Definitions of Frequently Used Stormwater Terms

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These frequently used terms are being released currently to provide guidance to the regulated community. These definitions may be included in stormwater rule language in the future.

Diffuse Flow: Uniform shallow flow that is conveyed to a vegetated filter strip, another ground surface or stormwater practice. The purpose of diffuse flow is to remove pollutants via infiltration and settling as well as to reduce erosion prior to stormwater reaching surface waters.

Effective Infiltration: Practices that closely replicate the reduction of pollutants and runoff volume that is achieved via infiltration.

Non-erosive Flow: A flow rate that does not result in erosion at the stormwater outfall, downstream conveyance or receiving water for the peak flow for the 10-year storm event.

Water Quality Design Storm Depth: The rainfall depth (in inches) to be used as the basis for water quality calculations and the design of volume-based stormwater control measures. Stormwater flows resulting from rainfall depths in excess of the water quality design storm depth shall be discharged as non-erosive flow.

Water Quality Design Storm Intensity: The rainfall intensity (in inches per hour) to be used as the basis for determining the design flowrate for flowrate-based stormwater control measures. Flowrate based stormwater control measures shall be designed to bypass flows which exceed the design flowrate and discharge these flows as non-erosive flow.

If you have questions about this document, please do not hesitate to contact Bradley Bennett at (919) 807-6378 or bradley.bennett@ncdenr.gov or Annette Lucas at (919) 807-6381 or annette.lucas@ncdenr.gov.