



# **GWINNETT COUNTY**

# **STORMWATER CREDITS MANUAL**

**2020 EDITION**

---



# CONTENTS

<b>DEFINITIONS</b> .....	III
1. <b>USE OF MANUAL</b> .....	1
2. <b>OVERVIEW</b> .....	2
2.1 Goals .....	3
2.2 Eligible Customers .....	4
3. <b>CREDIT CATEGORIES</b> .....	5
4. <b>STORMWATER BMPs</b> .....	6
4.1 Water Quality Performance Criteria .....	6
4.2 Properties with Multiple Development Permits .....	7
4.3 Retrofitting Stormwater BMPs .....	8
5. <b>WATERSHED STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES</b> .....	9
5.1 Public Participation .....	9
5.2 County-Approved Training Programs.....	10
5.3 Conservation Easements .....	11
5.4 Conservation Use Valuation Assessment (CUVA) Properties .....	13
5.5 Low Impact Parcels.....	13
5.6 Rain Barrels .....	14
5.7 Automatic Sprinkler Sensors .....	14
5.8 Residential Rain Gardens .....	14
5.9 Farmland Deep Tillage .....	15
5.10 Fencing Livestock Out of Stream .....	15
5.11 Stream Restoration/Stream Bank Stabilization .....	15
5.12 Stream Buffers that Exceed Local Standards.....	17
5.13 Watershed Improvement Project Participation .....	17
5.14 Direct Discharges.....	18
5.15 Septic Tank Maintenance .....	18

5.16 Connection to Sanitary Sewers .....	18
5.17 Non-Residential School Education.....	19
<b>6. CREDIT APPLICATION .....</b>	<b>22</b>
6.1 Timing of Application Review.....	22
6.2 Appeals .....	23
6.3 Non-Residential School Education Application Process .....	23
<b>7. CREDIT RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>8. CHANGE OF PROPERTY OWNERSHIP .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>9. ONLINE INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>10. CREDIT APPLICATION EXAMPLES.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>APPENDIX A. STORMWATER CREDIT APPLICATION FORM .....</b>	<b>A-1</b>
<b>APPENDIX B. STORMWATER CREDIT REQUEST PROCESS.....</b>	<b>B-1</b>
<b>APPENDIX C. STORMWATER BMP DOCUMENTATION.....</b>	<b>C-1</b>
<b>APPENDIX D. NON-RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL WATERSHED EDUCATION APPLICATION FORM.....</b>	<b>D-1</b>
<b>APPENDIX E. CREDIT APPLICATION EXAMPLES .....</b>	<b>E-1</b>

# DEFINITIONS

**Applicant** – A property owner or a public agency or public or private utility, which drains to a drainage way owned, operated or maintained by Gwinnett County. This definition could also apply to any person or entity designated or named in writing by the property or easement owner to be the applicant, in any application for a development proposal, permit or approval.

**Appeal** – The process that allows property owners the opportunity to challenge their service fee amounts, their allowed credits and other decisions made by the Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources (DWR) staff.

**Buffer** – The area of land immediately adjacent to the banks of state waters in its natural state of vegetation, which facilitate the protection of water quality and aquatic habitat.

**Channel Protection Credit** – A credit given to property owners who provide protection of stream channels from bank and bed erosion and degradation using a stormwater BMP to detain or retain stormwater runoff.

**Cistern** – a container capable of storing stormwater runoff typically connected to a roof downspout.

**Conservation Easement** – A voluntary, legally binding agreement that limits certain types of uses or prevents development from taking place on a property, or a portion thereof, now and in the future, while protecting the property's ecological or open-space values.

**Constructed Channel** – A channel or ditch constructed to convey surface water; also includes reconstructed natural channels.

**Conveyance** – A mechanism for transporting water from one point to another, including but not limited to pipes, ditches and channels.

**Conveyance System** – See Private Stormwater Management Systems and Facilities and Public Stormwater Management Systems and Facilities.

**County Standards** – The Gwinnett County ordinances that govern water quality including but not limited to the Development Regulations, the Floodplain Management Ordinance, the Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance, the Illicit Discharge and Illegal Connection Ordinance, the Stream Buffer Protection Ordinance, the Stream Buffer Mitigation Bank Ordinance, the Zoning Resolution, the Gwinnett County Stormwater Management Manual, and all procedures, rules, and policies pertaining thereto as these may be updated or amended from time to time.

**Credit** – A conditional reduction allowed against the stormwater service fee charged to an individual parcel based upon the technical requirements and the design and performance standards contained in the permitting guidance document.

**Culvert** – A pipe or concrete box structure, which drains open channels, swales or ditches under a roadway or embankment typically with no catch basins or manholes along its length.

**Customer** – All persons, parcels, and entities served by the utility's acquisition, management, maintenance, extension, and improvement of the public stormwater management systems and facilities and regulation of public and private stormwater

systems, facilities, and activities related thereto, and persons, parcels, and entities which will ultimately be served or benefited as a result of the stormwater management program.

**Detention** – The release of surface and stormwater runoff from the site at a slower rate than is collected by the drainage facility system, the difference being held in temporary storage. (Detention comes from the root word “detain” meaning to slow or delay.)

**Detention Facility** – A facility, by means of a single control point, which provides temporary storage of stormwater runoff in ponds, parking lots, depressed areas, rooftops, buried underground vaults or tanks, etc., for future release, and is used to delay and attenuate flow.

**Developed Land** – All parcels not deemed as undeveloped land as defined herein.

**Development** – New construction activity that requires a permit or approval inspection to complete. This includes all public and private development activities.

**Direct Discharge** – Unmanaged discharge from a property, facility, or proposed project to a receiving water that does not flow through any stormwater facility managed by Gwinnett County.

**Director** – The director of the Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources or designee.

**Dry Extended Detention Ponds** – Stormwater control ponds that do not have a standing pool of water but are dry between storm events. Extended detention ponds are designed to have detention per the water quality requirements.

**Easement** – A legal right to use a parcel of land for a particular purpose. It does not include fee ownership but it may restrict the owner’s use of the land.

**Engineering Review** – An evaluation by the Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources engineering staff to review applications for stormwater credit.

**Grassed Swales** – Concave, vegetated conveyance systems that can improve water quality through infiltration and filtering; systems incorporate modified geometry and other design features to use the swale to treat and convey stormwater runoff.

**Impervious Surface** – Any paved, hardened or structural surfaces, including but not limited to buildings, dams, decks, driveways, parking areas, patios, streets, swimming pools, tennis courts, walkways or other structures which prevent or impede the infiltration of stormwater into the soil.

**Infiltration Trench** – A long, narrow trench with no outlet that receives stormwater runoff, stores the runoff, and allows it to infiltrate through the bottom and into the soil.

**Low Impact Parcel** – A land parcel that has reduced land disturbance and minimal impervious surfaces (less than 7%) and manages stormwater runoff on-site.

**National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)** – A provision of the Clean Water Act which prohibits the discharge of pollutants into waters of the United States unless a special permit is issued by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), or delegated to a state or tribal government on Indian Lands. For the purposes of this credit manual, the NPDES permit refers to stormwater only.

**Native Vegetation** – Plants that are adapted to and occur naturally in Gwinnett County.

**Natural Channel** – A channel which has occurred naturally due to the flow of surface waters or a channel that, although originally constructed by human activity, has taken on the appearance of a natural channel including a stable route and biological community.

**Non-Native Vegetation** – Plant life that is often invasive and affects habitat and food supply for native animal, plant, and fish species.

**Oil/Grit Separators** – Systems designed to remove trash, debris, and some amount of sediment, oil and grease from stormwater runoff.

**Owner** – A person having a majority fee simple interest in real property, or a majority interest through any other form of real property ownership. (from Development Ordinance)

**Parcel** – A designated parcel, tract, or area of land established by plat, subdivision, or as otherwise permitted by law, to be separately owned, used, developed, or built upon.

**Peak Flow** – The highest flow rate of a stream during or following a rainfall event. It is usually related to a specific event recurrence interval (e.g. a 1 in 25-year runoff event).

**Pervious** – Permeable or having pores or openings that permit liquids to pass through.

**Private Stormwater Management Systems and Facilities** – Natural and manmade channels, swales, ditches, rivers, streams, creeks, branches, reservoirs, ponds, drainageways, inlets, catch

basins, pipes, headwalls, storm drains, lakes and other physical works, properties and improvements which transfer, control, convey or otherwise influence the movement of stormwater runoff or water quality, which are not public.

**Public Stormwater Management System and Facilities (or Gwinnett County's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System)** – Natural and manmade channels, swales, ditches, rivers, streams, creeks, branches, reservoirs, ponds, drainageways, inlets, catch basins, pipes, headwalls, storm drains, curbs and gutters, lakes and other physical works, properties and improvements which transfer, control, convey or otherwise influence either the movement of stormwater runoff or water quality, which are either owned by the County or over which the County has accepted an offer of dedication of an easement or other legally binding permanent right of use for stormwater drainage, and for which the County has the obligation of maintenance for stormwater drainage purposes. Bridges or multi-barreled culverts with a combined span of 20 feet or more are not part of the system managed by the Utility.

**Qualified Professionals** – Persons with the knowledge, education and technical licenses to design stormwater management facilities. Examples include engineers and landscape architects licensed in the State of Georgia.

**Rain Barrels** – Containers with a minimum capacity of 50 gallons that collect stormwater and are typically located under roof downspouts.

**Rain Gardens** – Depressions in the landscape, planted with native vegetation, that collect stormwater runoff and allow it to soak slowly into the ground.

**Retention** – The process of collecting and holding surface and stormwater runoff with no surface outflow. (Retention comes from the root word “retain” meaning to hold.)

**Retention Facility** – Any type of drainage facility designed either to hold water for a considerable length of time and then release it by evaporation, plant transpiration, and/or infiltration into the ground.

**Sand Filter** – A basic water treatment device that uses sand or gravel to remove pollutants from stormwater. As water moves through the device, impurities become attached to the rough edges of the sand and gravel particles.

**Sediment** – The loose particles of organic or inorganic material that suspend in a body of water and eventually settle to the bottom of the body of water.

**Small Impoundments** – Waters accumulated in reservoirs that do not occur naturally in the landscape.

**Stabilization** – The process of establishing an enduring soil cover of vegetation by the installation of temporary or permanent structures for the purpose of reducing to a minimum the erosion process and the resultant transport of sediment by wind, water, ice or gravity.

**Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs)** – Practices which provide the best available and reasonable physical, structural, managerial, or behavioral activity to reduce or eliminate pollutants loads and/or concentrations leaving the site. BMPs can be structural (constructed) such as detention ponds, rainwater harvesting (cisterns), bioretention, etc., or non-structural such as educational outreach programs.

**Stormwater** – Stormwater runoff, snow melt runoff, and surface runoff and drainage.

**Stormwater Management Services** – Address the quality and the quantity of stormwater runoff and include all services provided by the County which relate to the:

Transfer, control, conveyance or movement of stormwater runoff through the unincorporated portions of the county, or through any city which has entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the County pursuant to the Gwinnett County Stormwater Utility Ordinance;

Operation, maintenance, repair, enhancement and replacement of existing public stormwater management systems and facilities;

Planning, development, design and construction of additional stormwater management and facilities to meet current and anticipated needs;

Regulation of the use of stormwater management services or of stormwater management systems and facilities;

Education of the public as to stormwater issues;

Development plan review to require compliance with County standards;

Inspection for water quantity and water quality to require compliance with County standards;

Monitoring for water quantity and water quality to determine compliance with County standards, State water quality standards and stormwater management programs; and

Other services as the director may deem appropriate.

**Stormwater Service Fees** – The periodic service charge imposed by the County to a parcel of developed land pursuant to the Gwinnett County Stormwater Utility Ordinance for providing the stormwater management services and stormwater management systems and facilities, which fees shall be used only for the purpose of funding the Gwinnett County stormwater utility's cost of providing stormwater management services and stormwater management systems and facilities. Stormwater service fees shall be based on the relative contribution of each parcel to the demand for stormwater management services, shall be structured so as to be fair and reasonable and shall bear a substantial relationship to the cost of providing stormwater management services and stormwater management systems and facilities. The cost of operating expenses, capital investments and reserve accounts may be included in the stormwater service fees.

**Streambank** – The confining cut of a stream channel.

**Streambank Stabilization** – The repair of unstable streambank utilizing structural or bioengineering practices.

**Swale** – A shallow drainage conveyance with relatively gentle side slopes, generally with flow depths less than one foot.

**Total Suspended Solids (TSS)** – Small particulates that remain suspended in the water, such as silt and waste.

**TSS Removal Efficiencies** – The percent of total suspended solids that enters a system that is removed from the total suspended solids in the system.

**Undeveloped Land** – A parcel that has less than one hundred (100) square feet of impervious surface.

**Vegetated Filter Strips** – Natural or landscaped areas of vegetation designed to accept non- channelized runoff from developed areas.

**Water Quality** – The chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of the State's water resources.

**Water Quantity** – The volume of runoff which is not entirely confined and retained completely upon a parcel.

**Watershed** – The geographic region which drains toward a central collector such as a stream, river or lake. Large watersheds may be composed of several smaller "sub-watersheds," each of which contributes runoff to different locations that ultimately combine at a common delivery point.

**Wet Extended Detention Ponds** – A stormwater control pond that maintains a permanent pool of water typically equal to a portion of stormwater runoff after a storm and effectively reduces downstream peak flows and removes pollutants.

# 1. USE OF MANUAL

Stormwater credits are offered as an incentive to property owners for being good stewards of the Gwinnett County stormwater resources. The benefit to the property owner is a reduction in the stormwater utility bill. The Credits Manual provides guidance on stormwater credit procedures to property owners and the land development, design professionals, and contracting communities of Gwinnett County. The manual:

- Gives an overview on the Gwinnett county stormwater utility and stormwater credits program
- Describes credits available for Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Watershed Stewardship practices
- Describes the application process, timing of application review, and appeals process
- Shows examples of how stormwater credit is calculated and applied to a property's stormwater utility bill

Property owners should note that local codes (such as municipal and homeowners' associations' regulations), restrictions and/or ordinances may not allow the installation of some types of stormwater BMPs. Before proceeding with design or installation of any BMP, property owners should check to make certain that their actions will not violate any local requirements.

Periodically, modifications are made to the Gwinnett County Stormwater Credits program and this manual, due to changes in stormwater regulations, emerging stormwater treatment technology, and Gwinnett County's goals and objectives. In some instances, changes to the manual may cause a property owner to be ineligible for credits they were once receiving under a previous version. In these cases, Gwinnett County DWR may continue to grant credits to the property owner depending upon the particular situation.

Property owners with questions about the applicability of credits to their particular situation or about changes from previous versions of this manual may contact a customer service representative at 678.376.7193 x4.

## 2. OVERVIEW

As development occurs, the amount of stormwater runoff increases since there is less vegetated area to soak up rainfall. This leads to an increased risk of flooding and erosion due to the higher volume and velocity of stormwater runoff. The additional sediment from construction activities and pollutants (such as oil from driveways & roadways and fertilizers from lawns) can impair water quality, destroying fish habitats and disrupt the natural ecology of streams and rivers.

Gwinnett County has implemented a stormwater utility in order to provide support for major stormwater activities such as:

- replacing stormwater pipes,
- reducing flooding,
- fulfilling regulatory requirements, and
- reducing pollution carried by stormwater runoff to local waterways.

The stormwater utility is funded using proceeds from a stormwater fee. These fees are based on the amount of impervious area (hard surfaces, buildings, parking lots, concrete patios and swimming pool decks, etc.) on each property. The impervious area is calculated from aerial photography obtained in February of the year prior to the billing.

Gwinnett County has additional information concerning the utility and its mission on the website at [www.gwinnettstormwater.com](http://www.gwinnettstormwater.com). Refer to the Stormwater Utility Fee and Credits link.

The Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources (DWR) has implemented a Stormwater Credits Program to provide incentives to homeowners, business owners, developers, designers, builders, municipal officials and other property owners within the community.

In exchange for performing certain activities that improve water quality and afford other stormwater cost savings for the Gwinnett County DWR, property owners residing in jurisdictions covered under the stormwater utility can reduce their stormwater fees. The ultimate success of the program will be to encourage better site design and citizen action that:

- Diminishes environmental impact;
- Reduces or eliminates localized and downstream flooding;
- Provides better stormwater management education;
- Reduces the need for engineered stormwater quality or quantity improvements;
- Encourages making improvements to water quality.

### PURPOSE OF CREDITS

- Provide an incentive to Gwinnett County property owners to be good stewards of stormwater resources by reducing their stormwater fee.
- Reduce costs to Gwinnett County

Activities that receive stormwater credits are tied directly to or have a direct impact on those elements managed and supported by the Stormwater Utility. These elements include:

- Private and public stormwater conveyance systems. Stormwater conveyance systems include streams, channels, pipe systems and similar facilities.
- Private and public stormwater BMPs. BMPs are effective, practical, structural or non-structural methods which prevent or reduce the movement of sediment (particulate matter transported by water), nutrients which promote abnormally high organic growth, pesticides, and other pollutants from the land to surface or ground water. An example of a structural stormwater BMP is an extended detention basin which temporarily holds runoff and releases it at a slower rate. One example of a non-structural BMP is the preservation of stream buffers which filter runoff.
- Stream stability and ecosystem health. Activities that will improve water quality, increase awareness through education, and support stream stability and healthy stream ecosystems.
- Stormwater permitting requirements. Permitting requirements, such as those within the community's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit (for example: the requirement for public education and outreach).
- Other similar programs or practices.

Credited activities help protect the environment by reducing the amount of water and pollution reaching our streams.

## 2.1 Goals

The Credit Program was developed with the goals that it:

- Will not harm the financial integrity of the Stormwater Utility;
- Will provide an incentive to Gwinnett County property owners for being good stewards of stormwater resources;
- Will raise awareness of stormwater quantity and quality issues;
- Will produce environmental benefits;
- Will have a regulatory and technical basis;
- Will be easy to administer and maintain;
- Will provide a benefit to the Stormwater Utility greater than the cost to administer;
- Will receive public support and involvement; and
- Will have a proven track record based on community experience in other parts of the country.

Property owners can earn credits by performing activities that slow stormwater runoff down and keep it on site.

The result is that the entire community benefits from these enhancements or improvements to the stormwater system through the reduction in flooding and a cleaner water system.

All properties with >100 square foot of impervious area must pay a stormwater service fee.

## 2.2 Eligible Customers

The credit program has been developed for all customers, including residential property owners. Residential property owners in jurisdictions covered by the stormwater utility are eligible to apply for credits up to 40% of the property utility bill.

Non-residential property owners typically have very large impervious areas (hard surfaces, buildings, parking lots, etc.). As a result, there is a much greater opportunity and financial incentive for non-residential property owners to positively impact the stormwater system. Non-residential property owners in jurisdictions covered by the stormwater utility are eligible to apply for credits up to 40% of the property utility bill.

All property owners who pay the stormwater service fee can earn credits.

### 3. CREDIT CATEGORIES

Credits are offered in one or both of the following two categories:

- **Stormwater BMPs** – awarded to property owners with structural stormwater BMPs designed to provide water quality benefit, provide channel protection, and/or reduce peak flows. The maximum allowable credit for stormwater BMPs is 30% (10% for water quality, 10% for channel protection, and 10% for reducing peak flows).
- **Watershed Stewardship** – awarded to property owners who make efforts to learn about or increase public awareness about watershed management or take action to protect the watershed. The maximum allowable credit is 40%.

Single-family residential property owners will find the Watershed Stewardship credits most applicable to their property. Non-residential properties are most likely to have Stormwater BMPs. Property owners can apply for credits from one or both of the categories listed above by completing the [Stormwater Service Fee – Credit Application Form \(Appendix A\)](#) and providing supporting documentation.

The total allowable credit for any property is 40%. This amount was established under the ordinance that created the Stormwater Utility in November 2005. It is based on the concept that even if all property owners were able to mitigate the impacts of impervious surfaces on their property, the DWR would still have to maintain the drainage system associated with roads for large rainfall events. The majority of the system that the DWR maintains is associated with roads. Allowing property owners to apply for credits up to 40% of their utility bill is consistent with standards throughout the country.

#### 2 CREDIT CATEGORIES

- Stormwater BMPs
- Watershed Stewardship

Total allowable credit is 40%.  
Credits from categories can be combined.

[Figures B-1 through B-3 in Appendix B](#) illustrate the credit approval process when requesting Stormwater BMP credits and/or Watershed Stewardship credits. The process varies depending upon whether the applicant is requesting Stormwater BMP credits or Watershed Stewardship credits, and if the property is under development or was previously developed. [Section 6](#) and [Section 7](#) provide additional guidance on the credit application process and credit renewal requirements.

# 4. STORMWATER BMPs

Stormwater BMP credits are awarded to properties with Stormwater BMPs designed to provide one or a combination of three functions: water quality (includes runoff reduction), channel protection, and/or peak flow reduction. The performance criteria that must be achieved to receive credit for each of these functions are described below:

- **Water Quality** – A 10% credit is awarded based on compliance with the water quality performance criteria used when the property was developed. Water quality performance criteria is discussed in subsequent sections and includes stormwater management through runoff reduction.
- **Channel Protection** – A 10% credit is awarded to property owners with Stormwater BMPs designed to protect stream channels from bank and bed erosion and degradation by providing extended detention of the 1-year, 24-hour storm event released over a period of 24 hours.
- **Overbank Flood Protection (Peak Flow Reduction)** – A 10% credit is awarded to property owners with Stormwater BMPs that control the post-development peak discharge to the pre-development rate for the 2-year through the 25-year, 24-hour storms.

The maximum allowable Stormwater BMP credit for an individual property is 30%.

## 4.1 Water Quality Performance Criteria

The water quality credit amount is evaluated based on the performance criteria used when the property was permitted for development. In 2000, the initial water quality performance

criteria was established. The criteria was changed in 2018 and in 2020.

### 4.1.1 Stormwater BMPs Permitted in 2000-2018

Developments with stormwater BMPs that were permitted between 2000 and March 1, 2018 were designed to limit the total suspended solids (TSS) loading rate from a developed site to 850 lb/ac/yr or less. This water quality performance criterion is described in the *Stormwater Systems and Facilities Installation Standards and Specifications* (SSFISS) or formerly known as the Storm Water Manual.

Properties with stormwater BMPs permitted under the SSFISS may qualify for credits up to 30% (10% for water quality, 10% for channel protection, and 10% for peak flow reduction) after a credit application and supporting documentation has been submitted and accepted by Gwinnett County DWR. Documentation of the original design standard and current condition of all BMPs must be provided to DWR for review. The required documentation by BMP type is described in [Appendix C](#) of this manual. A stormwater facility maintenance agreement must also be in place. Compliance with the maintenance agreement must be maintained with DWR in order to continue the credit (see [Renewal Requirements](#)).

### 4.1.2 Stormwater BMPs Permitted in 2018-2020

Developments with stormwater BMPs that were permitted between March 1, 2018 and December 2020 are designed using the stormwater sizing criteria for stormwater control and mitigation in the Gwinnett County Stormwater Management Manual – Version 1.0 (GCSMM v1). In GCSMM v1, stormwater BMPs are sized to achieve the water quality performance

criteria of reducing average annual post-development TSS loadings by 80%. For Georgia, this equates to providing water quality treatment for the runoff resulting from a rainfall depth of 1.2 inches.

Properties with stormwater BMPs permitted according to GCSMM v1 standards may qualify for credits up to 30% (10% for water quality, 10% for channel protection, and 10% for peak flow reduction) after a credit application and supporting documentation has been submitted and accepted by Gwinnett County DWR. Documentation of the original design standard and current condition of all BMPs must be provided to DWR for review. The required documentation by BMP type is described in [Appendix C](#) of this manual. A stormwater facility maintenance agreement must also be in place. Compliance with the maintenance agreement must be maintained with DWR in order to continue the credit (see [Renewal Requirements](#)).

#### 4.1.3 Stormwater BMPs Permitted in 2020-Present

Developments with stormwater BMPs that were permitted after December 2020 to the present are assessed based on the design criteria that is outlined in the Gwinnett County Stormwater Management Manual – Version 2.0 (GCSMM v2). In GCSMM v2, facilities are selected and sized to retain or reduce the runoff for the first 1.0 inch of rainfall, or to the maximum extent practicable. If the entire 1.0-inch runoff reduction cannot be achieved, the remaining runoff from the 1.2-inch rainfall must be treated to reduce average annual post-development TSS loadings by 80%.

Properties with stormwater BMPs permitted according to GCSMM v2 qualify for credits up to 30% (10% for water quality, 10% for channel protection, and 10% for peak flow reduction).

All new developments are required to install stormwater BMPs that meet the provisions for water quality, channel protection and peak flow credits. When as-built plans for a development have been accepted by the DWR, the development will automatically qualify for up to a 30% credit for the following five billing years. These credits will be applied automatically for the initial 5-year period. Renewal of the credit beyond the first 5 years will require the property owner to submit a credit application and supporting documentation to DWR for review. The required documentation by BMP type is described in [Appendix C](#) of this manual.

Ongoing compliance with the BMP maintenance agreement, which is created at the time the development is approved, must be maintained in order for the credit to continue (see [Renewal Requirements](#)). Failure to maintain compliance will result in the credit being removed.

## 4.2 Properties with Multiple Development Permits

In most instances, an entire property is permitted for development under the same performance criteria. However, in rare instances, a property may have been developed in stages where a permit for one stage was granted using a different water quality performance criteria than was used to permit a subsequent stage. For these properties, water quality credit is apportioned according to the development stages. [Example 6](#) in [Appendix E](#) shows how water quality credit is apportioned for a property that was originally permitted for development in 2001 and permitted again in 2021.

### 4.3 Retrofitting Stormwater BMPs

In some cases, property owners will retrofit (or upgrade) stormwater BMPs to current water quality, channel protection and peak flow reduction design standards. Developments that retrofit existing stormwater BMPs are required to obtain a permit from the Gwinnett County Planning and Development Department. Only projects with retrofit stormwater BMPs that bring the entire property up to the current design standards will be assessed by the Department of Planning and Development plan review staff and awarded credit.

Retrofitted stormwater BMPs automatically qualify for up to 30% credit, after as-built plans have been accepted by DWR. Receipt of the credit is subject to the BMP(s) being maintained in compliance with the maintenance agreement and credits will be valid for the following five billing years.

Property owners must comply with standards and regulations that have been established for new development, redevelopment, zoning, etc., and are encouraged to contact DWR staff for additional guidance.

# 5. WATERSHED STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES

A Watershed Stewardship Credit will be awarded to property owners who take action to protect the watershed, or property owners who make efforts to learn about or increase public awareness about watershed management. The goal is to encourage citizens to practice good pollution prevention practices on their own properties and at home.

Practices that the County has identified as meeting these criteria, as well as the maximum percent credit that can be received, and credit term are shown in Table 1. A description of each of these practices is contained in the following text. Property owners are allowed up to 40% credit under the Watershed Stewardship category and the combined 40% can be obtained from more than one practice. Please note that 40% is the maximum credit allowed for any property, no matter how many categories or practices are utilized. Notice will not be provided by DWR when the term expires.

Property owners should understand that local codes (such as municipal and homeowners associations' regulations), restrictions and/or ordinances may not allow some of these practices. Property owners should check to make certain that their actions will not violate any local requirements.

## 5.1 Public Participation

### 5% Credit

Participating in efforts related to improving water quality provides an educational benefit to the community. The DWR will consider the following activities for Public Participation with approved certifications from Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful – 770.822.5187.

<http://www.gwinnettcb.org/programs>

- Spending four hours to obtain certification as an Adopt-a-Stream volunteer.

**Table 1. Watershed Stewardship Practices Maximum Credit Percentage and Term**

Watershed Stewardship Practice	Percent Credit Available	Term
Public Participation	5%	1 year
County-Approved Training Programs	5%	1 year
Conservation Easements	Up to 30%	10 years
Conservation Use Valuation Assessment (CUVA)	10%	Until CUVA expires
Low Impact Parcels	Up to 30%	5 years
Rain Barrels	Up to 3%	5 years
Residential Rain Garden	Up to 10%	5 years
Automatic Sprinkler Sensor Installation	10%	1 year nonrenewable
Farmland Deep Tillage	Up to 10%	5 years
Fencing Livestock Out of Stream	5%	5 years
Stream Restoration/Stream Bank Stabilization	Up to 30%	10 years
Stream Buffers that Exceed Local Standards	Up to 10%	5 years
Watershed Improvement Project	10%	5 years nonrenewable
Direct Discharges to Another County	40%	5 years
Septic Tank Maintenance	10%	Up to 5 years
Connection to Sanitary Sewers	40%	1 year nonrenewable
Non-Residential School Education	Up to 40%	1 year
<b>Maximum Credit Allowed</b>	<b>40%</b>	

- Spending four hours stenciling storm drains.
- Spending four hours participating in a stream clean-up or shore sweep.

In order to qualify for a residential credit under this practice, at least one person (in the household living on the property) must meet one of the above requirements, and submit a certificate or verification of participation along with a Stormwater Service Fee – Credit Application. Applicants must have the county official (from Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful or whichever organization sponsored the event) submit a signed and dated [Stormwater Service Fee – Credit Application \(Appendix A\)](#) on the customer's behalf. Attendance at the event must be taken and used to validate credit applications.

In order for non-residential property owners to receive credit for this practice, participating employees or members must be associated with the facility against which the credit is to be applied, and participation must meet the following levels:

- 20% participation based on the number of parking spaces (i.e. the number of people required to attend must be at least 0.20 times the number of parking spaces visible in aerial imagery); OR
- 20% participation based on verifiable number of employees or members; whichever is greater.

For a list of approved public participation activities that will meet requirements established by the Gwinnett County DWR, please refer to the County's stormwater website at [www.gwinnettstormwater.com](http://www.gwinnettstormwater.com) and then click on [Stormwater Utility Fee and Credits](#). There is a link to Events and Workshops.

The maximum credit allowed under this practice is 5%. The credit will be valid for the following billing year only. In order to continue receiving credit beyond a one-year term, additional participation is required the next year, and a verification of attendance issued by a county official must be submitted with a new application.

**Required documentation:** Credit application submitted by county official for applicant and certification of participation.

## 5.2 County-Approved Training Programs

**5% Credit**

The County has established various water quality training programs that are generally available for free.

Residential Property - In order to qualify for a residential credit under this practice, the owner of the property or a resident must submit a certified application, verifying his/her participation. Attendance at the event will be taken and used to validate credit applications.

In order for non-residential property owners to receive credit for this practice, participating employees or members must be associated with the facility against which the credit is to be applied, and participation must meet the following levels:

- 20% participation based on the number of parking spaces (i.e. the number of people required to attend must be at least 0.20 times the number of parking spaces visible in aerial imagery); OR
- 20% participation based on verifiable number of employees or members; whichever is greater.

Both residents (of residential property) and groups of employees/members of organizations (of non-residential property) may participate in several programs but are limited to obtain the maximum credit of 5% per billing year under this practice. Duplicate training credits are not allowed. Owners with multiple properties are limited to applying each training program course attended to one property.

Participants will submit signed and certified (by the host official) applications upon completion of the training.

The County-approved training programs are posted on the County's stormwater website at <https://www.gwinnettcounty.com/web/gwinnett/departments/water>; click Get Involved. Call 678.376.7193 and choose option 5 or email [dwrworkshops@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:dwrworkshops@gwinnettcounty.com) to register.

Credits obtained for completing training programs are valid for the next (one) billing year and are non-transferable. Attendance records taken at the training program will be used to validate the credit application. In order to receive credit for this practice for subsequent years, additional training will be required during the subsequent years and a new application submitted at that time.

**Required documentation:** Credit application submitted by county official for applicant and certification of participation.

## 5.3 Conservation Easements Up to 30% Credit

Land may be permanently protected for conservation by means of a conservation easement. A conservation easement is a binding legal contract between a landowner and a qualified entity (a local, state, or federal jurisdiction or a nonprofit organization recognized under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code) to ensure that lands are maintained in a conservation use state. The easement ensures protection of

the conservation values of a property while the owner retains ownership and use.

The conservation values or criteria for such protection fall into one of four categories, according to the Internal Revenue Service (Section 170(h)):

- A. provides outdoor recreation or educational use for the general public;
- B. protects a relatively natural habitat of fish, wildlife, plants or similar ecosystem;
- C. preserves open space including farmland and forest land that provides scenic enjoyment of the general public or is pursuant to a clearly delineated federal, state or local governmental conservation policy; and yields a significant public benefit; or
- D. preserves an historically important land area or a certified historic structure.

The State of Georgia identifies key features for conservation emphasis:

1. Water quality protection for rivers, streams, and lakes;
2. Flood protection;
3. Wetlands protection;
4. Reduction of erosion through protection of steep slopes, areas with erodible soils, and stream banks;
5. Protection of riparian buffers and other areas that serve as natural habitat and corridors for native plant and animal species;
6. Protection of prime agricultural and forestry lands;
7. Protection of cultural sites, heritage corridors, and archaeological and historic resources;

8. Scenic protection;
9. Provision of recreation in the form of boating, hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, running, jogging, biking, walking, and similar outdoor activities; and
10. Connection of existing or planned areas contributing to the goals set out in this paragraph.

The easement must be properly recorded in the Gwinnett County deed room.

A landowner who has protected land in this permanent manner may earn a maximum of 30% stormwater credit on such land. Use Table 2 to determine the credit percentage from the impervious area on the property divided by the conservation area provided.

**Table 2. Credit Percentages for Conservation Easements**

Impervious Area/Conservation Area	Credit (%)
>0.222	0
0.167-0.222	5
0.093-0.166	10
0.065-0.092	15
0.046-0.064	20
0.044-0.045	25
<0.043	30

For example, if a property owner has 2,500 square feet (sf) of impervious area on their property and places 12,000 sf of property in a conservation easement, the credit will be calculated as follows:

$$2,500 \text{ sf of impervious area} / 12,000 \text{ sf of conservation easement} = 0.208$$

Using Table 2, 0.208 is between 0.167-0.222; therefore, the property owner is eligible for 5% credit.

As another example, if a property owner has 3,000 sf of impervious area on their property and places 80,000 sf of property in a conservation easement, the credit will be calculated as follows:

$$3,000 \text{ sf of impervious area} / 80,000 \text{ sf of conservation easement} = 0.038$$

Using Table 2, 0.038 is <0.043; therefore, the property owner is eligible for 30% credit.

Credits will be effective for a maximum of 10 years. A violation of the easement that compromises the conservation values of the property may require reapplication for credits at the discretion of the Director. Expiration of the easement will result in termination of the stormwater credit.

The application must include a copy of the recorded easement and a survey or tax map of the protected property. Property owners who are interested in this credit should contact the DWR GIS Inventory and Billing Team.

Once approved, credit for this action will remain in place until ownership of the property changes or for a maximum of 10 years. In order to continue this credit for more than one five-year term, submit a new application on the condition of the easement in year five.

**Required documentation:** For initial application, submit a copy of the recorded easement and a survey or tax map of the protected property. For credit renewal, submit a new application on year five and describe the condition of the easement.

## 5.4 Conservation Use Valuation Assessment (CUVA) Properties

**10% Credit**

Owners of agricultural land, timberland and environmentally sensitive land that have qualified for conservation use assessment status under O.C.G.A. Section 48-5-7.4 may be awarded a credit of 10% for as long as the parcel has a current CUVA assessment status from the Tax Assessor.

More detailed information about CUVA is available on the Georgia Department of Revenue website:  
<http://dor.georgia.gov/conservation-use-assessment-information>

If a Gwinnett County citizen does not have a CUVA assessment on their minimum ten acre parcel, they can contact the Assessor's office at 770.822.7200 or email [taxpayer.services@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:taxpayer.services@gwinnettcounty.com) to get more info on how to apply for CUVA assessment tax status designation.

Once they have obtained the CUVA, owners should submit documentation that they have received a CUVA designation to GIS Inventory and Billing Team with the application for credit tax status designation from the Tax Assessors office.

DWR GIS Inventory and Billing Team will check the status of CUVA eligibility each year to verify continued eligibility.

**Required documentation:** Submit documentation that they have received a CUVA designation to GIS Inventory and Billing Team with the application for credit tax status designation from the Tax Assessors office.

## 5.5 Low Impact Parcels

**Up to 30% Credit**

A low impact parcel is one that has reduced land disturbance and minimal impervious surfaces, manages stormwater runoff on-site, and is less than 7% impervious.

Properties with 5% or less imperviousness meeting these criteria are eligible for a 30% credit. Properties with more than 5% but 6% or less impervious surface are eligible for 20% credit and properties with more than 6% but 7% or less impervious surface are eligible for 10% credit for a five-year term. Properties with more than 7% impervious surface do not qualify for the credit.

### CONVERSION

There are 43,560 square feet in one acre.

To calculate percent impervious, divide the number of impervious square feet by the parcel square feet.

**Required documentation:** In order to qualify for a credit under this practice, the property owner should include documentation with his/her application. Generally the documentation will include a site map (one can be printed from <https://gis.gwinnettcounty.com/GISDataBrowser/WebPages/Map/FundyViewer.aspx>) showing the entire parcel, all impervious areas on the property and a calculation of the percent impervious. Adjacent properties owned by the same person or family may be included in the calculation of percent impervious.

To continue the credit beyond a term of 5 years, complete a new application describing any changed conditions that affect the credit and resubmit.

## 5.6 Rain Barrels

### Up to 3% Credit

Rain barrels are containers that collect rainwater and are typically located under roof downspouts. They provide opportunity for retention of rainwater and delayed distribution onto the pervious areas of a parcel of land, promoting infiltration and diminished runoff during saturating rain events. The property owner should take care that these types of practices are installed and oriented to ensure that overflow is directed away from the foundations of the building. A property owner may use alternates to rain barrels that have the same volume as rain barrels. A downspout can be directed underground into 50' of 6" perforated pipe surrounded by gravel that does not have an outlet. Another alternate would be to use a dry well that is 2.5' by 2.5' by 3' deep and filled with rock. A new application every fifth year is required in order to continue a rain barrel credit beyond a five-year term.

A full credit of 3% is available if every downspout on the property buildings is served by a minimum of a 50-gallon rain barrel. Partial credit is offered for the percentage of the property buildings that are served by rain barrels. For example, if a house has six downspouts and two of them have a rain barrel, then the total credit is  $3\% \times 2/6 = 1\%$ .

**Required documentation:** Submit a site map (one can be printed from <https://gis.gwinnettcounty.com/GISDataBrowser/WebPages/Map/MapViewer.aspx>) showing structures on the property and the location of all rain barrels (or alternatives) that have been installed. Date-stamped photographs of the rain barrels (or alternatives) connected to the downspouts must be included in the application.

## 5.7 Automatic Sprinkler Sensors

### 10% Credit

Property owners who water their lawns with automatic sprinkler systems can minimize the amount of runoff from their property and save treated water by installing sensors that deactivate the sprinklers during rain events.

A credit of 10% will be allowed the year after they install the sensor. The term is one year only and is not renewable.

**Required documentation:** Submit documentation that the system has been installed and is functioning properly.

## 5.8 Residential Rain Gardens Up to 10% Credit

Residential property owners can receive up to a 10% credit by installing rain gardens, which are depressions in the landscape, planted with native vegetation that collect stormwater runoff and allow it to slowly soak into the ground. Native vegetation consists of plants that are adapted to, and occur naturally in an area (versus non-native vegetation which are often invasive and affect habitat and food supply for native animal and fish species).

Partial credit is offered for the percent of the entire impervious surface that the practice serves. For example, if a rain garden serves 30% of the impervious surfaces on the entire property, then the total credit is  $10\% \times 30\% = 3\%$ . A new credit application must be submitted every fifth year to continue credit. Notice will not be provided by DWR when the term expires.

Rain garden requirements can be found on the Gwinnett County stormwater website at: <https://www.gwinnettcounty.com/web/gwinnett/departments/water/geteducated/protectingourwaterways/raingardens>.

**Required documentation:** For initial application and credit renewal, submit a map showing the location of the rain garden, a report with sizing calculations, and date-stamped photographs of the completed rain garden. The report should include a list of the types of plants used.

## 5.9 Farmland Deep Tillage Up to 10% Credit

Deep tillage is a farming practice that breaks up soil, usually with a tractor, and usually 18 inches deep, to allow increased water movement, better aeration of roots and access to additional minerals and nutrients for plant growth. By comparison, conventional tillage with a rototiller breaks up the soil 6 to 12 inches below the surface, and in areas of heavy compaction, conventional tillage is not adequate.

A 1% credit is offered for each 1% of the farm property that is deep tilled, up to a maximum credit of 10%. The credit will be effective for five (5) years after the date the land was deep tilled. In order to continue receiving credit beyond the five year term, the land must be deep tilled again and a new application submitted.

Examples:

10,000 sf deep tilled: 100,000 sf parcel = 10% credit

.22 acres deep tilled: 2.29 acres parcel = 10% credit

**Required documentation:** Provide a site map (one can be printed from <https://gis.gwinnettcounty.com/GISDataBrowser/WebPages/Map/FundyViewer.aspx>) that shows the area of the property that has been deep tilled, along with a statement stating when the land was deep tilled and certifying that the land was deep tilled to a depth of at least 18 inches and in rows no more than three (3) feet apart.

## 5.10 Fencing Livestock Out of Stream 5% Credit

This practice typically applies to rural properties that have livestock with ready access to the stream which leads to streambank breakdowns, increased bacteria in the water, along with additional nutrients and sediment, all of which contribute to problems with water quality. Fencing the livestock out of the stream will reduce these problems, and credit will be offered for property where livestock are completely prevented from accessing the stream, although properly designed crossing devices are acceptable.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service has a program titled [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/financial/eqip/?cid=stelprdb1044009) (EQIP), which may also provide some assistance. For information about the program, contact their office at 770.963.9288 or visit the website at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/financial/eqip/?cid=stelprdb1044009>

The credit available for this practice is 5%. A new credit application every fifth year is required in order to continue the credit beyond a five-year term.

**Required documentation:** Submit a site map (one can be printed from <https://gis.gwinnettcounty.com/GISDataBrowser/WebPages/Map/FundyViewer.aspx>) showing the location of the stream and fencing, along with any additional supporting material.

## 5.11 Stream Restoration/Stream Bank Stabilization Up to 30% Credit

Stream restoration is the re-designing and associated construction of a stream section to make it more stable and to re-establish the stream's hydraulics and habitat conditions. Streambank stabilization is the repair of an unstable streambank

utilizing bioengineering practices. Both of these practices need to be prepared by a design professional registered in the State of Georgia, as appropriate. Approval to construct any improvements must be obtained from the Gwinnett County DWR and permits must be secured from the Gwinnett County Planning and Development, US Army Corps of Engineers and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources before any actual construction takes place.

The Gwinnett County DWR recognizes that there are different types of stream restoration projects and that they have different hydraulic and environmental benefits. The following four Levels of Restoration (LOR) have been established.

- **LOR 1** – Major channel realignment, grade control and floodplain connection. Reestablish channel on previous floodplain using relic channel or construction of a new bankfull discharge channel. Design new channel for dimension, pattern, and profile characteristic of stable reference reach form. Fill in existing incised channel to the new floodplain elevation.
- **LOR 2** – Minor channel realignment and provide grade control. Design channel for dimension, pattern, and profile characteristic of stable reference form. Construct a new bankfull discharge channel in the existing channel – at a higher elevation to re-connect to floodplain. Stabilize and vegetate banks.
- **LOR 3** – Reshape channel in place and grade control. Construct a new bankfull discharge channel in the bed of the existing channel. Design channel for dimension and profile characteristic of stable reference form. Stabilize and vegetate banks.
- **LOR 4** – Spot repair over an extended reach length or a discrete, abbreviated reach length.

LOR 1 projects can qualify for up to a maximum credit of 30% for a maximum of 10 years. LOR 2 projects can qualify for a maximum credit of 20% for a maximum of 10 years, and LOR 3 and 4 projects can qualify for up to a maximum credit of 10% for a maximum of 10 years. The 10-year term starts the Tax billing year after the project is finished. As stated above, a project must be evaluated and approved by the DWR prior to contacting other agencies and before any actual construction starts. This credit requires a renewal after year 5.

The amount of credit is based on the amount of area restored or stabilized. It assumes that each 150 sf of bare eroded bank restoration will mitigate the effects of 100 sf of impervious area.

For example, if a property owner has 3,500 sf of impervious area on his/her parcel of land, and performs 2,000 sf of streambank restoration on a LOR 2 project, the potential credit will be calculated as follows:

$$(2,000 \text{ sf of restoration} / 150 \text{ sf of restoration}) \times 100 \text{ sf of mitigation} = 1,333 \text{ sf of mitigation.}$$

$$1,333 \text{ sf of mitigation} / 3,500 \text{ sf of impervious area} = 38.1\%; \text{ therefore the property owner would qualify for the maximum credit of 20\%.$$

**Required documentation:** Submit the Gwinnett County permit number for the Stream Restoration/Streampbank Stabilization project and a Certificate of Completion from the Development Inspections Division. For credit renewal, in the fifth year submit a new application, with date-stamped photographs and a statement certifying that the stabilization project has been maintained and is operating as designed.

## 5.12 Stream Buffers that Exceed

### Local Standards

### Up to 10% Credit

Stream buffers are naturally vegetated areas along the stream's banks. To be awarded any credit, the buffer width has to exceed the local requirements as defined in the Stream Buffer Protection Ordinance of Gwinnett County.

Only undisturbed, natural areas with no impervious surfaces in the area will be considered for preservation credit. Areas already required as a part of open space requirement may not be included in the preservation area. Areas used for preservation must be contiguous at all points along the existing stream buffer and the length of the preservation area as measured parallel to the stream must be equal to or greater than the width as measured perpendicular to the stream (e.g., only rectangular areas parallel to the stream for protection of the stream corridor will be considered; triangular shapes are not acceptable).

The maximum width used to determine the buffer credit is 300 feet from the stream bank. The impervious setback (transition zone) between the undisturbed buffer and unprotected area must be maintained. The maximum credit allowed is 10% and is based on the buffer width provided beyond the locally required buffer (up to a buffer width of 300 feet).

For 10% credit a property owner must provide an additional 250 feet or more of stream buffer. To obtain a 5% credit, an additional 125 feet to 249 feet stream buffer must be provided.

Additional information on stream buffers can be found in the Stream Buffer Protection Ordinance on the Gwinnett County website at <https://www.gwinnettcounty.com/static/departments/publicutilities/pdf/SBA2005-001B.pdf>.

**Required documentation:** Provide documentation that a buffer easement has been established and recorded, and that the easement protects the natural buffer to the satisfaction of Gwinnett County DWR. Documentation should include a site map (one can be printed from <https://gis.gwinnettcounty.com/GISDataBrowser/WebPages/Map/FundyViewer.aspx>) showing the location of the buffer, a copy of the easement establishing the buffer and any additional supporting material. For credit renewal, a site map consisting of a simple drawing and a report on the condition of the easement should be included in the renewal application every fifth year in order to continue the credit beyond a five-year term.

## 5.13 Watershed Improvement Project

### Participation

### 10% Credit

Gwinnett County has developed Watershed Improvement Plans for watersheds in Gwinnett County. These Plans are comprised of stream restoration projects and stormwater BMP improvements (such as detention ponds). The Watershed Improvement Project Participation credit is limited to a maximum of 10% for a five-year term and is not renewable.

If the utility were considering doing stream restoration/stream stabilization or a BMP retrofit project, the property owner whose BMP or stream segment was under consideration could receive a five-year 10% credit if the property owner donated all necessary easements, including construction and permanent access easements, to Gwinnett County. Property owners interested in determining if a project has been identified on their

property should contact DWR by email at [DWRBMPCredits@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:DWRBMPCredits@gwinnettcounty.com) or by letter addressed to:

Gwinnett County  
Department of Water Resources  
GIS Inventory and Billing Team  
684 Winder Highway  
Lawrenceville, GA 30045-5012

## 5.14 Direct Discharges

**40% Credit**

Property owners whose stormwater runoff does not flow through the stormwater system owned, operated, or maintained by Gwinnett County can qualify for a 40% credit. Typically, this would be available to property owners who live on the border of the County with other counties where runoff from their property discharges outside the County limits.

**Required documentation:** Submit a simple site map (one can be printed from <https://gis.gwinnettcounty.com/GISDataBrowser/WebPages/Map/FundyViewer.aspx>) showing the location of the property, along with drainage patterns and any additional information necessary to document that runoff from the property will not flow through any stormwater system owned, operated, or maintained by the County or through a waterway that could be subject to future restoration efforts. For credit renewal, submit a new application every fifth year along with a description of any changes to drainage patterns that have occurred.

## 5.15 Septic Tank Maintenance

**10% Credit**

Residential property owners with septic systems can be awarded a credit by having their septic tanks pumped out on a regular basis every 5 years as recommended by the [Gwinnett County Board of Health, Environmental Health Section](#)

– 770.963.5132. Septic tanks that are not regularly pumped accumulate sludge. If sludge is not removed, it can build up to a point where it will discharge into the drain field where it then clogs the drain lines causing failure and discharge of sewage onto the ground.

By submitting documentation in the form of a receipt or invoice for tank pumping from a licensed hauler of septic wastes, homeowners may be eligible for a 10% credit. This annual 10% credit may be available for up to 5 years after the date the septic tank was pumped, however any unclaimed years between the date of the pumping and the date of the credit application will not be eligible for any backdated credit. These unclaimed years also cannot be used to extend the credit beyond its expiration date which is set at 5 years after the date the septic tank was pumped.

**Required documentation:** Submit a copy of a dated invoice showing the septic tank was pumped. For credit renewal at the end of every expiring 5-year term, submit a copy of a new dated invoice showing that the septic tank was pumped again.

## 5.16 Connection to Sanitary Sewers

**40% Credit**

Property owners who utilize on-site wastewater disposal systems (typically a septic tank and lateral fields) will qualify for a 40% credit the year after they connect to the sanitary sewer system and abandon their on-site systems. The 40% credit will only be available for the billing year after the connection is made. It is not renewable.

**Required documentation:** Submit documentation that the septic tank has been decommissioned by having a plumber remove the solids from the tank and then filling it with sand to ensure that no liquids continue to leach into the soil.

## 5.17 Non-Residential School Education

### Up to 40% Credit

The Gwinnett County DWR is required by our [NPDES MS4](#) permit to educate the public about the effects of urbanization on stream water quality. Working with schools that teach stormwater management issues will help DWR meet these goals.

Using the credit process, the Gwinnett County DWR, may award credits of up to 40% for eligible Group Day Care, Child Care Centers, preK-12<sup>th</sup>, and postsecondary educational institutions located in non-residential facilities that provide and/or promote educational activities that support and complement the County's stormwater goals.

#### 5.17.1 Eligible Non-Residential Schools:

For the purposes of this manual "Eligible Non-residential Schools" will be limited to Schools, Postsecondary Institutions, Daycare and Pre-K as defined below.

- **School** – A school as defined by Unannotated Georgia Code 20-2-690 recognizes the existence of public schools, and private schools as educational entities.  
<http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/gacode/default.asp>
  - Click "I agree" button, make sure the radio button for "Search All Documents in this source" is selected under search box, and search for 'O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690'.
- **Postsecondary Institutions** – Postsecondary educational institutions are defined in the Official Annotated Code of Georgia Code Section 20-3-519.7.  
<http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/gacode/default.asp>

– Click "I agree" button, make sure the radio button for "Search All Documents in this source" is selected under search box, and search for 'O.C.G.A. § 20-3-519'.

- **Daycare** – The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning defines and has jurisdiction for the licensing and registration for Group Day Care, and Child Care Centers.  
<http://www.decal.ga.gov>

- **Pre-K** – The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is authorized to administer the Lottery-funded Georgia Pre-K program and defines its authority over these programs.

<http://www.decal.ga.gov>

Approved credit applications will result in the award of a credit to the parcel's stormwater service fee. The per-parcel credit may not total more than 40% and credit may only be applied to the property where the educational activities are taught. Credits cannot be applied to Administrative Centers, Bus Lots, Parking Lots or Warehouse/Facility Operations purposed parcels.

The GIS Inventory and Billing Team endorses three methods for non-residential schools to obtain a stormwater service fee credit. These methods are Watershed Education Curriculum, Watershed Education Stewardship Activities, and participation in academic field studies and/or classes at the Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center (GEHC).

### 5.17.2 Watershed Education Curriculum:

Eligible Non-residential Schools will be considered for stormwater fee credit by teaching a watershed education curriculum. The maximum credit awarded is 20%. Approved curriculum may include but is not limited to:

- [Project WET](#)
  - <http://www.projectwet.org/>
- [Georgia Project WET Educator Resources](#)
  - Healthy Water/Healthy People, The Urban Watershed
  - <http://projectwet.georgia.gov/educator-resources>
- Gwinnett County Watershed Curriculum for grades 3 & 4
- [Wonder of Wetlands](#)
  - purchase here:  
<https://wetland.org/education/publications/>
- [GLOBE Program](#)
  - <http://www.globe.gov/>
- [Project Aquatic WILD](#)
  - <https://www.fishwildlife.org/projectwild/aquatic-wild>

To receive the minimum of 5% credit, at least 20% of enrolled students at the eligible non-residential school must have completed at least one unit (for purposes of this manual, one unit is defined as a minimum 4 hours of face-to-face instruction) during the calendar year. Greater than 20% participation will be rewarded with a higher credit in accordance with the following:

50% of students = 20% credit

40% of students = 15% credit

30% of students = 10% credit

20% of students = 5% credit

**Required documentation:** The credit will be considered for approval if the principal, headmaster, dean, school director, or other authorized representative for curriculum implementation, documents and submits a list of appropriate Georgia Performance Standards, Academic Knowledge and Skills, or objectives for the lessons that were taught using watershed curriculum for each grade level. The principal or other designee will verify by signature the percentage of the student population who received at least one unit of study on identified standards during the calendar year prior to the billing year against which the credit will be applied.

### 5.17.3 Watershed Education Stewardship Activities

Eligible Non-residential schools will be considered for a stormwater fee credit for participation in approved public service activities. The maximum credit for this activity is 20%. Participation in several activities in order to reach the 20% maximum is allowed. The percentage of participation will be considered based on the total number of hours eligible students collectively engaged in stewardship activities. At least four total hours of stewardship activities must be logged for the participating students to be eligible for credit. Watershed Education Stewardship stormwater fee credits may be granted for participation in approved programs provided the following conditions are met:

- Watershed Education Stewardship activities may be integrated into the school curriculum. Suggested activities may include but are not limited to Earth Week celebrations, Environmental Science Nights, Water Festivals, Great American Clean-Up, Adopt-A-Stream, Rivers Alive, Georgia Wildlife Federation events, and/or Clean Water Week.

Participation in activities related to watershed education and in the Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful Environmental Achievement Profile may also be considered. Additional

County-approved events may be appropriate and can be located on the County website. (To ensure acceptability of the activity, it is recommended that Eligible Non-residential Schools discuss the proposed activity with the designated agent of the GEHC.)

- At least 5% of enrolled students at the eligible non-residential school have completed at least 4 hours of stewardship activities during the calendar year. Greater than 5% participation will be rewarded with a higher credit in accordance with the following:

20% of students = 20% credit

15% of students = 15% credit

10% of students = 10% credit

5% of students = 5% credit

**Required documentation:** The number of participants, name and description of the activity, and date of the activity is submitted in support of the application for Watershed Education Stewardship. This description of the activity, if signed by a principal, headmaster, dean, or school director, will be considered acceptable evidence that the activity was completed as stated.

#### 5.17.4 Gwinnett County Environmental & Heritage Center

Eligible Non-residential schools will be considered for the GEHC stormwater service fee credit when students participate in field trips to the center. The maximum available credit is 20%. The education credit will be based on school enrollment and participation levels. The GEHC stormwater fee credit may be awarded provided that at least 5% of enrolled students at the eligible non-residential school have visited the GEHC during the

calendar year. Greater than 5% participation will be rewarded with a higher credit in accordance with the following:

20% of students = 20% credit

15% of students = 15% credit

10% of students = 10% credit

5% of students = 5% credit

**Required documentation:** Submit an official receipt from the GEHC showing the date and number of students attending.

#### 5.17.5 Non-Residential School Education Example

By participating in two or three of the Watershed Education programs, eligible non-residential schools may be considered for a maximum 40% credit for the calendar year prior to the billing year against which the credit is to be applied.

Further participation, though encouraged, will not increase the stormwater fee credit beyond the maximum allowable Watershed Education stormwater fee credit of 40%. Table 3 shows the maximum credit and term limit for non-residential school education practices.

**Table 3. Non-Residential School Education Watershed Stewardship Practices Maximum Credit and Term**

Watershed Stewardship Practice	Potential Stormwater Service Fee Credit	Term
Watershed Education Curriculum	Up to 20%	1 year
Watershed Education Stewardship Activities	Up to 20%	1 year
Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center Visit	Up to 20%	1 year
<b>Maximum Credit Allowed</b>		<b>40%</b>

# 6. CREDIT APPLICATION

All customers (except schools) requesting credit must complete and submit the [Stormwater Service Fee – Credit Application Form provided in Appendix A](#) to Gwinnett County DWR when:

- Requesting Stormwater BMP credits for existing developed properties for the first time,
- Renewing Stormwater BMP credits, and
- Requesting Watershed Stewardship credits.

All new developments are required to install stormwater BMPs that meet the provisions for water quality, channel protection and peak flow credits. When as-built plans for a new development have been authorized by the DWR, the development will automatically qualify for up to a 30% credit for the following five billing years. This credit will be applied automatically for the initial 5-year term. Extension of the credit beyond the first 5 years will require submitting a [Stormwater Service Fee – Credit Application Form \(Appendix A\)](#) along with supporting documents. [Section 7](#) provides additional information on renewing credits. Supporting documents required for Watershed Stewardship practice credits are discussed in [Section 5](#).

Supporting documents required for Stormwater BMP credits are discussed in [Appendix C](#).

One application may cover several credit types for a single parcel. Multiple billing addresses will not be considered on the same application except for a regional stormwater BMP that serves more than one property or for schools with multiple parcels/properties. An electronic spreadsheet is the preferred method of submitting multiple billing addresses, and all usual information including parcel numbers must be indicated for each address.

For all stormwater BMP credits, ongoing compliance with the maintenance agreement must be maintained in order for the credit to continue. Stormwater BMPs are subject to inspection by Gwinnett County DWR. If deficiencies are identified during an inspection, a notice will be sent to the property owner detailing the required repairs. Failure to complete the maintenance or repairs will result in the credit being removed.

Schools requesting credit must complete a [Non-Residential School Education Form Watershed Education Credit Application \(Appendix D\)](#). More information is provided in [Section 6.3 Non-Residential School Education Application Process](#).

## 6.1 Timing of Application Review

Applications must be received by March 1 in order to be considered for the current billing year, with the exception of county-approved training programs, non-residential school watershed education, water quality, channel protection and peak flow credits. Applications for those credits must be received by December 31 and will be considered for the following year. Gwinnett County intends that most applications will be reviewed and responses made within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt of the application. However, if the analysis requires significant review time, or if the number of applications received is large such as around the submittal deadline, the review period may be extended beyond the fourteen (14) days.

## 6.2 Appeals

An [appeals process](#) has been developed so property owners have the opportunity to challenge their service fee amounts, their approved credits and other decisions made by the Gwinnett County DWR staff.

The [appeals process](#) begins by filling out an appeals form found on the Gwinnett County website at [www.gwinnettstormwater.com](http://www.gwinnettstormwater.com) under Stormwater Utility Fee and Credits. Send the form to the DWR staff by:

- Email to [DWRBMPCredits@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:DWRBMPCredits@gwinnettcounty.com); or
- By mail to Gwinnett County  
GIS Inventory and Billing Team  
Department of Water Resources  
684 Winder Highway  
Lawrenceville, GA 30045-5012

Staff may be contacted by phone at 678.376.7193 (dial extension 4 for billing and credits) or in person at 684 Winder Highway in Lawrenceville.

## 6.3 Non-Residential School Education Application Process

The school(s) must comply with the procedures outlined in the program when submitting a stormwater service fee credit application. All information necessary for a credit to be evaluated and recommended must be supplied at the time of application and failure to comply with the procedures outlined could result in a denial of the credit application.

Applications are due December 31 and credit will be applied to the next billing year. Watershed Education activities completed after the December 31 deadline may be submitted with the following year's application.

A designated agent of the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center will review the school's stormwater service fee credit application within 30 days of receipt and make a recommendation to the Gwinnett County DWR for approval or denial. The final decision remains with the DWR.

Appeals of credit application decisions by the Gwinnett County DWR shall be in accordance with the Stormwater Utility Appeal process. Additional information on the appeals process can be found on the Gwinnett County website at [www.gwinnettstormwater.com](http://www.gwinnettstormwater.com) and clicking on Stormwater Utility Fee and Credits. Questions on the Watershed Education credit policy may be directed to Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful – 770.822.5187.

## 7. CREDIT RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS

For renewal of Watershed Stewardship credits, a new [Stormwater Credit Application Form \(Appendix A\)](#) and supporting documents (certificates, site maps, photographs, etc.) as described in [Section 5](#) of this manual are required, noting substantive changes that have occurred on the property, with the practice, or within the contributory drainage area.

Failure to continue or adequately maintain the Watershed Stewardship practice will result in loss of the credit. Gwinnett County DWR reserves the right to periodically inspect the practice to assure utility requirements are being followed and the credit still applies. The Gwinnett County DWR will NOT notify

credit recipients in advance of the need for renewal and failure to submit the renewal will result in expiration of the credit.

For renewal of Stormwater BMP credits, a new [Stormwater Credit Application Form \(Appendix A\)](#) and supporting documents as described in [Appendix C](#) are required. During the last year of eligibility, the Gwinnett County DWR will notify owners when a new five-year certification is required. Gwinnett County DWR reserves the right to periodically inspect the stormwater BMP to assure utility requirements are being followed and the credit still applies. Uncorrected BMP performance deficiencies cited during the term of the credit will result in the loss of the credit for each billing year the deficiency remains uncorrected.

## 8. CHANGE OF PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

Credits are awarded to an account associated with a particular property and are not transferable to a new property once they have already been awarded. Persons moving to a new address may not take the credit with them. It remains with the property. If eligible, the new owner will need only reapply for the credit upon its expiration.

The Gwinnett County DWR will allow new owners to review credit applications that were previously submitted and approved for their properties. Please contact the GIS Inventory and Billing Team at 678.376.7193 (dial extension 4) or email [DWRBMPCredits@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:DWRBMPCredits@gwinnettcounty.com) for assistance.

## 9. ONLINE INFORMATION

The Gwinnett County DWR maintains a website with information related to the stormwater utility and credits at <https://www.gwinnettcounty.com/web/gwinnett/departments/water/whatwedo/stormwater/stormwaterutilityfeeandcredits>.

# 10. CREDIT APPLICATION EXAMPLES

The following examples are presented in [Appendix E](#):

**Example 1** Non-Residential Property Renewing

Stormwater BMP Credit – Permitted in  
2019 Under Gwinnett County Stormwater  
Management Manual version 1 (GCSMM v1)

**Example 2** Residential Property applying for Watershed

Stewardship Rain Barrel Credit and Public  
Participation Credit

**Example 3** Residential Property applying for Watershed

Stewardship Low Impact Parcel and Stream  
Buffer Credit

**Example 4** Non-Residential Property Applying for

Stormwater BMP Credit – Permitted in 2001  
Under Stormwater Systems and Facilities  
Installation Standards and Specifications  
(SSFISS) Performance Criteria

**Example 5** Non-Residential Property Applying for Renewal  
of Stormwater BMP Credit – Permitted Under  
the Gwinnett County Stormwater Management  
Manual version 2 (GCSMM v2)

**Example 6** Non-Residential Property with Multiple  
Development Permits Applying for Stormwater  
BMP Credit

---

In accordance with Section 100-37 of the Gwinnett County  
Stormwater Utility Ordinance, this revised Stormwater Credits  
Manual is adopted and shall be effective on 01.15.2021.

*Tyler Richards*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tyler Richards, Director  
**Department of Water Resources**

1/21/2021

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# APPENDIX A.

# STORMWATER CREDIT APPLICATION FORM

**GWINNETT COUNTY**  
**STORMWATER SERVICE FEE – CREDIT APPLICATION FORM**

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parcel ID No. (Account # on Tax Bill): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing Address (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Category	Percent Credit Available	Percent Credit		Term <sup>(4)</sup> (Years)
		Requested	Approved	
<b>WATERSHED STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES<sup>(1)</sup></b>				
Public Participation	5%			1
County-Approved Training Programs	5%			1
Conservation Easements	Up to 30%			10
Conservation Use Valuation Assessment (CUVA)	10%			Until CUVA expires
Low Impact Parcels =( ft <sup>2</sup> impervious/ ft <sup>2</sup> parcel)= % impervious	Up to 30%			5
Rain Barrels	Up to 3%			5
Residential Rain Garden	Up to 10%			5
Automatic Sprinkler Sensor Installation (term 1 yr only)	10%			1 only
Farmland Deep Tillage	Up to 10%			5
Fencing Livestock Out of Stream	5%			5
Stream Restoration/Stream Bank Stabilization	Up to 30% <sup>(3)</sup>			10
Stream Buffers that Exceed Local Standards	Up to 10%			5
Watershed Improvement Project (one 5yr term only)	10%			5 only
Direct Discharges to Another County	40%			5
Septic Tank Maintenance (term determined from date on invoice)	10%			Up to 5
Connection to Sanitary Sewers (term 1 yr only)	40%			1 only
Non-Residential School Education (3.1 Curriculum@ %) (3.2 Activities@ %) (3.3 GEHC visits @ %)	Up to 40%			1
<b>STORMWATER BMPs<sup>(2, 3)</sup></b>				
Water Quality	10%			5
Channel Protection	10%			5
Peak Flow	10%			5
<b>TOTAL PERCENT CREDIT (CANNOT EXCEED 40%)</b>				

<sup>(1)</sup> To receive credit, supporting documentation is required. Refer to Watershed Stewardship Practices in the Gwinnett County Stormwater Credit Manual.

<sup>(2)</sup> To receive credit, the performance standards at the time the development was permitted must be met. Certification of performance by DWR is required. Refer to Stormwater BMP in the Gwinnett County Stormwater Credit Manual.

<sup>(3)</sup> Development Permit Numbers associated with this credit application must be identified below.

<sup>(4)</sup> In last year of term, credit will expire without notice unless a new application is submitted. Some credits are limited to one term only. See Gwinnett County Stormwater Credit Manual for full requirements. Conditions of approval must be maintained for credit to continue during term.

Development Permit Number(s) (if applicable; see note 2 above): \_\_\_\_\_

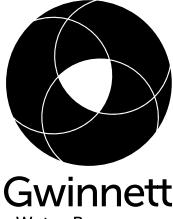
\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**Please return completed Form, along with all supporting documentation, to:**

Gwinnett County DWR  
 c/o GIS Inventory and Billing Team  
 684 Winder Highway  
 Lawrenceville, GA 30045

[www.gwinnettstormwater.com](http://www.gwinnettstormwater.com)  
<mailto:DWRBMPCredits@gwinnettcounty.com>  
 Ph: 678.376.7193, ext. 4

# APPENDIX B.

# STORMWATER CREDIT REQUEST PROCESS

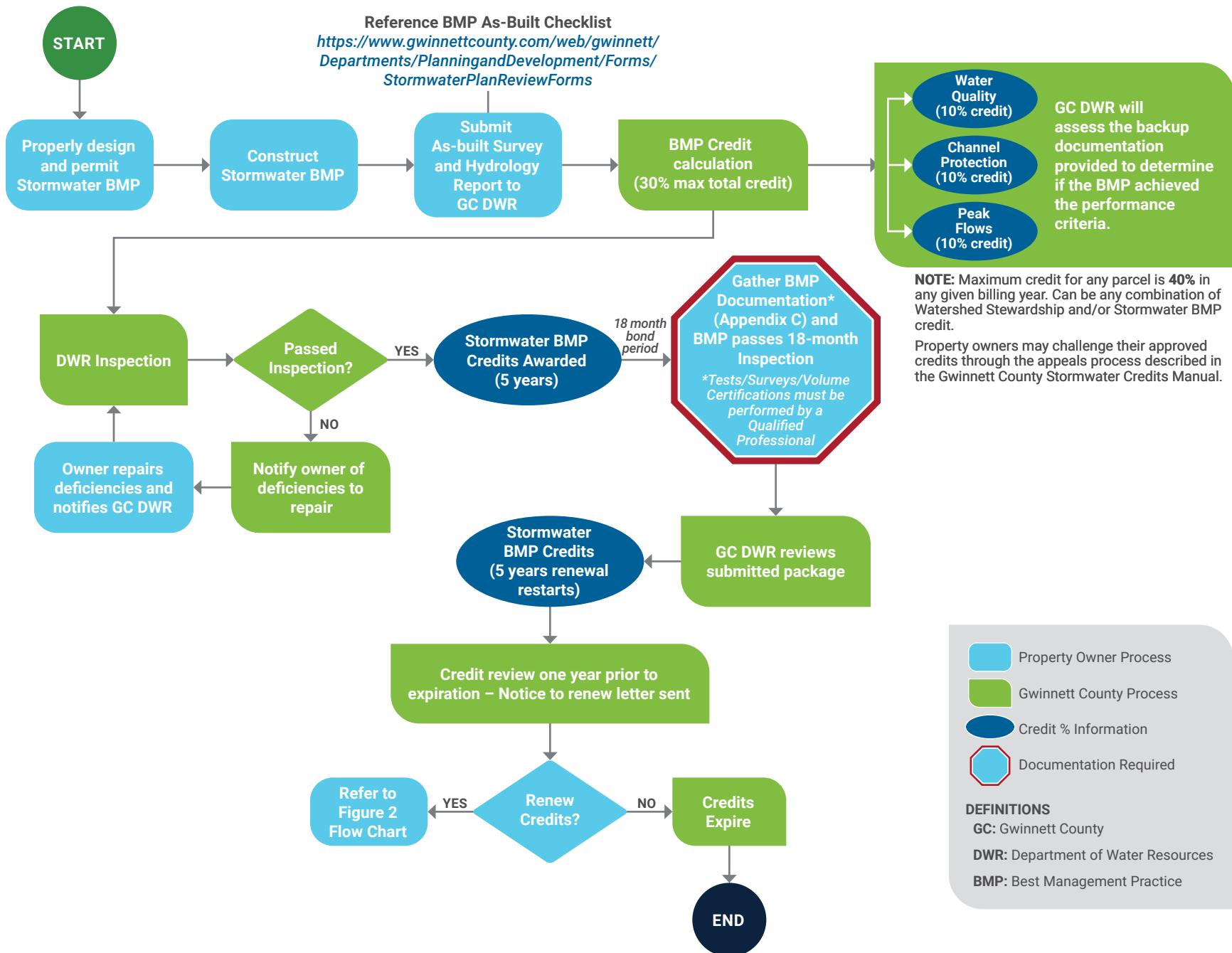


Figure 1. Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP) credits approval process for properties under development.

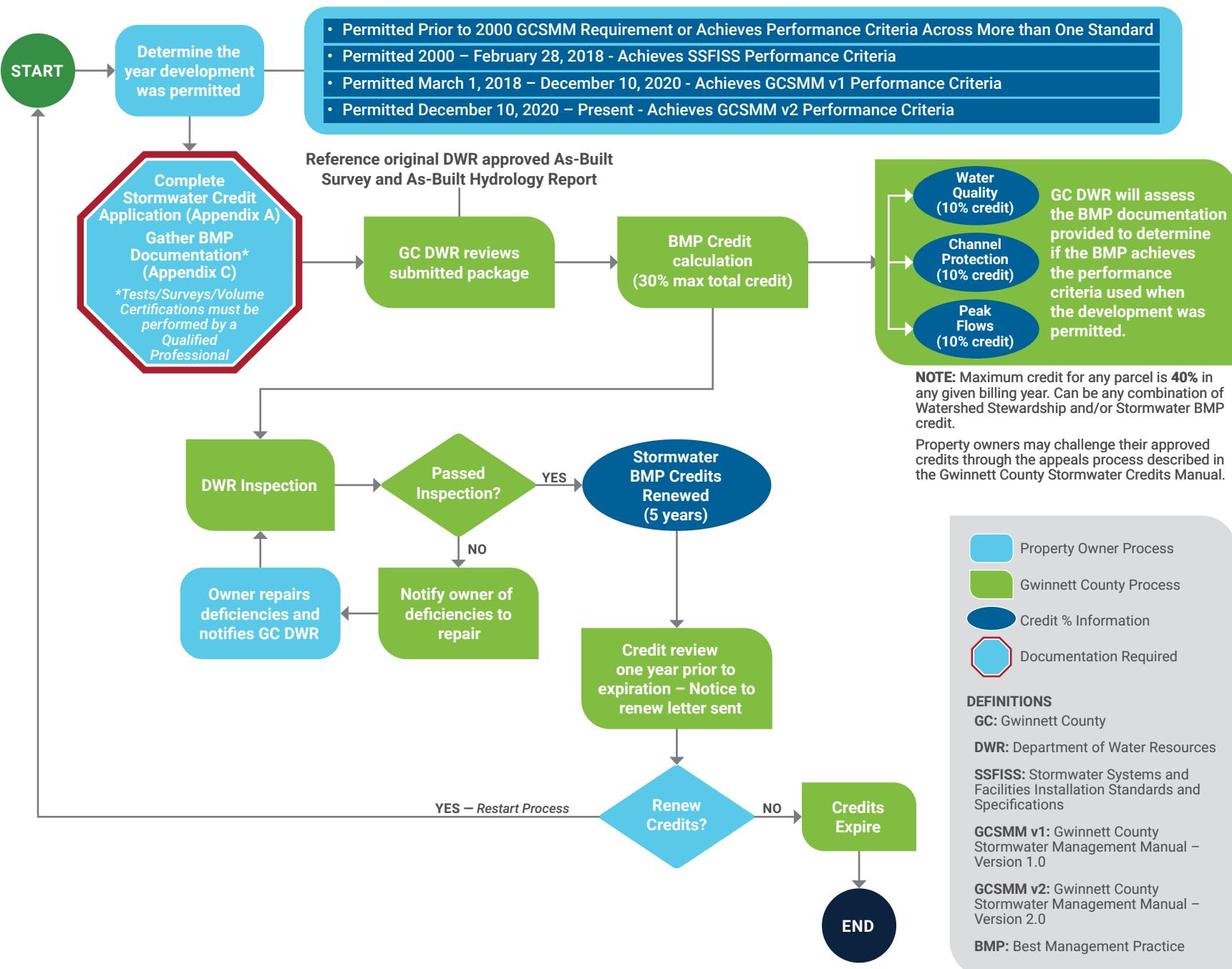


Figure 2. Stormwater BMP credits approval process for previously developed properties.

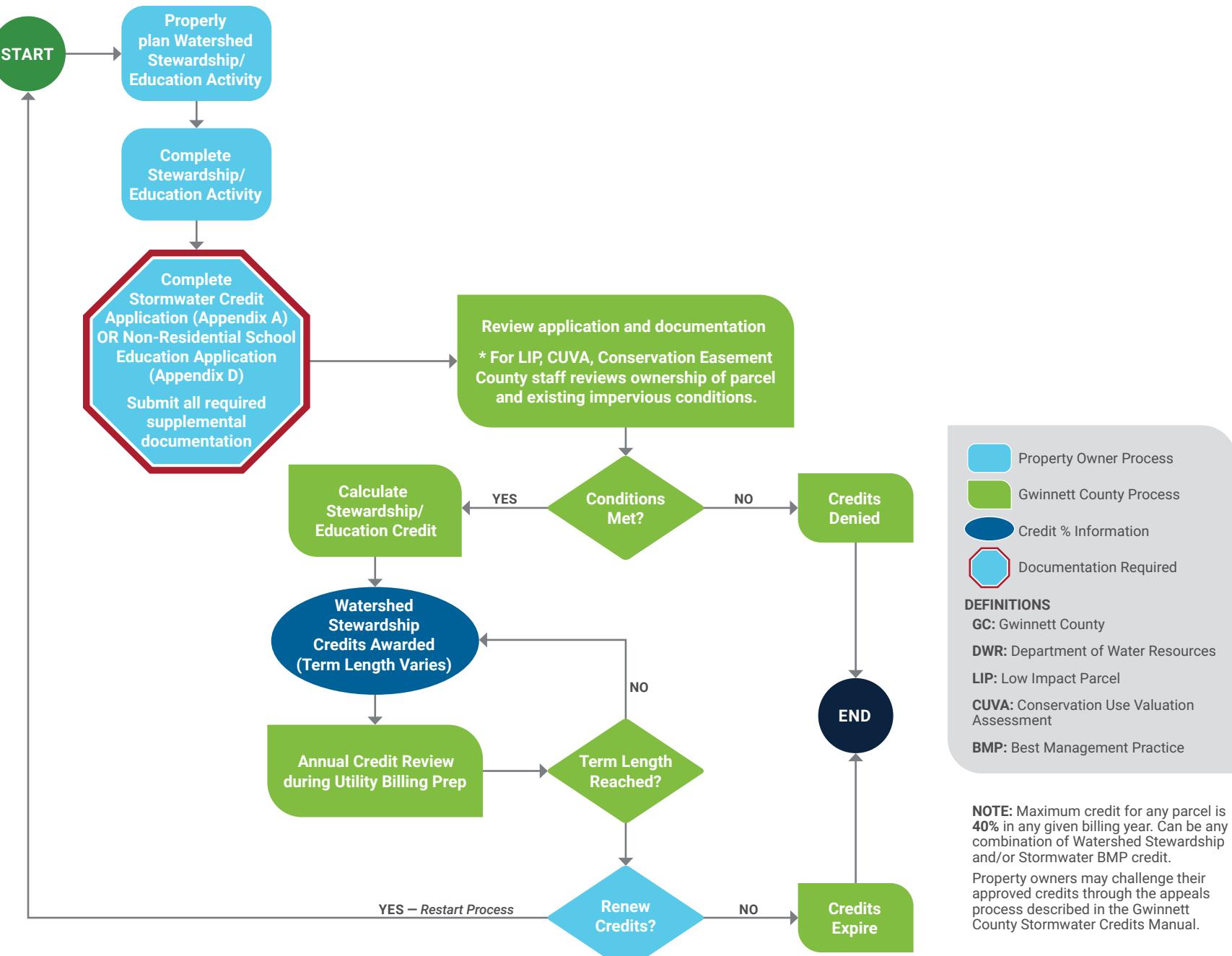


Figure 3. Watershed Stewardship/Education stormwater credit approval process.

# APPENDIX C. STORMWATER BMP DOCUMENTATION

## Documentation to Accompany the Stormwater Service Fee – Credit Application Form When Applying for Stormwater Best Management Practice (BMP) Credit

For property owners applying for stormwater BMP credits, documentation is required to demonstrate that the BMPs on the property have not been modified from the Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources (DWR) authorized As-Built Hydrology Report/As-Built Survey. In addition, each BMP must be inspected and maintained in accordance with the maintenance agreement maintained with DWR.

The required documentation varies by BMP type and is listed in Table C-1. Items listed in the “Documentation for All BMP Credit Applications” column should be provided regardless of the credit type (i.e. water quality, channel protection, or peak flow reduction). Items listed in the “Documentation for Water Quality Credit” column of Table C-1 are additional requirements if the property owner is applying for water quality credit. To obtain credit for channel protection and peak flow reduction, credit renewals must include a current Volume Certification Form, stage-storage table, and topographical survey drawing with outlet control structure detail.

DWR will review the documentation, compare it to the DWR authorized As-Built Hydrology Report/As-Built Survey, and inspect all documented stormwater BMPs on the property. DWR will notify the property owner of basic maintenance or repair required. The credit is approved once the BMP passes DWR inspection and all documentation has been reviewed and accepted.

**Table C-1. Documentation to Accompany the Stormwater Service Fee – Credit Application Form When Applying for Renewal of Stormwater BMP Credit**

BMP	Documentation for All BMP Credit Applications	Documentation for Water Quality Credit <sup>1</sup>
<b>Bioretention Areas</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the bioretention area showing pretreatment, surface, outlet control structure, and downstream of discharge locations. Site plan showing bioretention areas.	Infiltration Rate Certification Form or Drawdown Rate Certification Form
<b>Bioslopes</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the bioslope showing surface, outlet control structure, and downstream of discharge locations. Site plan showing bioslopes.	Infiltration Rate Certification Form
<b>Downspout Disconnects</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of each downspout showing point of disconnection. Site plan showing downspouts.	No additional documentation required
<b>Dry Detention/Dry Extended Detention Basins</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the detention basin showing pretreatment, surface, outlet control structure, and downstream of discharge locations. Site plan showing detention basin.	Volume Certification Form, stage-storage table, and current topographical survey drawing with outlet control structure detail

**Table C-1. Documentation to Accompany the Stormwater Service Fee – Credit Application Form When Applying for Renewal of Stormwater BMP Credit**

BMP	Documentation for All BMP Credit Applications	Documentation for Water Quality Credit <sup>1</sup>
<b>Dry Wells</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of each observation well. Site plan showing dry wells.	Drawdown Rate Certification Form
<b>Dry Enhanced Swales</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the swale showing surface, outlet structure, and downstream. Site plan showing swales.	Infiltration Rate Certification Form
<b>Wet Enhanced Swales</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the swale showing surface, outlet structure, and downstream. Site plan showing swales.	Volume Certification Form, stage-storage table, and current topographical survey drawing with outlet control structure detail
<b>Grass Channels</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the grass channel showing surface, outlet control structure, and downstream. Site plan showing grass channels.	Volume Certification Form, stage-storage table, and current topographical survey drawing with outlet control structure detail
<b>Gravity Oil/Grit Separators</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the oil/grit separators showing inside chambers. Site plan showing each oil/grit separator.	BMP Maintenance Certification Form
<b>Green Roofs</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the green roof showing the surface and condition. Site plan showing the location and extent of the green roof.	BMP Maintenance Certification Form
<b>Infiltration Practices</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the infiltration practice showing the surface, outlet control structure, and downstream. Site plan showing infiltration practices.	Infiltration Rate Certification Form
<b>Multi-Purpose Detention Areas</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the detention area showing the surface, outlet control structure, and downstream. Site plan showing multi-purpose detention areas.	Volume Certification Form, stage-storage table, and current topographical survey drawing with outlet control structure detail
<b>Organic Filters</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the filter showing the surface, outlet control structure, and downstream. Site plan showing filters.	Drawdown Rate Certification Form
<b>Permeable Paver Systems</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the permeable paver system showing the surface, system outlet, and downstream of outlet. Site plan showing permeable pavement system.	Infiltration Rate Certification Form or Drawdown Rate Certification Form
<b>Pervious Concrete</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the pervious concrete showing the surface, system outlet, and downstream of outlet. Site plan showing pervious concrete.	Infiltration Rate Certification Form or Drawdown Rate Certification Form

**Table C-1. Documentation to Accompany the Stormwater Service Fee – Credit Application Form When Applying for Renewal of Stormwater BMP Credit**

BMP	Documentation for All BMP Credit Applications	Documentation for Water Quality Credit <sup>1</sup>
<b>Porous Asphalt</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the porous asphalt showing the surface, system outlet, and downstream of outlet. Site plan showing porous asphalt.	Infiltration Rate Certification Form or Drawdown Rate Certification Form
<b>Proprietary Systems</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the BMP components including the surface, outlet control structure, and downstream. Site plan showing proprietary systems.	BMP Maintenance Certification Form
<b>Rainwater Harvesting</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the cistern components including the downspout connection and discharge locations. Site plan showing cistern locations.	BMP Maintenance Certification Form
<b>Regenerative Stormwater Conveyance</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the surface, outlet control structure, and any pretreatment or inlets. Site plan showing regenerative stormwater conveyance.	Volume Certification Form, stage-storage table, and current topographical survey drawing with outlet control structure detail
<b>Sand Filter</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the pretreatment, sand filter surface, outlet control structure, and downstream. Site plan showing sand filter.	Infiltration Rate Certification Form, Volume Certification Form, stage-storage table, and current topographical survey drawing with outlet control structure detail
<b>Site Reforestation/Revegetation</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the reforested/revegetated area. Site plan showing extent of reforestation and revegetation.	No additional documentation required
<b>Soil Restoration</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the soil restoration area. Site plan showing extent of soil restoration area.	No additional documentation required
<b>Stormwater Planters/Tree Boxes</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of each stormwater planter or tree box. Site plan showing stormwater planters/tree boxes.	Infiltration Rate Certification Form or Drawdown Rate Certification Form
<b>Stormwater Ponds (Extended Wet Detention Ponds)</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of stormwater pond pretreatment, surface, banks, outlet control structure, and downstream. Site plan showing the stormwater pond.	Volume Certification Form, stage-storage table, and current topographical survey drawing with outlet control structure detail
<b>Stormwater Wetlands</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the pretreatment or forebay, wetland surface, and outlet control structure. Site plan showing the wetland.	Volume Certification Form, stage-storage table, and current topographical survey drawing with outlet control structure detail

**Table C-1. Documentation to Accompany the Stormwater Service Fee – Credit Application Form When Applying for Renewal of Stormwater BMP Credit**

BMP	Documentation for All BMP Credit Applications	Documentation for Water Quality Credit <sup>1</sup>
<b>Submerged Gravel Wetland</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the pretreatment or forebay, submerged gravel wetland surface, and outlet control structure. Site plan showing the wetland.	Drawdown Rate Certification Form
<b>Underground Detention</b>	Site plan showing the location and extent of the underground detention. Current date-stamped photographs of the outlet control structure (with tape measure next to orifice to indicate size) and vault bottom. More information is provided online at <a href="https://www.gwinnettcounty.com/static/departments/water/pdf/Underdetention_2015.pdf">https://www.gwinnettcounty.com/static/departments/water/pdf/Underdetention_2015.pdf</a> .	Volume Certification Form, stage-storage table, and outlet control structure drawing (Water Quality Credit can only be awarded for underground detention permitted between 2000-2017.)
<b>Vegetated Filter Strip</b>	Current date-stamped photograph(s) of the filter strip and downstream. Site plan showing the filter strip.	Infiltration Rate Certification Form, Volume Certification Form, stage-storage table, and current topographical survey drawing with outlet control structure detail

Notes:

All documentation must reflect BMP conditions within 1 year of the credit application date.

<sup>1</sup>A qualified professional must complete the Volume Certification Form, the Infiltration Rate Test, Drawdown Rate Test, or Simple Infiltration Rate Test and the property owner must certify the results in the corresponding certification form.

# APPENDIX D.

# NON-RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL WATERSHED

# EDUCATION APPLICATION FORM

**GWINNETT COUNTY STORMWATER UTILITY FEE  
NON-RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL WATERSHED EDUCATION APPLICATION FORMS  
WATERSHED EDUCATION CREDIT APPLICATION**

**PART I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

**I.A School Entity Applying for Credits**

**Public Schools in unincorporated Gwinnett County & City of Lilburn**

Owners: \_\_\_\_\_

Refer to list (spreadsheet) submitted with application

*OR*

**Daycare, Private School or Postsecondary Institution**

Owners: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Institution(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Refer to list (spreadsheet) submitted with application

**I.B Authorized Education Curriculum Representative**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**I.C School Situs Address**

Provide Parcel ID, Street Address, City, ZIP

Tax Property Parcel ID# \_\_\_\_\_

School Address \_\_\_\_\_

(City)

(Zip Code)

*OR*

Refer to list (spreadsheet) submitted with application

**I.D Signatures of Parcel Owner Representatives**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

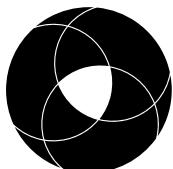
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_



## PART II. EDUCATION CREDIT

**NOTE:** Please provide specific responses to the following questions, using additional pages if necessary, to provide a complete and comprehensive application.

### II.A Watershed Education Curriculum

#### II.A.1

Total school enrollment as of October 1 \_\_\_\_\_

##### Credit Schedule

*50% of enrollment = 20% credit*

Total number of participants = \_\_\_\_\_

*40% of enrollment = 15% credit*

Percent of enrollment = \_\_\_\_\_

*30% of enrollment = 10% credit*

Credit Amount = \_\_\_\_\_

*20% of enrollment = 5% credit*

I have verified that at least a unit of study on the identified standards (II.A.2) was provided.  
(4 contact hours per eligible submitted student).

---

DATE

---

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

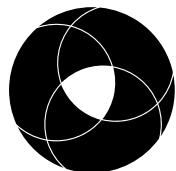
#### II.A.2

Attach a list of current dated Georgia Performance Standards, AKS, or objectives for the watershed education lessons.

---

DATE

---

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

**Gwinnett**  
Water Resources

## II.B Watershed Stewardship Activities

Refer to list (spreadsheet) submitted with application      **OR**

Fill out this block:

Date of Activity			
Name of School			
Number of Contact Hours			
Name of Activity			
<b>Brief Description</b>			
# Participants (students only)			

***Attach additional project sheets if necessary.***

Total school enrollment as of October 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Schedule

*20% of enrollment = 20% credit*

Total number of participants = \_\_\_\_\_

*15% of enrollment = 15% credit*

Percent of enrollment = \_\_\_\_\_

*10% of enrollment = 10% credit*

Credit Amount = \_\_\_\_\_

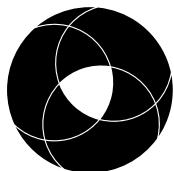
*5% of enrollment = 5% credit*

---

DATE

---

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE



**Gwinnett**  
Water Resources

## II.C Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center

Refer to list (spreadsheet) submitted with application      **OR**  
 Fill out this block:

Date of Activity			
Name of School			
Number of Contact Hours			
Name of Activity			
<b>Brief Description</b>			
# Participants (students only)			

***Attach additional project sheets if necessary.***

Total school enrollment as of October 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Schedule

*20% of enrollment = 20% credit*

Total number of participants = \_\_\_\_\_

*15% of enrollment = 15% credit*

Percent of enrollment = \_\_\_\_\_

*10% of enrollment = 10% credit*

Credit Amount = \_\_\_\_\_

*5% of enrollment = 5% credit*

---

DATE

---

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

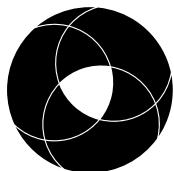
---

DATE

---

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Gwinnett County DWR  
c/o GIS Inventory and Billing Team  
684 Winder Highway  
Lawrenceville, GA 30045



**Gwinnett**  
Water Resources

## OFFICIAL DWR USE ONLY

### PART III. TOTAL EDUCATION CREDIT

Total Credit II.A \_\_\_\_\_ %

**OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

40% credit  
is the maximum allowed

Total Credit II.B \_\_\_\_\_ %

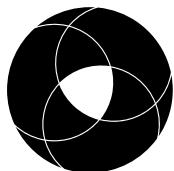
Total Credit II.C \_\_\_\_\_ %

GEHC SIGNATURE

DATE

DWR SIGNATURE

DATE



# APPENDIX E. CREDIT APPLICATION EXAMPLES

**The following examples have been developed to illustrate the process for requesting Stormwater BMP credit for properties with common BMPs and under common development scenarios.**

## Example 1: Non-Residential Property Renewing Stormwater BMP Credit – Permitted in 2019 Under Gwinnett County Stormwater Management Manual version1 (GCSMM v 1)

A 5-acre car dealership was constructed in 2019 and permitted by Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources (DWR) under the GCSMM v1. A dry extended detention basin is located on the property and it was designed to capture runoff from the first 1.2 inches of rainfall, provide extended detention of the 1-year, 24-hour storm event released over 24 hours, control the post-development rate for the 2-year through the 25-year, 24-hour storms, and safely handle the runoff from the 100-year event. During the 2019 permitting process, an As-built Storm Water Management Report was authorized by Gwinnett County and a 30% credit for stormwater BMPs was granted for a 5-year term. The 5-year term is about to expire, and the property owner is interested in renewing the credits.

The property owner is eligible to renew the 30% credit for the dry extended detention basin on the property after documentation of facility condition and volume has been accepted by Gwinnett County DWR and as long as a stormwater facility maintenance agreement for the dry extended detention basin is in place.

The property owner is required to provide current date-stamped photographs of the dry extended detention basin showing the pretreatment, surface, outlet structure, and downstream of the outlet structure ([Appendix C](#)). The property owner must also provide a topographical survey drawing with outlet control structure detail, a stage/storage table, and a Volume Certification Form completed by a qualified professional. The survey must have been completed within one year of applying for credit renewal. The property owner will attach all backup documentation to a completed [Stormwater Service Fee Credit Application Form \(Appendix A\)](#) and submit the package to DWR for review.

## Example 2: Residential Property Applying for Watershed Stewardship Rain Barrel Credit and Public Participation Credit

Residential homeowners have installed rain barrels on two of the six roof downspouts and have participated in a local storm drain stenciling effort. Figure 1 presents a site map showing the location of downspouts and rain barrels.

The credits available are in the Watershed Stewardship category. From the [Stormwater Service Fee Credit Application Form \(Appendix A\)](#), 5% credit is available for residential education for the storm drain stenciling effort. The maximum amount of credit available for rain barrels is 3% credit if runoff from 100% of the downspouts is captured in a 50 gallon or larger rain barrel(s). Partial credit is granted based on the fraction of downspouts captured by a rain barrel multiplied by 3%. The fraction of downspouts with a rain barrel is 2/6 or 0.33. The rain barrel credit is  $0.33 \times 3\% = 1\%$ .

Total property credit =  
public education credit + rain barrel credit =  $5\% + 1\% = 6\%$ .

To request 6% credit off their stormwater utility fee, the homeowners will request that the county official organizing the storm drain stenciling effort submit a Stormwater Service Fee Credit Application Form with the official and applicants' signatures along with certification of participation. To receive the 1% credit for installation of the rain barrels, the homeowners will submit a site map showing structures on the property and the location of all rain barrels that have been installed. The site map may be sketched by hand or printed from <https://gis.gwinnettcounty.com/GISDataBrowser/WebPages/Map/FundyViewer.aspx>. Date-stamped photographs of each rain barrel must also be included in the application.

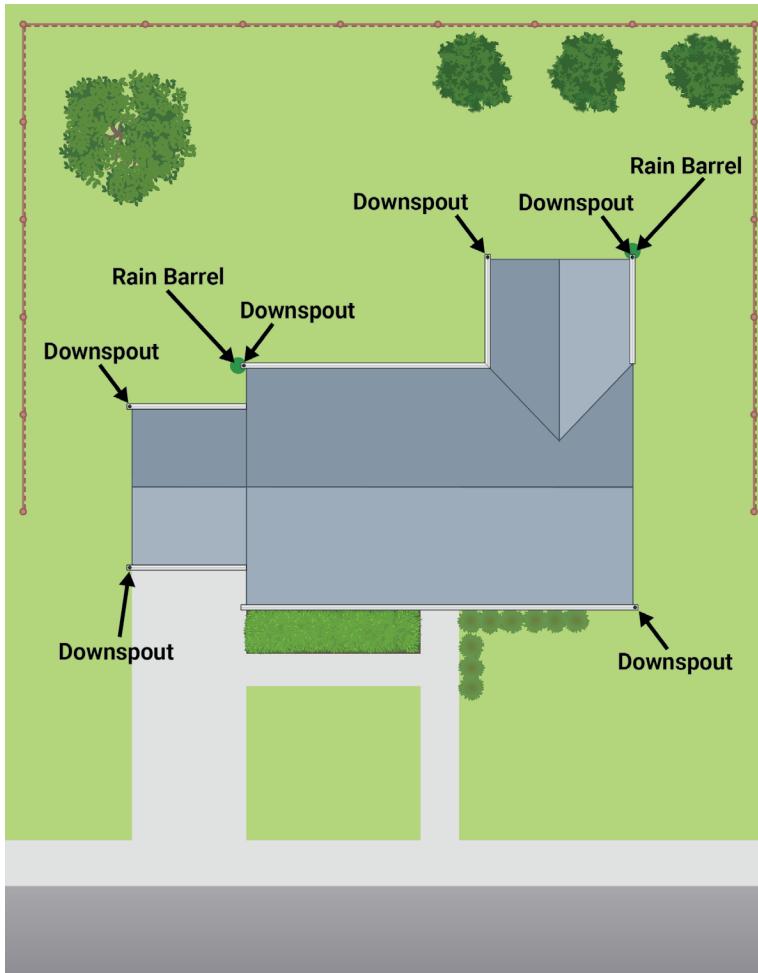


Figure 1. Residential Site Map Showing the Location of Downspouts and Rain Barrels

## Example 3: Residential Property Applying for Watershed Stewardship Low Impact Parcel and Stream Buffer Credit

This residential property has incorporated extensive stormwater management practices, including meeting the requirements for a low-impact parcel with 5% or less of impervious area. The impervious area on the property is 4% of the total area. In addition, the homeowners have added another 130 feet to the stream buffer along the back of their property (Figure 2).

The available credits are in the Watershed Stewardship category for a low-impact parcel and stream buffer. A credit of 30% is available for the low-impact parcel because the impervious area is less than 5% of the total property area.

The additional stream buffer width of 130 feet beyond the local required buffer width is eligible for a stream buffer credit. For 10% credit, a property owner must provide an additional 250 feet or more of stream buffer. To obtain a 5% credit, an additional 125 feet to 249 feet must be provided. The additional buffer of 130 feet is between 125 and 249; therefore, the stream buffer credit is 5%.

The full property credit would be the addition of the credit for the two practices:  $30\% + 5\% = 35\%$ .

To request 35% off their stormwater fee, the property owner will complete a stormwater credit application and provide documentation that a buffer easement has been established and recorded, and that the easement protects the natural buffer to the satisfaction of Gwinnett County DWR. Documentation should include a site map completed by a professional surveyor showing the location of the buffer and impervious area on the property and a copy of the easement establishing the buffer. For credit renewal, a site map consisting of a simple drawing and a report on the condition of the easement should be included in the renewal application every fifth year in order to continue the credit beyond a five-year term.

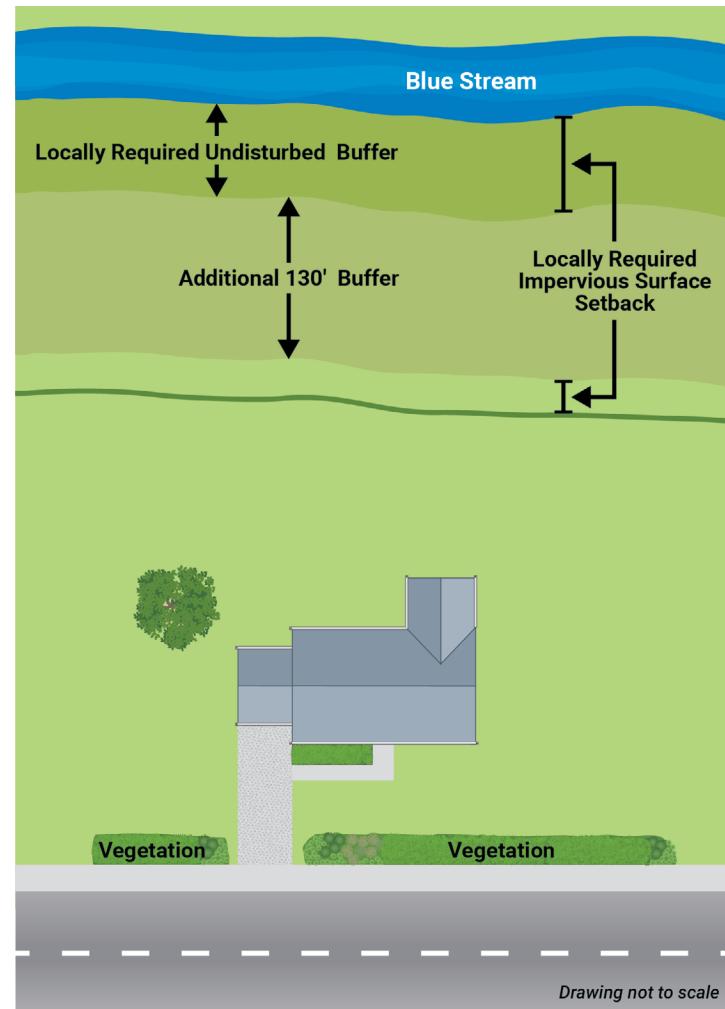


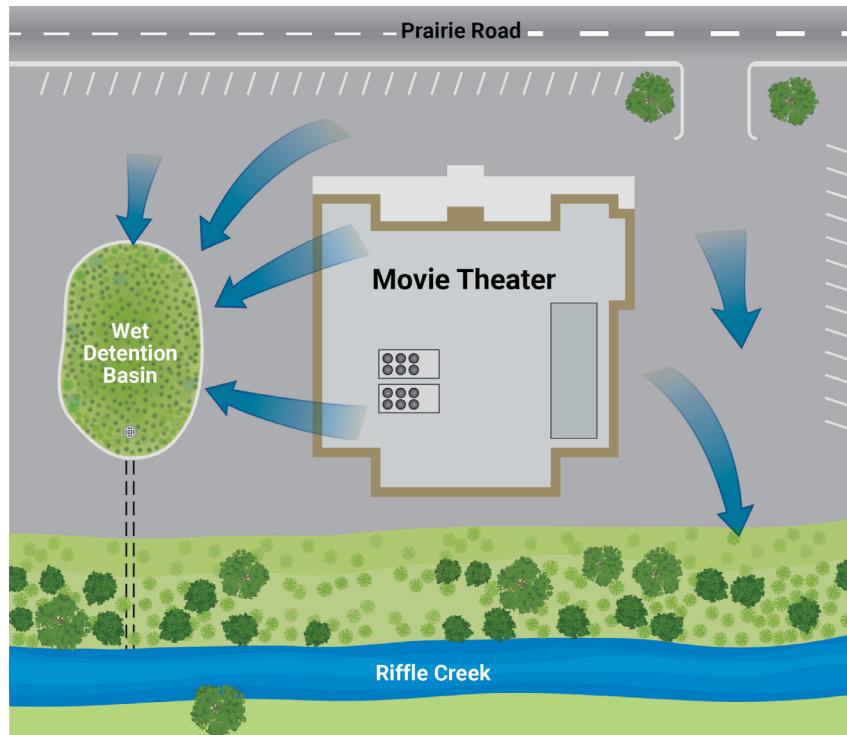
Figure 2. Residential Property with Low Impact Development and Additional Stream Buffer

## Example 4: Non-Residential Property Applying for Stormwater BMP Credit – Permitted in 2001 Under Stormwater Systems and Facilities Installation Standards and Specifications (SSFISS) Performance Criteria

A movie theatre was constructed in 2001 on a 5-acre re-development site in Gwinnett County. The impervious area associated with the parking lot and building and a portion of the disturbed pervious area drain to a wet detention basin. The remaining disturbed pervious area and undisturbed upland area drain to Riffle Creek without any treatment.

The property owner may be eligible for credits in the Stormwater BMP credit category because of the wet detention basin on the property. From the [Stormwater Service Fee Credit Application Form \(Appendix A\)](#), stormwater BMPs may be eligible for the following credits:

- **Water Quality** – A 10% credit is awarded based on compliance with the water quality performance criteria used when the property was developed.
- **Channel Protection** – A 10% credit is awarded to property owners with stormwater BMPs designed to protect stream channels from bank and bed erosion and degradation by providing extended detention of the 1-year, 24-hour storm event released over a period of 24 hours.
- **Peak Flow** – A 10% credit is awarded to property owners with stormwater BMPs that control the post-development peak discharge to the pre-development rate for the 2-year through the 25-year, 24-hour storms.



The As-Built Hydrology Report authorized by DWR at the time the wet detention basin was designed, shows that the basin was designed to meet the SSFISS water quality and channel protection performance criteria. The property owner may be eligible for 20% credit (10% for water quality and 10% for channel protection). The property owner must submit to DWR a completed [Stormwater Service Fee Credit Application Form \(Appendix A\)](#) with current date-stamped photographs of the wet detention basin pretreatment, pond surface, outlet control structure and downstream of the outlet control structure ([Appendix C](#)). The property owner must also provide a topographical survey drawing with an outlet control structure detail,

stage/storage table, and Volume Certification Form completed by a qualified professional. All documentation must be within one year of applying for credit.

DWR will review the documentation, compare it to the DWR authorized As-Built Hydrology Report/As-Built Survey, and inspect the BMP. If deficiencies are noted, DWR will notify the property owner of any maintenance or repair required. The 20% credit is approved once the BMP passes DWR inspection and all documentation has been reviewed and accepted.

## Example 5: Non-Residential Property Applying for Renewal of Stormwater BMP Credit – Permitted Under the GCSMM v2

A commercial property was developed under the GCSMM v2 and includes stormwater BMPs that were designed to meet the performance criteria of the GCSMM v2. Stormwater BMPs on the site include:

- Two gravity oil/grit separators designed for water quality.
- One infiltration practice designed for runoff reduction.
- One dry detention basin designed for channel protection and peak flow control.

At the time the development was completed, the property owner was approved for 30% credit for the stormwater BMPs on the property. The gravity oil/grit separators and infiltration practice together achieve the water quality performance criteria for GCSMM v2. The owner received notification from DWR that the credits were about to expire, and they have the option to renew the credits for another 5-year term. To qualify for renewal of the 30% credit, the property owner is required to provide ([Appendix C](#)):

- A site plan showing all BMPs.
- Current date-stamped photographs of the two gravity oil/grit separators showing inside chambers and BMP maintenance certification form.
- Current date-stamped photographs of the infiltration practice showing the surface, outlet structure, and downstream of BMP. A signed Infiltration Rate Certification Form documenting results from a surface infiltration rate test. The surface infiltration rate test must be completed by a qualified professional.
- Current date-stamped photographs of the dry detention basin showing surface, outlet structure, dam slopes, wall condition and downstream of any discharge location and overflow. A Volume Certification Form, stage/storage table, and current topographical survey drawing with outlet control structure detail.

All documentation must be dated within one-year of the credit application. DWR will review the documentation, compare it to the DWR authorized As-Built Hydrology Report/As-Built Survey, and inspect all stormwater BMPs on the property. If deficiencies are noted, DWR will notify the property owner of any maintenance or repair required. The 30% credit is approved once the BMPs pass DWR inspection and all documentation has been reviewed and accepted.

## Example 6: Non-Residential Property with Multiple Development Permits Applying for Stormwater BMP Credit

Five acres of a 12-acre commercial property were initially developed in 2001. The 2001 development was permitted under SSFISS and included a sand filter designed to meet the water quality performance criteria. In 2021, the property owner is developing an additional 3 acres under the GCSMM v2 and is designing BMPs to meet the water quality, channel protection, and peak flow reduction performance criteria. For the purposes of credit toward the stormwater utility fee for the property, the stormwater BMP credit is proportionally distributed according to the impervious area associated with each development stage. The first stage of development is the 5-acre development in 2001 and the second stage of development is the 3-acre development in 2021.

The [Stormwater Service Fee Credit Application Form \(Appendix A\)](#) shows properties with stormwater BMPs may be eligible for the following credits:

- **Water Quality** – A 10% credit is awarded based on compliance with the water quality performance criteria used when the property was developed.
- **Channel Protection** – A 10% credit is awarded to property owners with stormwater BMPs designed to protect stream channels from bank and bed erosion and degradation by providing extended detention of the 1-year, 24-hour storm event released over a period of 24 hours.
- **Peak Flow Reduction** – A 10% credit is awarded to property owners with stormwater BMPs that control the post-development peak discharge to the pre-development rate for the 2-year through the 25-year, 24-hour storms.

The 5-acre development in 2001 was permitted according to the SSFISS performance criteria limiting the TSS loading rate from a developed site to 850 lb/ac/yr or less. To receive the 10% water quality credit for the 5 acres, the property owner must complete and submit a credit application and backup documentation. Documentation for the 2001 sand filter includes current date-stamped photographs of the sand filter surface, outlet structure, and any pretreatment or inlets. The property owner will include a site plan showing the location and extent of the sand filter and a Drawdown Rate Certification Form documenting results of the drawdown rate test performed by a qualified professional.

DWR will review the documentation, compare it to the authorized 2001 As-Built Hydrology Report/As-Built Survey, and inspect the sand filter. DWR will notify the property owner of any maintenance or repair required. The 10% credit is applied after the sand filter passes DWR inspection and all documentation has been reviewed and accepted. The credit is calculated as 10% of the stormwater fee associated with the impervious area of the 5-acre development.

During the land development permitting and approval process, the property owner develops and submits an As-Built Hydrology and As-Built Survey report to DWR for the new 3-acre development. Once these have been approved, a 30% credit for achieving the water quality, channel protection, and peak flow reduction performance criteria in the GCSMM v2 will be

## Example 6: Non-Residential Property with Multiple Development Permits Applying for Stormwater BMP Credit (continued)

applied automatically for the initial 5-year period. The credit is calculated as 30% of the stormwater fee associated with the impervious area of the three-acre development. Renewal of the credit beyond the first 5 years will require the property owner to submit a credit application and backup documentation to DWR for review.

The savings provided by the stormwater BMP credit for the entire property is computed by calculating the stormwater fee for each development phase based on the impervious area and multiplying by the stormwater BMP credit for the individual phase. The table below illustrates the calculation with an example stormwater fee of \$2.46 per 100 sf of impervious area.

**Table E-1. Example Stormwater Fee Calculation for a Property with Multiple Development Permits and Stormwater BMP Credits**

Development Stage	Developed Area (acres)	Developed Area (sf)	Impervious Basis (sf) (Impervious area rounded down to the nearest 100 sf)	Stormwater Fee ( = \$2.46 x Imperious Basis (sf) / 100 sf)	Credit (multiply by 100 to get percent)	Savings (= Credit x Stormwater Fee)
Stage 1 Developed in 2001	5	217,801	54,400	\$1,339.48	0.1	\$133.95
Stage 2 Developed in 2021	3	130,681	52,200	\$1,285.90	0.3	\$385.77
Stormwater Fee for Property (= 1,339.48+1,285.90)			\$2,625.37			\$519.72
Reduced Fee with Credits Applied (= 2,625.37-519.72)			\$2,105.66			