

SUSTAINABLE SITES AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

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I will introduce the latest efforts of an initiative to protect and enhance the ability landscapes have in providing services such as climate regulation, clean air and water, and improved quality of life. I will discuss the status of Sustainable Sites™, an interdisciplinary partnership to develop voluntary standards and guidelines for sustainable land development and management practices as well as metrics to assess site performance and a rating system to recognize achievements. The Sustainable Sites Initiative is a partnership of the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, the United States Botanic Garden, and a diverse group of stakeholder organizations. I will also discuss ways to create win-win situations involving the topics of hydrology, soils, vegetation, materials and human well-being. I will show how good design practices can be utilized to capture the potential the landscape has to repair and prevent severe environmental and social damage. I will also discuss the need for a Puerto Rico clearinghouse for the supporting documents of LEED for Neighborhood Development, which places emphasis on the design and construction elements that bring buildings together into a neighborhood, and relate the neighborhood to its larger region and landscape. The standards are guided by sources such as the Smart Growth Network's ten principles of smart growth, the Charter of New Urbanism, and other LEED rating systems. LEED for Neighborhood Development serves as a label as well as an incentive for better location, design, and construction of new residential, commercial, and mixed use developments.