Appendix

D

Approved Infiltration Rate Assessment Methods for Selection of Storm Water BMPs

D.1 Introduction

Characterization of potential infiltration rates is a critical step in evaluating the degree to which infiltration can be used to reduce storm water runoff volume. This appendix is intended to provide guidance to help answer the following questions:

1. **How and where does infiltration testing fit into the project development process?**

   Section D.2 discusses the role of infiltration testing in different stage of project development and how to plan a phased investigation approach.

2. **What infiltration rate assessment methods are acceptable?**

   Section D.3 describes the infiltration rate assessment methods that are acceptable.

3. **What factors should be considered in selecting the most appropriate testing method for a project?**

   Section D.4 provides guidance on site-specific considerations that influence which assessment methods are most appropriate.

4. **How should factors of safety be selected and applied to, for BMP selection and design?**

   Section D.5 provides guidance for selecting a safety factor.

Note, that this appendix does not consider other feasibility criteria that may make infiltration infeasible, such as groundwater contamination and geotechnical considerations (these are covered in **Appendix C**). In general, infiltration testing should only be conducted after other feasibility criteria specified in this manual have been evaluated and cleared.

D.2 Role of Infiltration Testing in Different Stages of Project Development

In the process of planning and designing infiltration facilities, there are a number of ways that infiltration testing or estimation factors into project development, as summarized in Table D.2-1. When selecting infiltration testing methods, the geotechnical engineer shall select methods applicable to the relevant project phase.

Table D.2-1: Role of Infiltration Testing

Project Phase	Key Questions	General Assessment Strategies
Planning Phase	• Where within the project area is infiltration potentially feasible? • What volume reduction approaches are potentially suitable for my project?	• Use existing data and maps to the extent possible • Use less expensive methods to allow a broader area to be investigated more rapidly • Reach tentative conclusions that are subject to confirmation/refinement at the design phase
BMP Phase	• What infiltration rates should be used to design infiltration and biofiltration facilities? • What factor of safety should be applied?	• Use more rigorous testing methods at specific BMP locations • Support or modify preliminary feasibility findings • Estimate design infiltration rates with appropriate factors of safety

D.3 Guidance for Selecting Infiltration Testing Methods

The geotechnical engineer shall select appropriate testing methods for the site conditions, subject to the engineer's discretion and approval of the City Engineer, that are adequate to meet the burden of proof that is applicable at each phase of the project design (See Table 1-1):

- At the planning phase, testing/evaluation method must be selected to provide a reliable estimate of the locations where infiltration is feasible and allow a reasonably confident determination of infiltration feasibilility to support the selection between full infiltration, partial infiltration, and no infiltration BMPs.
- At the design phase, the testing method must be selected to provide a reliable infiltration rate to be used in design. The degree of certainty provided by the selected test should be considered

Table D.3-1 provides a matrix comparison of these methods. Appendices **D.3.1 to D.3.3** provide a summary of each method. This appendix is not intended to be an exhaustive reference on infiltration testing at this time. It does not attempt to discuss every method for testing, nor is it intended to provide step-by-step procedures for each method. The user is directed to supplemental resources (referenced in this appendix) or other appropriate references for more specific information. **Alternative testing methods are allowed with appropriate rationales and documentation.**

To select an infiltration testing method, it is important to understand how each test is applied and what specific physical properties the test is designed to measure. Infiltration testing methods vary considerably in these regards. For example, a borehole percolation test is conducted by drilling a borehole, filling a portion of the hole with water, and monitoring the rate of fall of the water. This test directly measures the three dimensional flux of water into the walls and bottom of the borehole. An approximate correction is applied to indirectly estimate the vertical hydraulic conductivity from the results of the borehole test. In contrast, a double-ring infiltrometer test is conducted from the ground surface and is intended to provide a direct estimate of vertical (one-dimensional) infiltration rate at this point. Both of these methods are applicable under different conditions.

Submit the field test measurements and tabulated results for each location tested. Submit the calculated infiltration rate and method of calculation. For the purposes of this manual, saturated hydraulic conductivity and infiltration rate may be assumed to be equal.

Table D.3-1: Comparision of Infiltration Rate Estimation and Testing Methods[1]

Test	Suitability at Planning Phase	Suitability at Design Phase[2]
NRCS Soil Survey Maps	Yes, but mapped soil types must be confirmed with site observations. Regional soil maps are known to contain inaccuracies at the scale of typical development sites.	Yes, for partial infiltration designs when mapped soils are corroborated with soil samples collected during investigation activities. No, for full infiltration designs.
Grain Size Analysis	Not preferred. Should only be used if a strong correlation has been developed between grain size analysis and measured infiltration rates testing results of site soils.	No
Cone Penetrometer Testing (CPT)	Not preferred. Should only be used if a strong correlation has been developed between CPT results and measured infiltration rates testing results of site soils.	No
Simple Open Pit Test	Yes	Yes, with appropriate correction for infiltration into side walls and elevated factor of safety.

[1] Percolation rates measured in pit tests and borehole percolation tests should be converted to infiltration rates using the Porchet method (Appendix D.3.4).

[2] Design phase confirmation of infiltration rate is only required if full infiltration BMPs are proposed. Partial infiltration BMPs are not as sensitive to infiltration rate and do not warrant design phase verification

Test	Suitability at Planning Phase	Suitability at Design Phase[2]
Open Pit Falling Head Test	Yes	Yes, with appropriate correction for infiltration into side walls and elevated factor of safety.
Double Ring Infiltrometer Test (ASTM 3385)	Yes	Yes
Single Ring Infiltrometer Test	Yes	Yes
Large-scale Pilot Infiltration Test	Yes, but generally cost prohibitive and too water-intensive for preliminary screening of a large area.	Yes, but should consider relatively large water demand associated with this test.
Smaller-scale Pilot Infiltration Test	Yes	Yes
Well Permeameter Method (USBR 7300-89)	Yes	Yes
Borehole Percolation Tests (various methods)	Yes; reliability of this test can be improved by obtaining a continuous core where tests are conducted.	Yes in areas of proposed cut where other tests are not possible; a continuous boring log should be recorded and used to interpret test; should be confirmed with a more direct measurement following excavation.
Laboratory Permeability Tests (e.g., ASTM D2434)	Yes, only suitable for evaluating potential infiltration rates in proposed fill areas. For sites with proposed cut, it is preferred to do a borehole percolation test at the proposed grade instead of analyzing samples in the lab. A combination of both tests may improve reliability.	No. However, may be part of a line of evidence for estimating the design infiltration of partial infiltration BMPs constructed in future compacted fill.

Table D.3-2 provides recommendations for number of tests, based on test method, needed to provide adequate characterization of the design phase infiltration rate. Testing must be done at the location and elevation of proposed infiltration BMPs. This guidance is only applicable for full infiltration BMPs at the design phase. It is not applicable for planning phase investigations or for design of partial infiltration BMPs. The "low" and "medium" concerns relate to the factor of safety presented in Appendix D.5.

Table D.3-2: Recommended Replicagtes and Levels of Concern for Design Phase Infiltration Testing for Full Infiltration Design

Test Method Category	Small BMPs (BMP area < 250 ft²)	Medium BMPs (BMP area < 2,000 ft²)	Large BMPs (BMP area > 2,000 ft²)
Pit Testing Methods: Large-scale PIT Smaller-scale PIT	2 tests = **Low Concern**	2+ tests = **Low Concern**	2 tests per 5,000 ft² = **Medium Concern** 3+ tests per 5,000 ft²=
Surface Infiltrometer Tests and Smaller Pit Testing Methods: Simple Open Pit Open Pit Falling Head Single Ring Double ring Other surface infiltrometer methods	2 tests = **Medium Concern** 3+ tests = **Low Concern**	3 tests = **Medium Concern** 4+ tests = **Low Concern**	**Low Concern** 3 tests per 5,000 ft²= **Medium Concern** 5+ tests per 5,000 ft²= **Low Concern**
Well and Borehole Permeameter Methods **(**must be **accompanied by bore logs to be suitable for design phase)**	2 tests = **Medium Concern** 3+ tests = **Low Concern**	3 tests = **Medium Concern** 4+ tests = **Low Concern**	3 tests per 5,000 ft² = **Medium Concern** 5+ tests per 5,000 ft²= **Low Concern**
Mapping or soil texture methods	Not Acceptable for Full Infiltration Design Phase		

D.3.1 Desktop Approaches and Data Correlation Methods

This section reviews common methods used to evaluate infiltration characteristics based on desktop-available information, such as GIS data. This section also introduces methods for estimating infiltration properties via correlations with other measurements.

D.3.1.1 NRCS Soil Survey Maps

NRCS Soil Survey maps (http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm) can be used to estimate preliminary feasibility conditions, specifically by mapping hydrologic soil groups, soil texture classes, and presence of hydric soils relative to the site layout. For feasibility determinations, mapped conditions must be supplemented with available data from the site (e.g., soil borings, observed soil textures, biological indicators). The presence of D soils, if confirmed by available data, provides a reasonable basis to determine that full infiltration is not feasible for a given DMA.

D.3.1.2 Grain Size Analysis Testing and Correlations to Infiltration Rate

Hydraulic conductivity can be estimated indirectly from correlations with soil grain-size distributions. While this method is approximate, correlations have been relatively well established for some soil conditions. One of the most commonly used correlations between grain size parameters and hydraulic conductivity is the Hazen (1892, 1911) empirical formula (Philips and Kitch, 2011), but a variety of others have been developed. Correlations must be developed based on testing of site-specific soils. For the purposes of this manual, saturated hydraulic conductivity and infiltration rate can be assumed to be equal.

D.3.1.3 Cone Penetrometer Testing and Correlations to Infiltration Rate

Hydraulic conductivity can also be estimated indirectly from cone penetrometer testing (CPT). A cone penetrometer test involves advancing a small probe into the soil and measuring the relative resistance encountered by the probe as it is advanced. The signal returned from this test can be interpreted to yield estimated soil types and the location of key transitions between soil layers. If this method is used, correlations must be developed based on testing of site-specific soils. For the purposes of this manual, saturated hydraulic conductivity and infiltration rate can be assumed to be equal.

D.3.2 Surface and Shallow Excavation Methods

This section describes tests that are conducted at the ground surface or within shallow excavations close to the ground surface. These tests are generally applicable for cases where the bottom of the infiltration system will be near the existing ground surface. They can also be conducted to confirm the results of borehole methods after excavation/site grading has been completed.

D.3.2.1 Simple Open Pit Test

The Simple Open Pit Test is most appropriate for planning level screening of infiltration feasibility. Although it is similar to Open Pit Falling Head tests used for establishing a design infiltration rate (see below), the Simple Open Pit Test is less rigorous and is generally conducted to a lower standard of care. This test can be conducted by a nonprofessional as part of planning level screening phase.

The Simple Open Pit Test is a falling head test in which a hole at least two feet in diameter is filled with water to a level of 6" above the bottom. Water level is checked and recorded regularly until either an hour has passed or the entire volume has infiltrated. The test is repeated two more times in succession and the rate at which the water level falls in the third test is used as the infiltration rate. Measured percolation rate shall be converted to an infiltration rate using the Porchet method (Appendix D.3.4).

This test has the advantage of being inexpensive to conduct. Yet it is believed to be fairly reliable for screening as the dimensions of the test are similar, proportionally, to the dimensions of a typical BMP. The key limitations of this test are that it measures a relatively small area, does not necessarily result in a precise measurement, and may not be uniformly implemented.

Source: City of Portland, 2008. Storm water Management Manual

D.3.2.2 Open Pit Falling Head Test

This test is similar to the Simple Open Pit Test, but covers a larger footprint, includes more specific instructions, returns more precise measurements, and generally should be overseen by a geotechnical professional. Nonetheless, it remains a relatively simple test.

To perform this test, a hole is excavated at least 2 feet wide by 4 feet long (larger is preferred) and to a depth of at least 12 inches. The bottom of the hole should be approximately at the depth of the proposed infiltrating surface of the BMP. The hole is pre-soaked by filling it with water at least a foot above the soil to be tested and leaving it at least 4 hours (or overnight if clays are present). After pre-soaking, the hole is refilled to a depth of 12 inches and allow it to drain for one hour (2 hours for slower soils), measuring the rate at which the water level drops. The test is then repeated until successive trials yield a result with less than 10 percent change.

In comparison to a double-ring infiltrometer, this test has the advantage of measuring infiltration over a larger area and better resembles the dimensionality of a typical small scale BMP. Because it includes both vertical and lateral infiltration, it should be adjusted to estimate design rates for larger scale BMPs.

D.3.2.3 Double Ring Infiltrometer Test (ASTM 3385)

The Double Ring Infiltrometer was originally developed to estimate the saturated hydraulic conductivity of low permeability materials, such as clay liners for ponds, but has seen significant use in storm water applications. The most recent revision of this method from 2009 is known as ASTM 3385-09. The testing apparatus is designed with concentric rings that form an inner ring and an annulus between the inner and outer rings. Infiltration from the annulus between the two rings is intended to saturate the soil outside of the inner ring such that infiltration from the inner ring is restricted primarily to the vertical direction.

To conduct this test, both the center ring and annulus between the rings are filled with water. There is no pre-wetting of the soil in this test. However, a constant head of 1 to 6 inches is maintained for 6 hours, or until a constant flow rate is established. Both the inner flow rate and annular flow rate are recorded, but if they are different, the inner flow rate should be used. There are a variety of approaches that are used to maintain a constant head on the system, including use of a Mariotte tube, constant level float valves, or manual observation and filling. This test must be conducted at the elevation of the proposed infiltrating surface; therefore application of this test is limited in cases where the infiltration surface is a significant distance below existing grade at the time of testing.

However, given the small diameter of the inner ring (standard diameter is 12 inches, but it can be larger), this test only measures infiltration rate in a small area. Additionally, given the small quantity of water used in this test compared to larger scale tests, this test may be biased high in cases where the long term infiltration rate is governed by groundwater mounding and the rate at which mounding dissipates (i.e., the capacity of the infiltration receptor). Finally, the added effort and cost of isolating vertical infiltration rate may not necessarily be warranted considering that BMPs typically have a lateral component of infiltration as well. Therefore, while this method has the advantages of being technical rigorous and well standardized, it should not necessarily be assumed to be the most representative test for estimating full-scale infiltration rates. Source: American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) International (2009)

D.3.2.4 Single Ring Infiltrometer Test

The single ring Infiltrometer test is not a standardized ASTM test, however it is a relatively well-controlled test and shares many similarities with the ASTM standard double ring infiltrometer test (ASTM 3385-09). This test is a constant head test using a large ring (preferably greater than 40 inches in diameter) usually driven 12 inches into the soil. Water is ponded above the surface. The rate of water addition is recorded and infiltration rate is determined after the flow rate has stabilized. Water can be added either manually or automatically.

The single ring used in this test tends to be larger than the inner ring used in the double ring test. Driving the ring into the ground limits lateral infiltration; however some lateral infiltration is generally considered to occur. Experience in Riverside County (CA) has shown that this test gives results that are close to full-scale infiltration facilities. The primary advantages of this test are that it is relatively simple to conduct and has a larger footprint (compared to the double-ring method) and restricts horizontal infiltration and is more standardized (compared to open pit methods). However, it is still a relatively small scale test and can only be reasonably conducted near the existing ground surface.

D.3.2.5 Large-scale Pilot Infiltration Test

As its name implies, this test is closer in scale to a full-scale infiltration facility. This test was developed by Washington State Department of Ecology specifically for storm water applications.

To perform this test, a test pit is excavated with a horizontal surface area of roughly 100 square feet to a depth that allows 3 to 4 feet of ponding above the expected bottom of the infiltration facility. Water is continually pumped into the system to maintain a constant water level (between 3 and 4 feet about the bottom of the pit, but not more than the estimated water depth in the proposed facility) and the flow rate is recorded. The test is continued until the flow rate stabilizes. Infiltration rate is calculated by dividing the flow rate by the surface area of the pit. Similar to other open pit test, this test is known to result in a slight bias high because infiltration also moves laterally through the walls of the pit during the test. Washington State Department of Ecology requires a correction factor of 0.75 (factor of safety of 1.33) be applied to results.

This test has the advantage of being more resistant to bias from localized soil variability and being more similar to the dimensionality and scale of full scale BMPs. It is also more likely to detect long term decline in infiltration rates associated with groundwater mounding. As such, it remains the preferred test for establishing design infiltration rates in Western Washington (Washington State Department of Ecology, 2012). In a comparative evaluation of test methods, this method was found to provide a more reliable estimate of full-scale infiltration rate than double ring infiltrometer and borehole percolation tests (Philips and Kitch 2011).

The difficulty encountered in this method is that it requires a larger area be excavated than the other methods, and this in turn requires larger equipment for excavation and a greater supply of water. However, this method should be strongly considered when less information is known about spatial variability of soils and/or a higher degree of certainty in estimated infiltration rates is desired.

Source: Washington State Department of Ecology, 2012.

D.3.2.6 Smaller-scale Pilot Infiltration Test

The smaller-scale PIT is conducted similarly to the large-scale PIT but involves a smaller excavation, ranging from 20 to 32 square feet instead of 100 square feet for the large-scale PIT, with similar depths. The primary advantage of this test compared to the full-scale PIT is that it requires less excavation volume and less water. It may be more suitable for small-scale distributed infiltration controls where the need to conduct a greater number of tests outweighs the accuracy that must be obtained in each test, and where groundwater mounding is not as likely to be an issue. Washington State Department of Ecology establishes a correction factor of 0.5 (factor of safety of 2.0) for this test in comparison to 0.75 (factor of safety of 1.33) for the large-scale PIT to account for a greater fraction of water infiltrating through the walls of the excavation and lower degree of certainty related to spatial variability of soils.

D.3.3 Deeper Subsurface Tests

D.3.3.1 Well Permeameter Method (USBR 7300-89)

Well permeameter methods were originally developed for purposes of assessing aquifer permeability and associated yield of drinking water wells. This family of tests is most applicable in situations in which infiltration facilities will be placed substantially below existing grade, which limits the use of surface testing methods.

In general, this test involves drilling a 6 inch to 8 inch test well to the depth of interest and maintaining a constant head until a constant flow rate has been achieved. Water level is maintained with down-hole floats. The Porchet method (**Appendix D.3.4)** or the nomographs provided in the USBR Drainage Manual (United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, 1993) are used to convert the measured rate of percolation to an estimate of vertical hydraulic conductivity. A smaller diameter boring may be adequate, however this then requires a different correction factor to account for the increased variability expected.

While these tests have applicability in screening level analysis, considerable uncertainty is introduced in the step of converting direct percolation measurements to estimates of vertical infiltration. Additionally, this testing method is prone to yielding erroneous results cases where the vertical horizon of the test intersects with minor lenses of sandy soils that allow water to dissipate laterally at a much greater rate than would be expected in a full-scale facility. To improve the interpretation of this test method, a continuous bore log should be inspected to determine whether thin lenses of material may be biasing results at the strata where testing is conducted. Consult USBR procedure 7300-89 for more details.

Source: (United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, 1990, 1993)

D.3.3.2 Borehole Percolation Tests (various methods)

Borehole percolation tests were originally developed as empirical tests to estimate the capacity of onsite sewage disposal systems (septic system leach fields), but have more recently been adopted into use for evaluating storm water infiltration. Similar to the well permeameter method, borehole percolation methods primarily measure lateral infiltration into the walls of the boring and are designed for situations in which infiltration facilities will be placed well below current grade. The percolation rate obtained in this test should be converted to an infiltration rate using a technique such as the Porchet method (**Appendix D.3.4)**.

This test is generally implemented similarly to the USBR Well Permeameter Method. Per the Riverside County Borehole Percolation method, a hole is bored to a depth at least 5 times the borehole radius. The hole is presoaked for 24 hours (or at least 2 hours if sandy soils with no clay). The hole is filled to approximately the anticipated top of the proposed infiltration basin. Rates of fall are measured for six hours, refilling each half hour (or 10 minutes for sand). Tests are generally repeated until consistent results are obtained.

The same limitations described for the well permeameter method apply to borehole percolation tests, and their applicability is generally limited to initial screening. To improve the interpretation of this test method, a continuous soil core can be extracted from the hole and below the test depth, following testing, to determine whether thin lenses of material may be biasing results at the strata where testing is conducted.

Sources: Riverside County Percolation Test (2011), California Test 750 (Caltrans, 1986), San Bernardino County Percolation Test (1992); USEPA Falling Head Test (USEPA, 1980).

D.3.4 Percolation Rate Conversion Example

Measured percolation rate should be converted to an infiltration rate using the Porchet method (aka Inverse Borehole Method). See example below for the conversion.

Given:

- Time interval, Δt = 10 minutes
- Initial depth to water, D_o = 12.25 inches
- Final depth to water, D_f = 13.75 inches
- Total depth of test hole, D_T = 60 inches
- Test hole radius[1], r = 4 inches

Required:

- Determine the tested infiltration rate based on Porchet's method.

Solution:

1. Solve for the height of water at the beginning of the selected time interval, H_o:

$$H_o = D_T - D_o = 60 - 12.25 = 47.75\ inches$$

2. Solve for the height of water at the end of the selected time interval, H_f:

$$H_f = D_T - D_f = 60 - 13.75 = 46.25\ inches$$

3. Solve for the change in height of water over the selected time interval, ΔH:

$$\Delta H = H_o - H_f = 47.75 - 46.25 = 1.50\ inches$$

4. Calculate the average head over the selected time interval, H_{avg}:

$$H_{avg} = \frac{H_o + H_f}{2} = \frac{47.75 + 46.25}{2} = 47.00\ inches$$

5. Calculate the tested infiltration rate, I_t, using the following equation:

$$I_t = \frac{\Delta H(60r)}{\Delta t\left(r + 2H_{avg}\right)} = \frac{(1.50\ in)\left(60\frac{min}{hr}\right)(4\ in)}{(10\ \mathrm{min})\left((4\ \mathrm{in}) + 2(47\ \mathrm{in})\right)} = 0.37\ in/hr$$

Notes:

[1]The equivalent radius should be determined for rectangular holes based on the area of the rectangular test hole (i.e., $r=(A/\pi)^{0.5}$)

D.4 Specific Considerations for Infiltration Testing

The following subsections are intended to address specific topics that commonly arise in characterizing infiltration rates.

D.4.1 Hydraulic Conductivity versus Infiltration Rate versusPercolation Rate

A common misunderstanding is that the "percolation rate" obtained from a percolation test is equivalent to the "infiltration rate" obtained from tests such as a single or double ring infiltrometer test which is equivalent to the "saturated hydraulic conductivity". In fact, these terms have different meanings. Saturated hydraulic conductivity is an intrinsic property of a specific soil sample under a given degree of compaction. It is a coefficient in Darcy's equation (Darcy 1856) that characterizes the flux of water that will occur under a given gradient. The measurement of saturated hydraulic conductivity in a laboratory test is typically referred to as "permeability", which is a function of the density, structure, stratification, fines, and discontinuities of a given sample under given controlled conditions. In contrast, infiltration rate is an empirical observation of the rate of flux of water into a given soil structure under long term ponding conditions. Similarly to permeability, infiltration rate can be limited by a number of factors including the layering of soil, density, discontinuities, and initial moisture content. These factors control how quickly water can move through a soil. However, infiltration rate can also be influenced by mounding of groundwater, and the rate at which water dissipates horizontally below a BMP – both of which describe the "capacity" of the "infiltration receptor" to accept this water over an extended period. For this reason, an infiltration test should ideally be conducted for a relatively long duration resembling a series of storm events so that the capacity of the infiltration receptor is evaluated as well as the rate at which water can enter the system. Infiltration rates are generally tested with larger diameter holes, pits, or apparatuses intended to enforce a primarily vertical direction of flux.

In contrast, percolation is tested with small diameter holes, and it is mostly a lateral phenomenon. The direct measurement yielded by a percolation test tends to overestimate the infiltration rate, except perhaps in cases in which a BMP has similar dimensionality to the borehole, such as a dry well. Adjustment of percolation rates may be made to an infiltration rate using a technique such as the Porchet Method.

D.4.2 Cut and Fill Conditions

Cut Conditions: Where the proposed infiltration BMP is to be located in a cut condition, the infiltration surface level at the bottom of the BMP might be far below the existing grade. For example, if the infiltration surface of a proposed BMP is to be located at an elevation that is currently beneath 15 feet of planned cut, how can the proposed infiltration surface be tested to establish a design infiltration rate prior to beginning excavation? The question can be addressed in two ways: First, one of the deeper subsurface tests described above can be used to provide a planning level screening of potential rates at the elevation of the proposed infiltrating surface. These tests can be conducted at depths exceeding 100 feet, therefore are applicable in most cut conditions. Second, the project can commit to further testing using more reliable methods following bulk excavation to refine or adjust infiltration rates, and/or apply higher factors of safety to borehole methods to account for the inherent uncertainty in these measurements and conversions.

Fill Conditions: Materials that are placed to construct grade are referred to as fill. Mechanically placed fill soil constructed in accordance with current standards is referred to as engineered compacted fill or structural fill. Per current standards, the placement and compaction of the fill soil is monitored and tested for quality assurance, and reported in an "as-graded" geotechnical report. Mechanically placed fill constructed prior to the current standards may or may not have been properly documented. Suitability of these fills for an intended use must be investigated by a geotechnical professional. Fill materials have also been placed locally that are not constructed in accordance with any standard and without any quality control. These fills soils are referred to as undocumented fill or as an uncontrolled embankment.

Infiltration rates and subsurface water flow pathways in fill soils can vary based on the soil properties, placement, and compaction of the fill. Select grading using soils with uniform properties can result in fills with predictable infiltration characteristics. More commonly, however, soils from different sources are mixed and/or stratified resulting in unpredictable infiltration characteristics and subsurface flow pathways.

If the bottom of a BMP (infiltration surface) is proposed to be located in a planned location, the infiltration surface may not exist prior to grading. How then can the infiltration rate be determined? For example, if a proposed infiltration BMP is to be located with its bottom elevation in 5 feet of fill, how could one reasonably establish an infiltration rate prior to the fill being placed?

Where possible, infiltration BMPs on planned materials should be designed such that their infiltrating surface extends into native soils. Additionally, for shallow fill depths, fill material can be selectively graded (i.e., high permeability granular material placed below proposed BMPs) to provide reliable infiltration properties until the infiltrating water reaches native soils. In some cases, due to considerable fill depth, the extension of the BMP down to natural soil and/or selective grading of fill material may prove infeasible. In addition, placement of fill material with heavy equipment may result in some compaction of now buried native soils potentially reducing their ability to infiltrate. In these cases, because of the uncertainty of fill parameters as described above as well as potential compaction of the native soils, an infiltration BMP may not be feasible.

If the fill is known to be of a granular nature and that the native soils below is permeable and will not be highly compacted, infiltration through compacted fill materials may still be feasible. In this case, a project phasing approach could be used including the following general steps, (1) collect samples from areas expected to be used as borrow sites for fill activities, (2) remold samples to approximately the proposed degree of compaction and measure the saturated hydraulic conductivity of remolded samples using laboratory methods, (3) if infiltration rates appear adequate for infiltration, then apply an appropriate factor of safety and use the initial rates for preliminary design, (4) following placement of fill, conduct in-situ testing to refine design infiltration rates and adjust the design as needed; the infiltration rate of native soil below the fill should also be tested at this time to determine if compaction as a result of fill placement has significantly reduced its infiltration rate.

The project geotechnical engineer shall be involved in decision making whenever infiltration is proposed in the vicinity of engineered compacted fill supporting structures or improvements so that potential impacts of infiltration can be evaluated. No full infiltration or partial infiltration BMPs shall be used in existing fills greater than 5 feet thick unless approved by the project geotechnical engineer. In fills 5 feet or less, full infiltration or partial infiltration may reasonably be achieved beneath fill. Full or partial Infiltration BMPs proposed within fills 5 feet or less must be evaluated by a geotechnical professional.

D.4.3 Effects of Direct and Incidental Compaction

It is widely recognized that compaction of soil has a major influence on infiltration rates (Pitt et al. 2008). However, direct (intentional) compaction is an essential aspect of project construction and indirect compaction (such as by movement of machinery, placement of fill, stockpiling of materials, and foot traffic) can be difficult to avoid in some parts of the project site. Infiltration testing strategies should attempt to measure soils at a degree of compaction that resembles anticipated post-construction conditions.

Ideally, infiltration systems should be located outside of areas where direct compaction will be required and should be staked off to minimize incidental compaction from vehicles and stockpiling. For these conditions, no adjustment of test results is needed.

However, in some cases, infiltration BMPs will be constructed in areas to be compacted. For these areas, it may be appropriate to include field compaction tests or prepare laboratory samples and conducting infiltration testing to approximate the degree of compaction that will occur in post-construction conditions. Alternatively, testing could be conducted on undisturbed soil, and an additional factor of safety could be applied to account for anticipated infiltration after compaction. To develop a factor of safety associated with incidental compaction, samples could compacted to various degrees of compaction, their hydraulic conductivity measured, and a "response curve" developed to relate the degree of compaction to the hydraulic conductivity of the material.

D.4.4 Temperature Effects on Infiltration Rate

The rate of infiltration through soil is affected by the viscosity of water, which in turn is affected by the temperature of water. As such, infiltration rate is strongly dependent on the temperature of the infiltrating water (Cedergren, 1997). For example, Emerson (2008) found that wintertime infiltration rates below a BMP in Pennsylvania were approximately half their peak summertime rates. As such, it is important to consider the effects of temperature when planning tests and interpreting results.

If possible, testing should be conducted at a temperature that approximates the typical runoff temperatures for the site during the times when rainfall occurs. If this is not possible, then the results of infiltration tests should be adjusted to account for the difference between the temperature at the time of testing and the typical temperature of runoff when rainfall occurs. The measured infiltration can be adjusted by the ratio of the viscosity at the test temperature versus the typical temperature when rainfall occurs (Cedergren, 1997), per the following formula:

Equation D.4-1: Measured Infiltration Adjustment

$$K_{Typical} = K_{Test} \times \left(\frac{\mu_{Test}}{\mu_{Typical}} \right)$$

Where:

$K_{Typical}$	=	the typical infiltration rate expected at typical temperatures when rainfall occurs
K_{Test}	=	the infiltration rate measured or estimated under the conditions of the test
$\mu_{Typical}$	=	the viscosity of water at the typical temperature expected when rainfall occurs
μ_{Test}	=	the viscosity of water at the temperature at which the test was conducted

D.4.5 Number of Infiltration Tests Needed

The heterogeneity inherent in soils implies that all but the smallest proposed infiltration facilities would benefit from infiltration tests in multiple locations. The following requirements apply for in situ infiltration/percolation testing:

- For design phase, in situ infiltration testing shall be conducted at a minimum of two locations within 50-feet of each proposed storm water infiltration BMP.
- In situ infiltration testing shall be conducted using an approved method listed in Table D.3-1
- For design phase, esting shall be conducted at approximately the same depth and in the same material as the base of the proposed storm water BMP.

D.5 Selecting a Safety Factor

Should I use a factor of safety for design infiltration rate?

Monitoring of actual facility performance has shown that the full-scale infiltration rate can be much lower than the rate measured by small-scale testing (King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, 2009). Factors such as soil variability and groundwater mounding may be responsible for much of this difference. Additionally, the infiltration rate of BMPs naturally declines between maintenance cycles as the BMP surface becomes occluded and particulates accumulate in the infiltrative layer.

In the past, infiltration structures have been shown to have a relatively short lifespan. Over 50 percent of infiltration systems either partially or completely failed within the first 5 years of operation (United States EPA. 1999). In a Maryland study on infiltration trenches (Lindsey et al. 1991), 53 percent were not operating as designed, 36 percent were clogged, and 22 percent showed reduced filtration. In a study of 12 infiltration basins (Galli 1992), none of which had built-in pretreatment systems, all had failed within the first two years of operation.

Given the known potential for infiltration BMPs to degrade or fail over time, an appropriate factor of safety applied to infiltration testing results is strongly recommended. This section presents a recommended thought process for selecting a safety factor. This method considers factor of safety to be a function of:

- Site suitability considerations, and
- Design-related considerations.

These factors and the method for using them to compute a safety factor are discussed below. Importantly, this method encourages rigorous site investigation, good pretreatment, and commitments to routine maintenance to provide technically-sound justification for using a lower factor of safety.

D.5.1 Determining Factor of Safety

Worksheet D.5-1, (Form I-9) at the end of this section can be used in conjunction with Tables D.5-1 and D.5-2 to determine an appropriate safety factor for design phase for full infiltration BMPs. and D.5-2 to determine an appropriate safety factor for design phase for full infiltration BMPs. A factor of safety of 2 must be used for partial infiltration BMPs. Tables D.5-1 and D.5-2 assign point values to design considerations; the values are entered into **Worksheet D.5-1 (Form I-9),** which assign a weighting factor for each design consideration.

The following procedure can be used to estimate an appropriate factor of safety to be applied to the infiltration testing results for full infiltration BMPs during the design phase. When assigning a factor of safety, care should be taken to understand what other factors of safety are implicit in other aspects of the design to avoid incorporating compounding factors of safety that may result in significant over-design.

1. For each consideration shown above, determine whether the consideration is a high, medium, or low concern.
2. For all high concerns in Table D.5-1, assign a factor value of 3, for medium concerns, assign a factor value of 2, and for low concerns assign a factor value of 1.
3. Multiply each of the factors in Table D.5-1 by 0.25 and then add them together. This should yield a number between 1 and 3.
4. For all high concerns in Table D.5-2, assign a factor value of 3, for medium concerns, assign a factor value of 2, and for low concerns assign a factor value of 1.
5. Multiply each of the factors in Table D.5-2 by 0.5 and then add them together. This should yield a number between 1 and 3.
6. Multiply the two safety factors together to get the final combined safety factor. If the combined safety factor is less than 2, then 2 should be used as the safety factor.
7. Divide the tested infiltration rate by the combined safety factor to obtain the adjusted design infiltration rate for use in sizing the infiltration facility.

Note: The minimum combined adjustment factor should not be less than 2.0 and the maximum combined adjustment factor should not exceed 9.0.

D.5.2 Site Suitability Considerations for Selection of an Infiltration Factor of Safety

Considerations related to site suitability include:

- Soil assessment methods – the site assessment extent (e.g., number of borings, test pits, etc.) and the measurement method used to estimate the short-term infiltration rate.
- Predominant soil texture/percent fines – soil texture and the percent of fines can influence the potential for clogging. Finer grained soils may be more susceptible to clogging.
- Site soil variability – site with spatially heterogeneous soils (vertically or horizontally) as determined from site investigations are more difficult to estimate average properties for resulting in a higher level of uncertainty associated with initial estimates.
- Depth to seasonal high groundwater/impervious layer – groundwater mounding may become an issue during excessively wet conditions where shallow aquifers or shallow clay lenses are present.

These considerations are summarized in Table D.5-1 below, in addition to presenting classification of concern.

Table D.5-1: Suitability Assessment Related Considerations for Infiltration Facility Safety Factors

Consideration	High Concern – 3 points	Medium Concern – 2 points	Low Concern – 1 point
Assessment methods	Refer to Table D.3-2 for guidance related to selecting levels of concern based on testing methods, test replicates, and infiltration BMP size.		
Texture Class	Silty and clayey soils with significant fines	Loamy soils	Granular to slightly loamy soils
Site soil variability	Highly variable soils indicated from site assessment, or Unknown variability	Soil borings/test pits indicate moderately homogeneous soils	Soil borings/test pits indicate relatively homogeneous soils
Depth to groundwater/ impervious layer	<5 ft below facility bottom	5-15 ft below facility bottom	>15 below facility bottom

D.5.3 Design Related Considerations for Selection of an Infiltration Factor of Safety

Design related considerations include:

- Level of pretreatment and expected influent sediment loads – credit should be given for good pretreatment to account for the reduced probability of clogging from high sediment loading. **Appendix B.6** describes performance criteria for "flow-thru treatment" based 80 percent capture of total suspended solids, which provides excellent levels of pretreatment. Additionally, the Washington State Technology Acceptance Protocol-Ecology provides a certification for "pre-treatment" based on 50 percent removal of TSS, which provides moderate levels of treatment. Current approved technologies are listed at: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/newtech/technologies.html. Use of certified technologies can allow a lower factor of safety. Also, facilities designed to capture runoff from relatively clean surfaces such as rooftops are likely to see low sediment loads and therefore may be designed with lower safety factors. Finally, the amount of landscaped area and its vegetation coverage characteristics should be considered. For example in arid areas with more soils exposed, open areas draining to infiltration systems may contribute excessive sediments.

- Compaction during construction – proper construction oversight is needed during construction to ensure that the bottoms of infiltration facility are not impacted by significant incidental compaction. Facilities that use proper construction practices and oversight need less restrictive safety factors.

Table D.5-2: Design Related Considerations for Infiltration Facility Safety Factors

Consideration	High Concern – 3 points	Medium Concern – 2 points	Low Concern – 1 point
Level of pretreatment/ expected influent sediment loads	Limited pretreatment using gross solids removal devices only, such as hydrodynamic separators, racks and screens AND tributary area includes landscaped areas, steep slopes, high traffic areas, road sanding, or any other areas expected to produce high sediment, trash, or debris loads.	Good pretreatment with BMPs that mitigate coarse sediments such as vegetated swales AND influent sediment loads from the tributary area are expected to be moderate (e.g., low traffic, mild slopes, stabilized pervious areas, etc.). Performance of pretreatment consistent with "pretreatment BMP performance criteria" (50% TSS removal) in Appendix B.6	Excellent pretreatment with BMPs that mitigate fine sediments such as bioretention or media filtration OR sedimentation or facility only treats runoff from relatively clean surfaces, such as rooftops/non-sanded road surfaces. Performance of pretreatment consistent with "flow-thru treatment control BMP performance criteria" (i.e., 80% TSS removal) in Appendix B.6
Redundancy/ resiliency	No "backup" system is provided; the system design does not allow infiltration rates to be restored relatively easily with maintenance	The system has a backup pathway for treated water to discharge if clogging occurs <u>or</u> infiltration rates can be restored via maintenance.	The system has a backup pathway for treated water to discharge if clogging occurs <u>and</u> infiltration rates can be relatively easily restored via maintenance.
Compaction during construction	Construction of facility on a compacted site or increased probability of unintended/ indirect compaction.	Medium probability of unintended/ indirect compaction.	Equipment traffic is effectively restricted from infiltration areas during construction and there is low probability of unintended/ indirect compaction.

D.5.4 Implications of a Factor of Safety in BMP Feasibility and Design

The above method will provide safety factors in the range of 2 to 9. From a simplified practical perspective, this means that the size of the facility will need to increase in area from 2 to 9 times relative to that which might be used without a safety factor. It is also possible that some facilities that were deemed feasible during full infiltration screening (Affirmative response to Criteria 1 in Worksheet C.4-1) may be deemed infeasible during design phase investigations. Clearly, numbers toward the upper end of this range will make all but the best locations prohibitive in land area, cost and feasibility.

In order to make full infiltration BMPs more feasible and cost effective, steps should be taken to plan and execute the implementation of infiltration BMPs in a way that will reduce the safety factors needed for those projects. A commitment to effective site design and source control thorough site investigation, use of effective pretreatment controls, good construction practices, and restoration of the infiltration rates of soils that are damaged by prior compaction should lower the safety factor that should be applied, to help improve the long term reliability of the system and reduce BMP construction cost. While these practices decrease the recommended safety factor, they do not totally mitigate the need to apply a factor of safety. The minimum recommended safety factor of 2.0 is intended to account for the remaining uncertainty and long-term deterioration that cannot be technically mitigated.

Partial infiltration BMPs shall use a factor of safety of 2 for both the feasibility screening and design phase rather than a factor of safety determined using the method below. Partial infiltration BMPs are less sensitive and more resilient to uncertainties in true infiltration because water that does not infiltrate into underlying soils is discharged after being treated through bioretention soil media.

Summary of factor of safety selection:

- **During Planning Phase:** A factor of safety of 2.0 must be used to estimate the infiltration rate to categorize the infiltration feasibility condition of the DMA (when completing **Worksheet C.4-1: Form I-8)** and to estimate the percentage of volume reduction required when the DMA is classified as "Partial Infiltration Condition".
- **During Design Phase:** During the design phase, **Worksheet D.5-1: Form I-9** must be used to calculate the factor of safety and design infiltration rate to design full infiltration BMPs. If the calculated combined factor of safety is less than 2, then a safety factor of 2 must be used to calculate the design infiltration rate. Partial infiltration BMP designs shall use a factor of safety of 2 for the design phase.

Note: If the observed infiltration rate is greater than or equal to 1 inches/hr. and the design infiltration rate calculated using **Worksheet D.5-1** is less than or equal to 0.5 inches/hr. then the applicant may choose to implement partial infiltration BMPs.

Worksheet D.5-1: Factor of Safety and Design Infiltration Rate Worksheet

Factor of Safety and Design Infiltration Rate Worksheet			Worksheet D.5-1: Form I-9		
F actor Category		Factor Description	Assigned Weight (w)	Factor Value (v)	Product (p) p = w x v
A	Suitability Assessment	Soil assessment methods	0.25		
		Predominant soil texture	0.25		
		Site soil variability	0.25		
		Depth to groundwater / impervious layer	0.25		
		Suitability Assessment Safety Factor, $S_A = \Sigma p$			
B	Design	Level of pretreatment/ expected sediment loads	0.5		
		Redundancy/resiliency	0.25		
		Compaction during construction	0.25		
		Design Safety Factor, $S_B = \Sigma p$			
Combined Safety Factor, $S_{total} = S_A \times S_B$ [Minimum of 2 and Maximum of 9]					
Observed Infiltration Rate, inch/hr, $K_{observed}$ (corrected for test-specific bias) Note: This worksheet is only applicable when the observed infiltration rate is greater than or equal to 1 inch/hr					
Design Infiltration Rate, in/hr, $K_{design} = K_{observed} / S_{total}$ Note: If the estimated design infiltration rate is less than or equal to 0.5 inch/hr. then the applicant may choose to implement partial infiltration BMPs.					
Supporting Data					
Briefly describe infiltration test and provide reference to test forms:					

<u>**Note**</u>: Worksheet D.5-1: Form I-9 is only applicable to design BMPs in “full infiltration condition”. This form is not applicable for categorization of infiltration feasibility (Worksheet C.4-1: Form I-8) and/or for designing BMPs in “partial infiltration condition” or “no infiltration condition”.

Page intentionally left blank for double-sided printing