SCVWD FLOOD PROTECTION DETENTION BASIN DESIGN CRITERIA

SCVWD FLOOD PROTECTION DETENTION BASIN DESIGN CRITERIA

This guidance is intended to provide an overview and is to be supplemented with engineering analysis and design. Engineering professionals should refer to the SCVWD Hydrology Manual, the Santa Clara County Drainage Manual, and any design requirements made by permitting agencies.

These design criteria are recommended to be used when detention basins are required to mitigate for impacts to flood conveyance capacity. Separate criteria have been developed for implementing NPDES permit requirements for hydro-modification. There may be some instances where stormwater runoff rates need to be regulated for both flood protection and hydro-modification (HMP) purposes. In those cases, the recommended method of design needs to be as follows: (a) design the basin for the HMP requirements, (b) test the HMP basin design against the flood protection requirements outlined in this section. If the HMP design meets the flood protection requirements, the HMP design achieves both functions. If not, the HMP design would need to be modified by the engineer to accomplish both functions. This may require modifying the storage volume and the orifices/weirs of the HMP basin.

GENERAL DESIGN CRITERIA

The frequency, lateral extent and elevation of flooding should not substantially increase under post development conditions.

The 100-year flood according to pre-development and post-development conditions shall be analyzed and routed through the pond. The 100-year outflow hydrograph shall not be more than the pre-development condition. If there is an existing flooding condition downstream, then the design should also be based on the flow rate and frequency at which flooding occurs.

In general the design of detention facilities should be based on the differential storage between the inflow and the outflow hydrographs. The peak of the outflow hydrograph for the post-design condition shall not exceed that of the pre-design condition.

DEFINITIONS AND DESIGN IMPLICATIONS OF SOME TERMINOLOGIES

Pre-development condition: This is the existing land uses within the tributary watershed, which may be completely rural, and it includes pervious and impervious areas. Using appropriate procedures, the total flow peak and volume may be determined by calculating the flood hydrographs from the pervious and impervious areas and then subsequently combining these two hydrographs.

Post-development condition: With an increase in imperviousness, urbanization within the watershed will result in a higher runoff volume and a different peak flow rate which, again, are obtained by combining the pervious area and impervious area hydrographs from the post-development land use conditions.

Differential peak flow rate and volume: The differential flow values, between the pre- and post-development conditions, represent the effect of urbanization. In order to minimize impacts from flooding, no increase in flow rate or volume is allowed. Thus, mitigation measures are needed. One of the mitigation measures is to achieve peak shaving and volume reduction via a detention basin.

Detention basin routing: The routing (passing-through) of floodwaters through the detention basin could effectively reduce the peak flow and volume at its downstream end due to storage effects. The use of a detention basin is desired to reduce flood peaks.

OPERATION MANUAL AND RULE CURVES

For every stormwater detention facility that is designed to alleviate flood damages or other natural emergencies, guidelines must be established to assure the proper maintenance and safety of the facility. These guidelines should identify whom, when, and how the facility will be managed. The safety elements of operating the facility should be addressed, as should recommendations relating to the ingress-egress to and from the facility.

It is recommended that detention basins be designed to function as multipurpose facilities for recreation as well as for flood attenuation. For this purpose, the facility should be designed with minimum depths of water and relatively flat slopes for the sides of the pond. In the case where detention facilities are designed as multipurpose facilities for recreation, flood and pollution control, a rule curve that specifies the allowable maximum water surface elevations over time should be defined and made as a part of the final operating manual.

SITING OF DETENTION BASINS

- Recommend situating the detention basin closer to the middle of a watershed to provide efficient peak flow and volume reductions.
- Avoid locations near San Francisco Bay or at the lower/downstream end of a watershed.
- Utilize existing topography, such as the selection of a low depressed area to reduce the amount of excavation and the selection of a narrow necking area for outlet control or dam sites, could result in significant savings.
- Avoid locations where the seasonal ground water level may rise above the basin bottom. Ground water flow can have significant effect in the construction and operation of the basin.
- Where multiple detention facilities are on one creek, synchronize operations of these facilities so as not to expand the impact and increase the flow rather than reducing it.

PROTECTION OF RIPARIAN HABITAT AND GROUNDWATER

Detention basins should not be located within the riparian corridor, but may be located beyond the riparian corridor. Geotechnical evaluation may be needed for basins in close proximity to a creek bank. To protect the groundwater from surface water contamination, it is preferable that the stormwater detention facilities be located in impervious areas. Investigations should also be made into the proximity of existing groundwater contamination. Infiltration from an unlined detention basin can exacerbate the movement of a groundwater contamination plume. Groundwater or geologic conditions may require the inclusion of a lining to ensure that the underground water is not contaminated.

TYPES OF ATTENUATION FACILITIES

Off-Stream Facilities: Off-stream basins are preferable because they are generally smaller than in-stream types and, hence, more economical. In-stream basins have more restrictions due to environmental concerns. An off-stream detention basin is designed to take the excess flow above a certain prescribed threshold. Stormwater runoff from a watershed is generally collected and transported via storm drains or channels to the detention basin. The outlet of the off-stream basin should be designed to drain flow back to the main stream either by gravity or by pumping if gravity flow is not feasible.

In-Stream Facilities: Instream facilities are not preferred because of the impacts structural modifications may have on the stream. Flow through ponds or detention basins that intercept flow from development with a discharge outlet draining back to the creek to mitigate induced flooding can both be categorized as in-stream facilities. The modified puls or storage-indication method is frequently used as the routing method for the in-stream facility routing. Usually the in-stream facility attenuates the flows through the creek; therefore, the outlet structure should be designed to accommodate the required capacity of the creek. At times, minimum inflows are permitted to flow unimpeded through the detention facility. The design of in-stream detention facilities shall be consistent with the design of the ultimate flood control project on that stream.

SIZING OF AN OFF-STREAM DETENTION BASIN

The sizing of an off-stream detention basin involves an iterative design process. Flow over a preset level is diverted through a diversion and control structures such as an overflow weir discharging via either an open channel or a closed conduit into the detention basin. At the lower end of the basin, an outlet draining the flow back into the main stream may be needed. The flow conveying hydraulics for both inflow and outflow of the detention basin must be determined in order to meet the objectives of the flow attenuation in the main stream. This involves a trial and error design process of sizing the basin with its associated storage-discharge relationship to optimize the combined flow at the downstream end.

OUTLET STRUCTURE

The outlet structure should be designed to evacuate the storage volume incidental to flood control (excluding the initial storage) within a short time period to allow for the next incoming storm.

SPILLWAY DESIGN

Every stormwater detention facility should be designed to prevent damages from embankment failure due to overtopping or other causes. Good engineering principles should be implemented in the construction of the embankment and the spillway should be designed to prevent the possibility of over-banking from the spillway design flood.

If the pond volume is less than 15 acre-feet and the depth of water in the pond is less than 6 feet, then the spillway shall be designed for the 100-year flood. If the volume of the pond is between 15 and 50 acre-feet and the depth is between 6 and 25 feet, then the spillway design flood may be based on the 200-year flood. All other impoundments that are larger than defined above should comply with the design criteria of the State of California Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD).

BASIN SLOPES AND LOW FLOW CHANNEL

The recommended side slopes for flood control storage areas within a stormwater detention basin vary with the design of the basin. Earthen slopes or passive vegetated areas should be at a maximum of 3 horizontal to 1 vertical. Turf areas should be at a 4 to 1 or flatter slope to facilitate mowing. The basin floor shall be sloped towards the low flow channel with a minimum slope of 1%. The low flow channel is recommended to carry 1 to 3 percent of the 100-year peak flow.

CHECKLIST FOR DETENTION BASIN DESIGN

- Hydrology map of watershed boundaries, basin layout with contours.
- Summary tables of watershed parameters.
- Inflow hydrographs at key locations.
- Stage, storage, discharge curves.
- Outflow hydrographs after basin routing.
- Basin design drawings with inlet and outlet designs.
- Summary tables of peak flow and volume for pre- and post- conditions.