

## **WATER IN THE LANDSCAPE**

### **APLD Guidelines for Designing Landscapes that Respect Water Resources**

The APLD is committed to the principle of sustainability as the foundation for our landscape design practice. We recognize water is an invaluable natural resource and view the appropriate management of this resource as fundamental to sustainable design.

We aim to preserve, conserve and regenerate the water resources available to us as landscape designers by harvesting, distributing, using, and recycling this resource appropriately.

#### **Therefore as designers, we will:**

- Design to protect and maintain the supply of water existing within the bounds of our client's property;
- Maintain existing drainage patterns, utilize stormwater runoff where it falls, maintain porosity throughout the landscape;
- Collect and Conserve water generated within the landscape;
- Sustain and preferably enhance the filtration of water in the landscape;
- Consider water in conjunction with building and maintaining healthy soil;
- Fully understand the biological habitat in which we are designing;
- Provide and enhance water sources for native wildlife populations;
- Be responsible for maintaining and enhancing the collective ecosystem and the quality of the receiving water system downstream;
- Endorse and collaborate, both at the international and local levels, with like-minded organizations or initiatives, established to protect and conserve our natural resources – US Environmental Protection Agency's Greenscapes Alliance, the Sustainable Sites Initiative, California's River-Friendly Landscape Guidelines, Blue Thumb in MN, etc.

**In order to achieve these objectives, we will:**

- Review and consider carefully the site options available, using and working with existing elements and conditions, e.g., poor drainage, seasonal standing water, sandy porous soils, site grade whenever feasible;
- Specify plants that require less water and/or fit the existing drainage conditions;
- Protect soil from erosion and plan, with intent, for erosion control;
- Utilize rain gardens, green roofs, French drains, proper hardscape design, and other techniques to maximize water absorption in the landscape;
- Minimize the size of hardscape elements and use the most permeable materials possible to reduce run-off and to maximize the soil absorption of water;
- Reduce the use of water-intensive features such as extensive annual beds and traditional turfgrass lawns;
- Specify efficient irrigation systems that employ deep or subsurface delivery, low volume and/or low flow methods, and sensors and controllers;
- Eliminate or reduce to a minimum potable water use in the landscape and specify alternative methods of providing irrigation – the use of ‘gray water’, stored rain water sources, etc.;
- Consider water efficient green roofs and green walls as elements in the landscape when feasible;
- Educate clients in methods of appropriate watering and related techniques, e.g., the use of mulch, the concept of watering deeply / less often and early day, etc.;
- Encourage reducing the size of the turfgrass lawn, the use of low maintenance turf varieties and the use of non-turf alternatives when possible.
- Advocate responsible lawn care and educate clients on effective lawn maintenance techniques – less frequent mowing, use of mulching blades, maintaining a taller lawn height, maintaining sharp blades, etc.