature. But more and more engineers, academics, and regulators are recognizing that the term also includes the very forests, meadows, and wetlands that inspire bioswales, porous hardscapes, and rain gardens.

Last September, Governor Jerry Brown of California introduced legislation that acknowledges these landscapes as worthy targets of water infrastructure funding. In the preceding years, legislators in Lima, Peru, passed a similar resolution to funnel about $112 million from the city’s water fees into natural watershed restoration projects. Soon afterwards, lawmakers implemented Lima’s successful approach to managing stormwater through natural landscape enrichment at the national level. **Read more**

Trinity River floodplain set to become one of nation’s largest and greenest urban parks

Following a $50 million donation from the widow of late Texas philanthropist Harold Simmons last October, the Trinity Park Conservancy (Dallas) soon will break ground on the largest civic project in the history of Dallas — a “Nature District” along the Trinity River Corridor roughly eleven times larger than Manhattan’s Central Park.

Harold Simmons Park will cover 115 ha (285 ac) of the Trinity River floodplain, representing the first foray into the ambitious Trinity River Corridor Project. The installation will employ innovative flood management techniques to use overflow from the Trinity River as a resource. Planners expect construction to wrap up by 2021. **Read more**

Storm Events

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund: Flexible Funding for the Urban Tree Canopy
March 29
1:30-3 pm EDT
No-charge Webcast

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Sept. 30-Oct. 4
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StormWater Management

Taking the high road for water quality

Source control is a topic of great interest in the stormwater sector, in part due to the cost-effective nature of this approach — as the old adage goes, “an ounce of pollution prevention is worth of pound of pollution treatment.” Considering the significant and growing funding gap in the stormwater sector, practices that are cost-effective are critical, and will continue to be so in the future.

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