Accumulated impacts of multi-faceted urban greening projects: is the whole greater than the sum of the parts? Hamid Karimi, District Department of the Environment

The District Department of the Environment funds, manages and implements various Low Impact Development practices to improve the water quality of local waterbodies. Although the budget and regulatory authority comes from water quality mandates, ancillary habitat benefits are expected. These practices were initially constructed as demonstration projects to showcase the technology and learn from implementation. Currently, there are three major policy actions that will make these actions mainstream and greatly expand their application.

- Conversion of stormwater fee to be based upon impervious area
- DC Green Building Act mandates LEED silver ranking for all buildings over 10,000 ft.
- Stormwater regulations require LID as the first option for SW treatment. Waiver requires proof that this is not possible.

Actions to date
78 green roofs with approx. coverage of 350,000 sq. ft.
520 LIDs approved through 2008
33 bayscaping installations
20 raingardens installed

Discussion: Application of LID practices will become widespread in the District within the next decade. The stormwater benefits have been well researched however, the benefits as habitat for pollinators and birds is less understood. It is expected that as the built city environment is laced with more and more vegetated practices, there will be additional value to these areas. Research in these areas is necessary to understand the potential heat island reduction, habitat benefits, trash reduction, and improved quality of life.