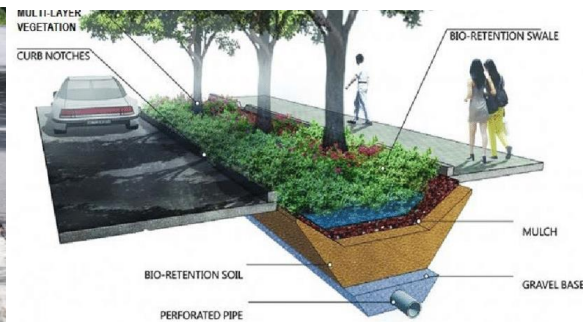


# BENTON COUNTY STORMWATER PROGRAM

## -Bioswales-

Have you ever noticed that many commercial and residential lots have planted areas adjacent to the road? These areas do more than bring green space and curb appeal to development; they are known as ‘bioswales’ and serve a very specific purpose in conserving environmental health!

What is a bioswale? In short, it’s a vegetated feature that allows for natural infiltration of stormwater into the ground. You have probably seen a lot of them – every vegetated ditch is technically a bioswale. They may also be referred to as “grass swales”, “vegetated swales”, or “filter strips”. They are important because they act as a sort of ‘first line’ for stormwater. Plants allow water to saturate the soil without causing erosion or sediment pollution and greatly decrease the quantity of dirty water entering our rivers, streams, and storm drains (which end up in our natural waterways!).



Bioswales both reduce and treat stormwater runoff making them a powerful and inexpensive tool that require little maintenance. They can also be seeded or planted with native plants which benefit local pollinators. Lastly, they make neighborhoods a nicer place to live by introducing an element of nature!

### Building a Bioswale

Bioswales are easy to create; they are generally a linear ‘ditch’ dug to a lower elevation than the surrounding area to be drained, and they must be vegetated before use. This includes grasses or other plants that will help stabilize the surrounding soil and efficiently allow water to infiltrate.

### Learn More!

**Marys River Watershed Council**

<https://www.mrwc.org/>

**Luckiamute Watershed Council**

<https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/>

**Mid-coast Watershed Council**

<http://www.midcoastwatersheds.org/>

**Long Tom Watershed Council**

<https://www.longtom.org/>

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**Or visit to learn more:**  
[pw.bentoncountyor.gov/stormwater](http://pw.bentoncountyor.gov/stormwater)