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The Influence of Green Infrastructure Practices on Groundwater Quality

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Introduction

- Urbanization has been linked to declining water quality
  - Disruption of natural hydrologic cycle
  - Abnormally high volumes of stormwater
    - Increased flooding
    - Increased erosion
    - Increased sediment loads in surface water bodies
    - Increased stress to waste water systems
    - Increased combined sewer overflows (CSO)
    - Decreased subsurface storage

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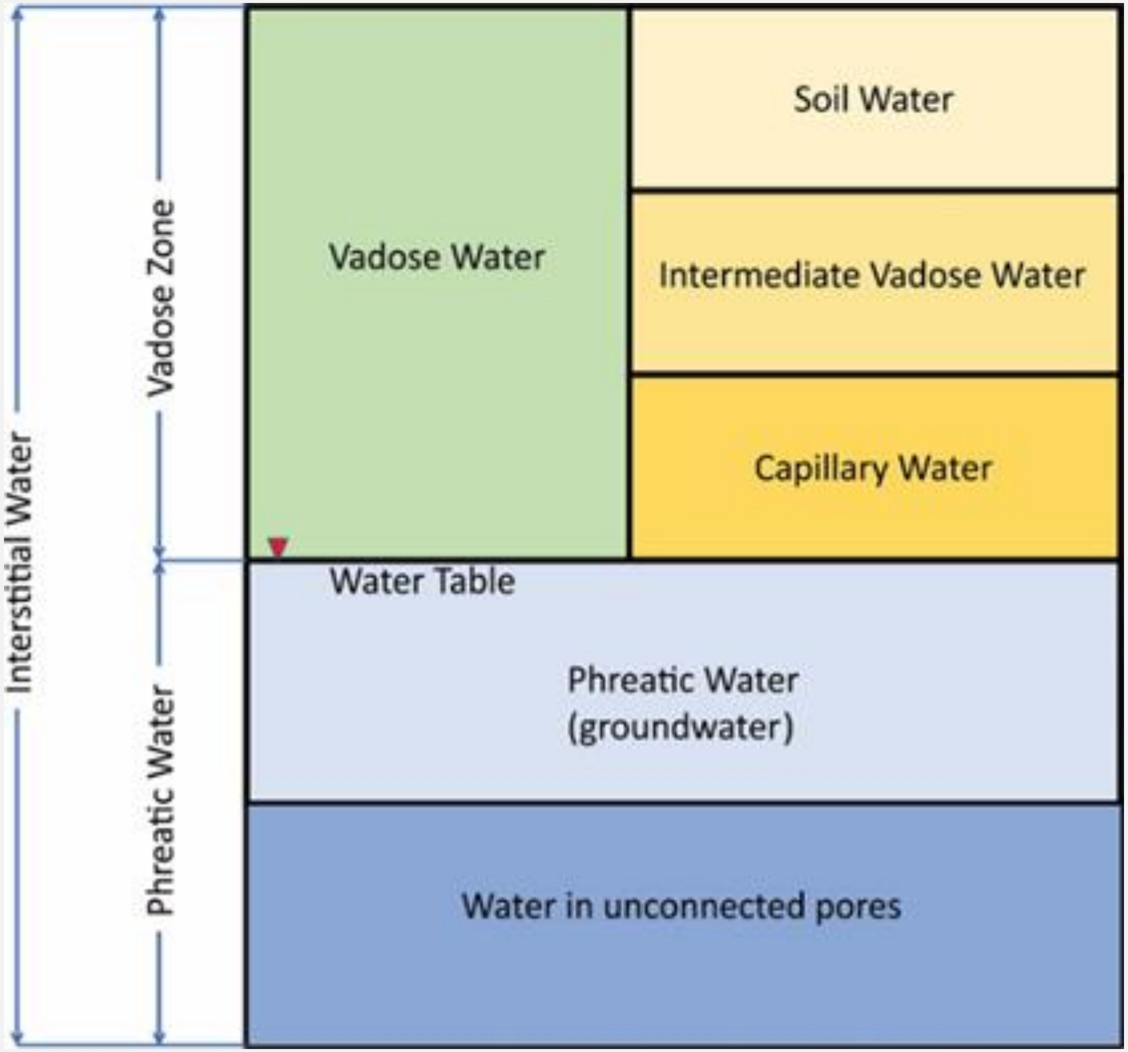
Introduction

- What is Green Infrastructure (GI)?
  - GI is a water management approach that protects, restores, or mimics the natural hydrologic cycle
- Potential benefits of GI:
  - Infiltration of stormwater
  - Groundwater recharge
  - CSO reductions
  - Flood mitigation
  - Reduces stress on wastewater or sewer systems
  - Reduced sediment loads in surface water bodies.

USEPA Green Infrastructure Strategy, 2013

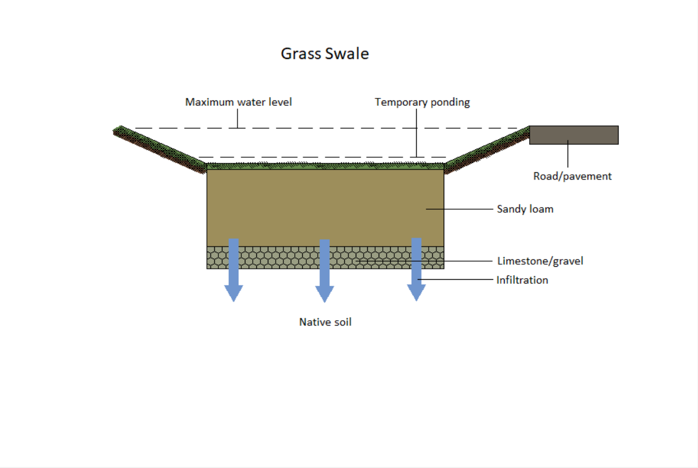
- This Strategy emphasized:
  - Reducing the volume of stormwater runoff
  - Reducing pollutant loadings
  - Creating a sustainable and resilient water infrastructure that supports and revitalizes urban communities
- Goal:
  - Increase the use of constructed and natural GI in stormwater management plans and watershed/ sewershed sustainability goals

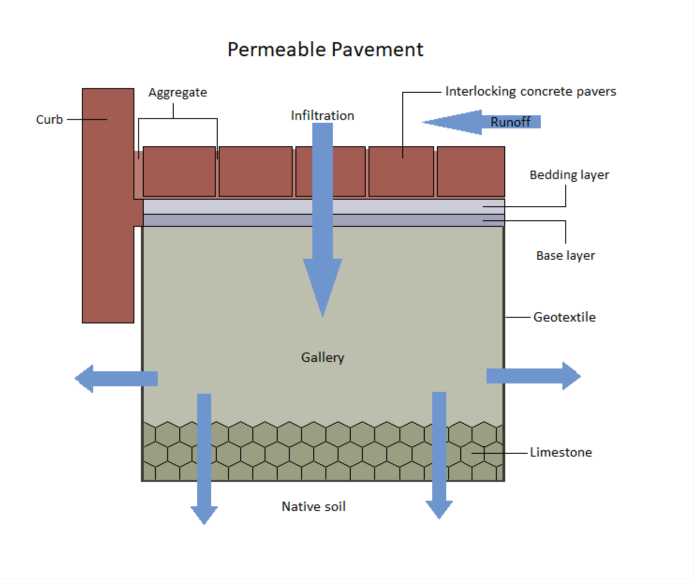
Subsurface Model



Types of GI

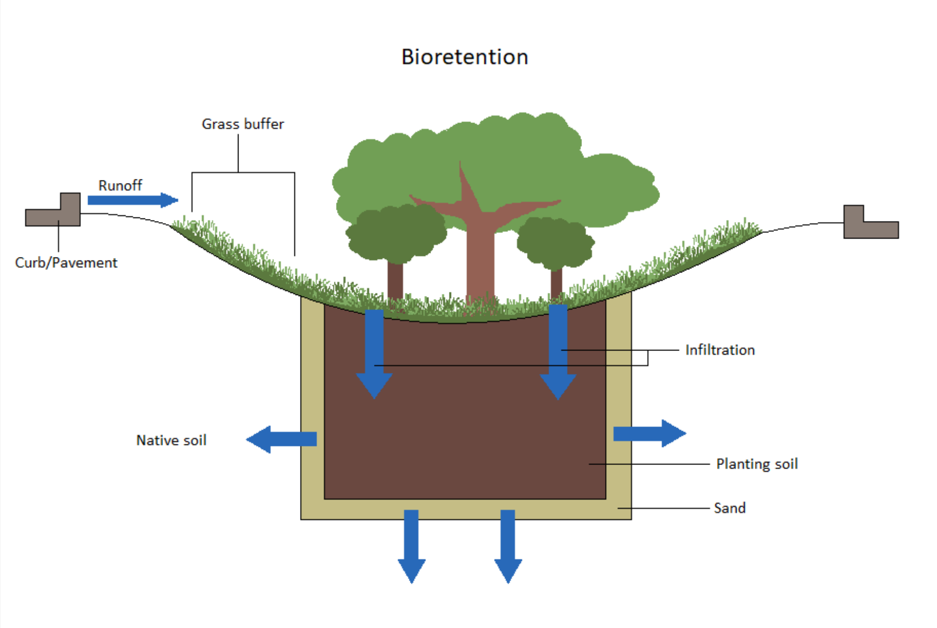
- Two broad categories (Pitt et al. 1999)
  - Surface infiltration
  - Subsurface infiltration





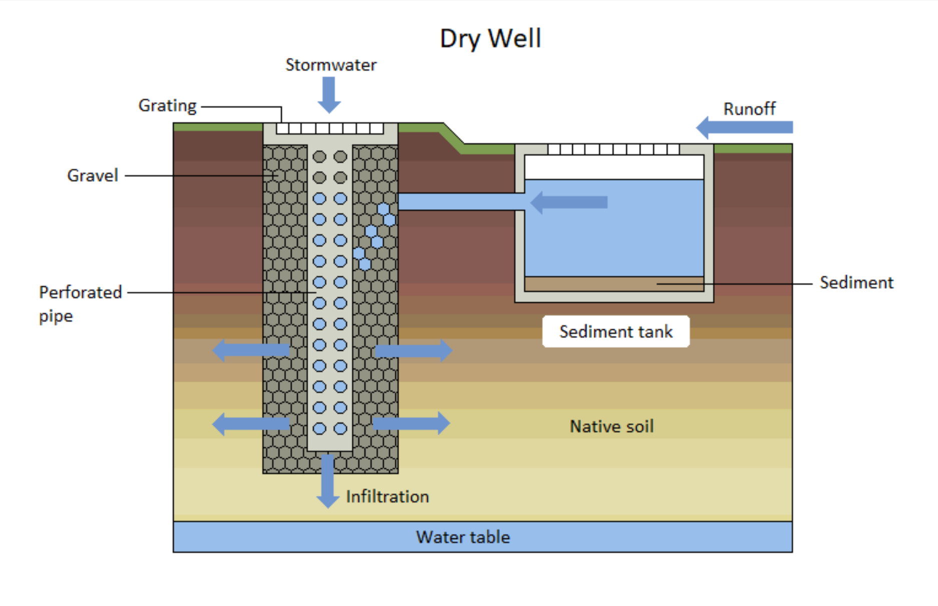
Surface Infiltration

- Relies on natural infiltration processes to move water from the surface through the vadose zone to groundwater.
- Mimics natural processes.
- Examples
  - –Infiltration basins
  - –Bioretention basins
  - –Bioswales
  - –Riparian Buffers



Subsurface Infiltration

- Engineered systems that directly infiltrates water into the vadose zone to groundwater.
- Examples:
  - –Permeable pavement
  - –Dry wells
  - –ASR technologies



Effect of GI on Groundwater Quality

- Few studies address groundwater quality
- Infiltration could create new pathways for contaminants transport
- Is GI a source or sink for stormwater contaminants?
- Does GI pose a risk to groundwater Quality?

Literature Review- State of Science Report

- Contaminants: nutrients, metals, anions, organic compounds, and pathogens.
- Sources of contaminants: automobiles, lawn treatments, industrial activities, deicing agents, native geology, etc.
- Literature Review findings:
  - no impacts were found during the study.
  - In some cases there were potential impacts.
  - Impacts were found.
- There is a risk to the vadose zone

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Literature Review Problems/ Research Gaps

- Most studies did not monitor the aquifer or deeper in the vadose zone.
- When groundwater monitoring was included
  - Unknown if sampling strategies or monitoring network would detect groundwater quality changes
    - Groundwater flow direction was not known
    - Was the groundwater monitoring network robust enough to detect changes?
  - Lag time was not considered in many studies.
- Study duration

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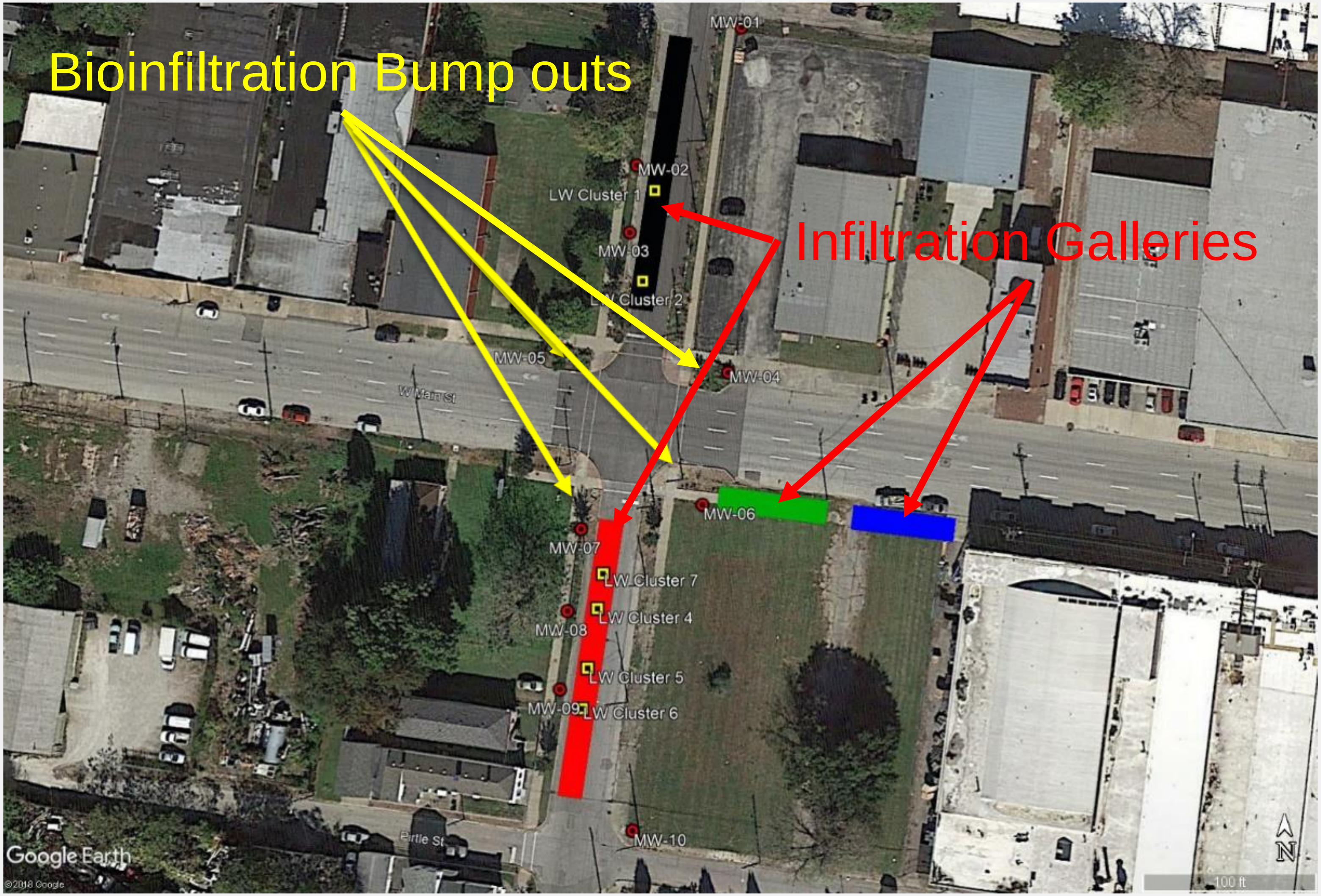
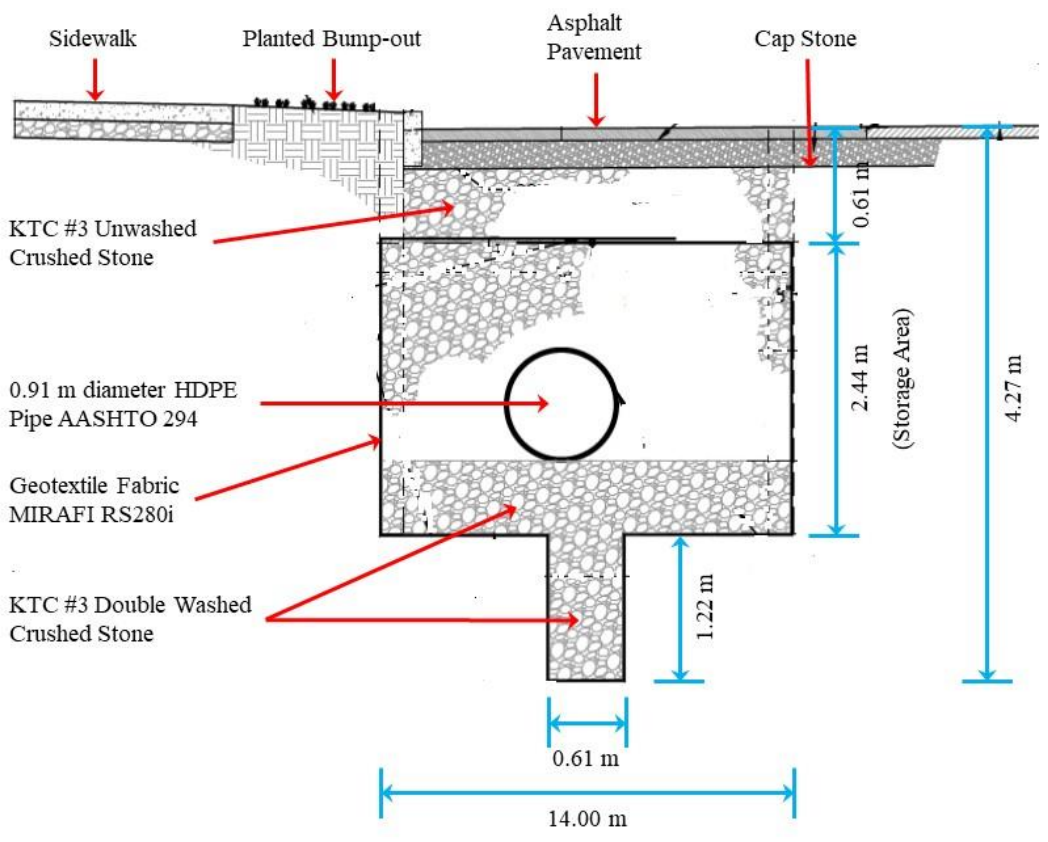
Louisville Study Site

- Located in the Portland neighborhood
  - 58.7 hectare sewershed
  - Residential, light industrial, and commercial
- Consent Decree
  - Reduce the annual overflow frequency from 54 to 8
  - Reduce overflow volume from 136 ML to 13.8 ML
- Type of GI is a combination of
  - Bioinfiltration areas (bump outs) intercept stormwater runoff
  - Underground infiltration galleries

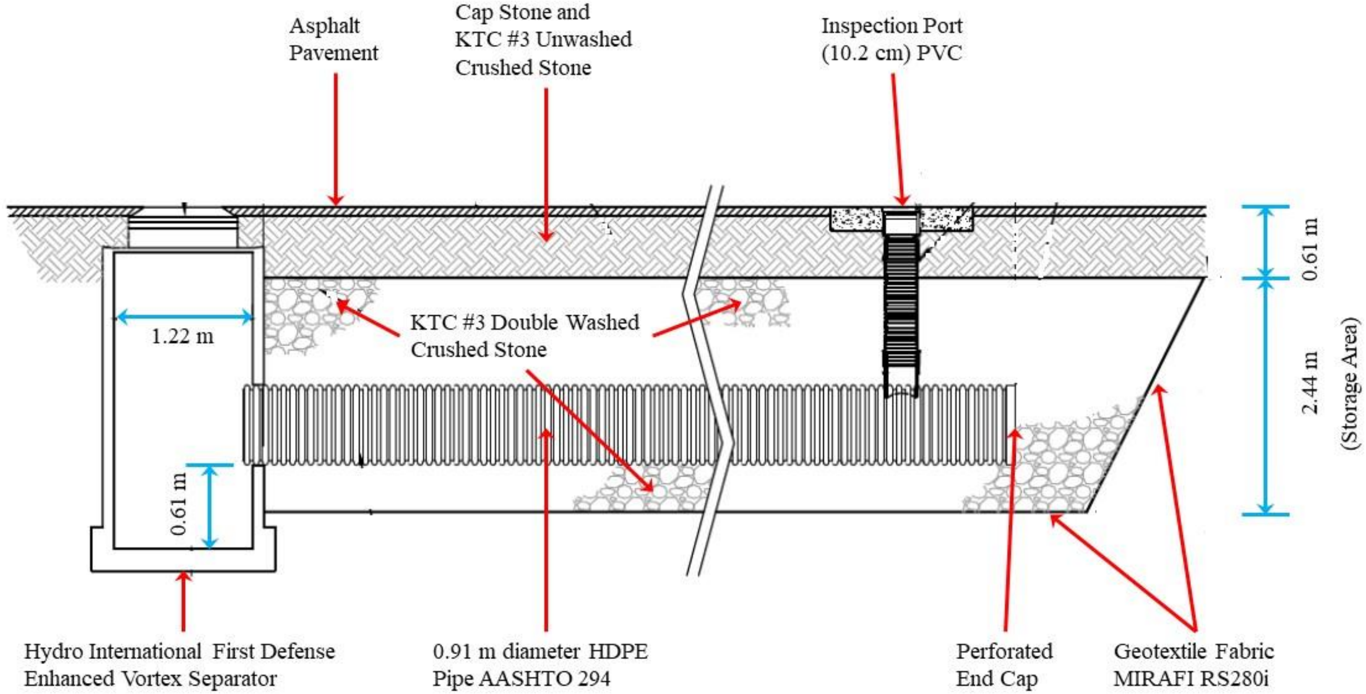
Louisville Study Site



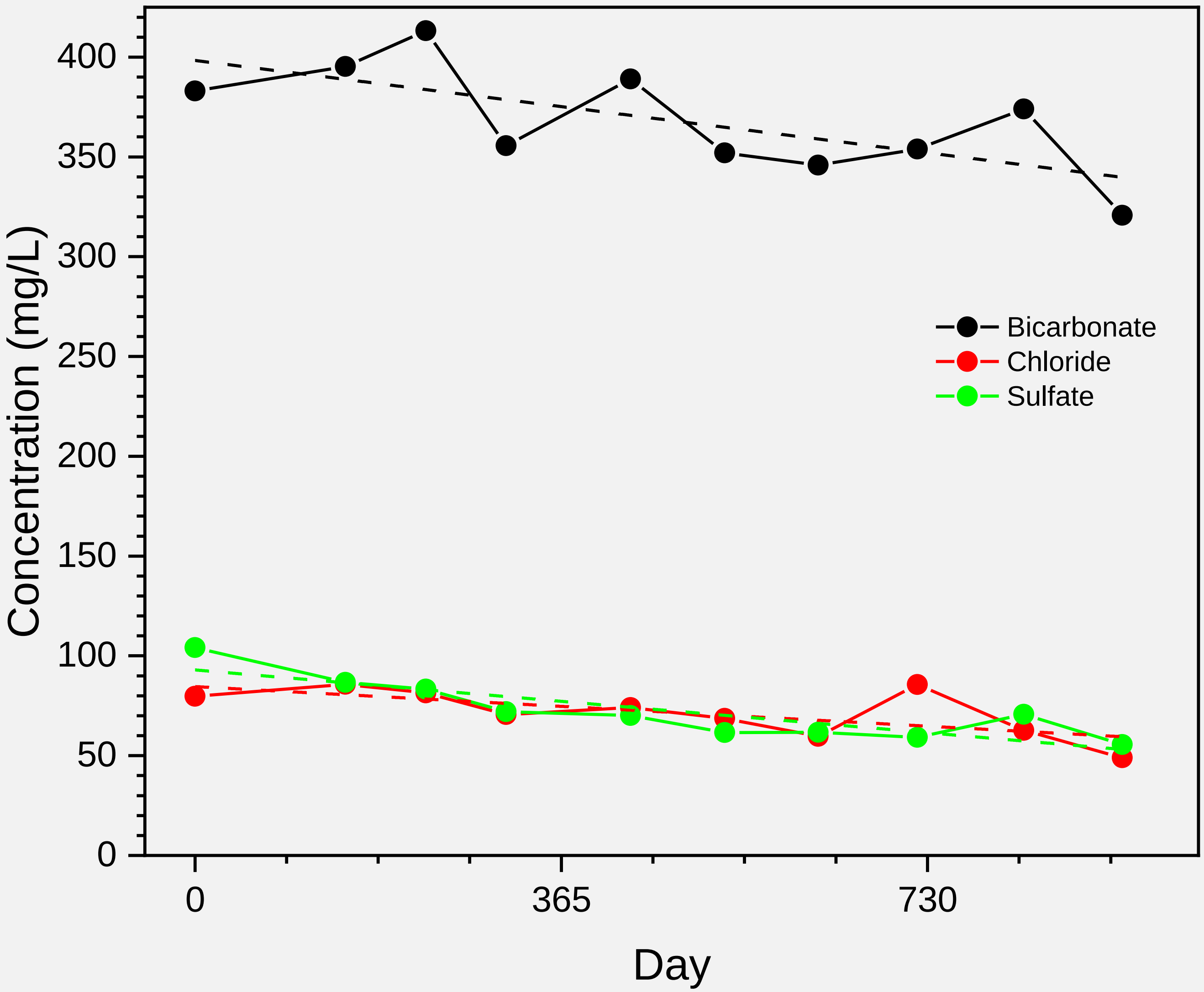
Infiltration Gallery Cross Section



Infiltration Gallery Transverse Section

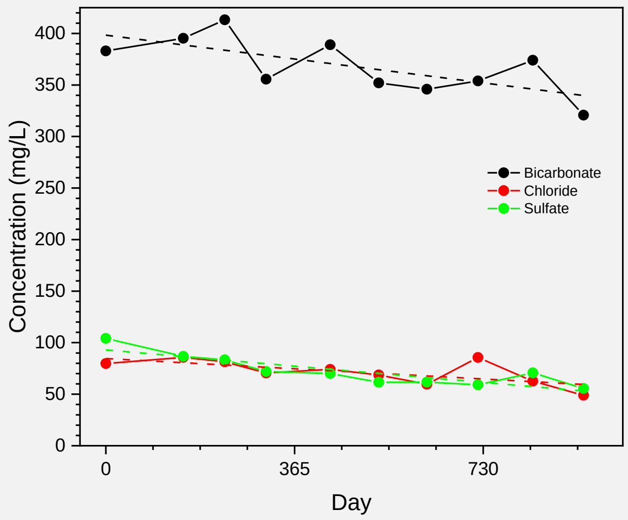


Major Anion Trends

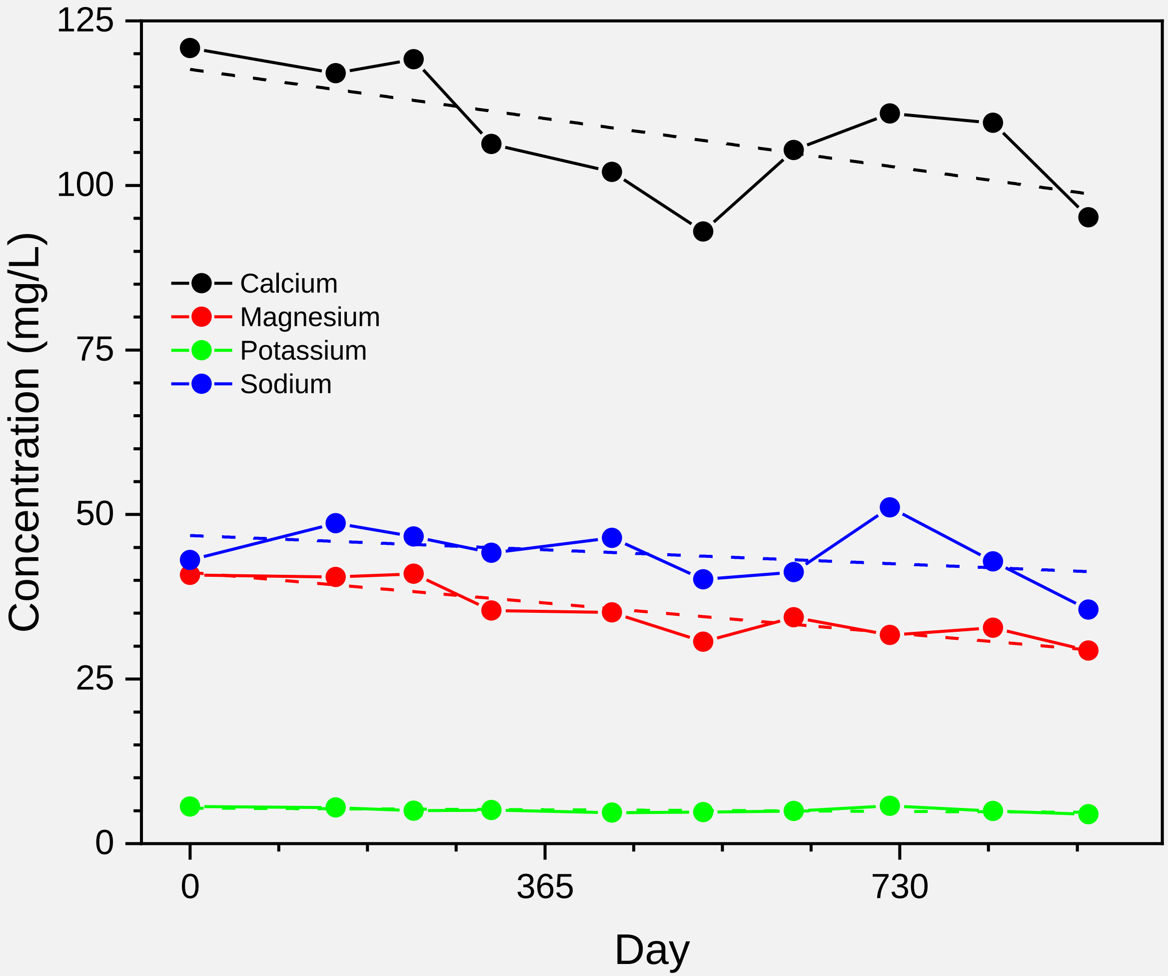


Major Anion Trends

- Bicarbonate
  - Significantly decreasing $p < 0.001$
  - Rate= -23.1 mg/L/yr
- Chloride
  - Significantly decreasing $p = 0.023$
  - Rate= -9.93 mg/L/yr
- Sulfate
  - Significantly Decreasing $p = 0.014$
  - Rate= -5.11 mg/L/yr

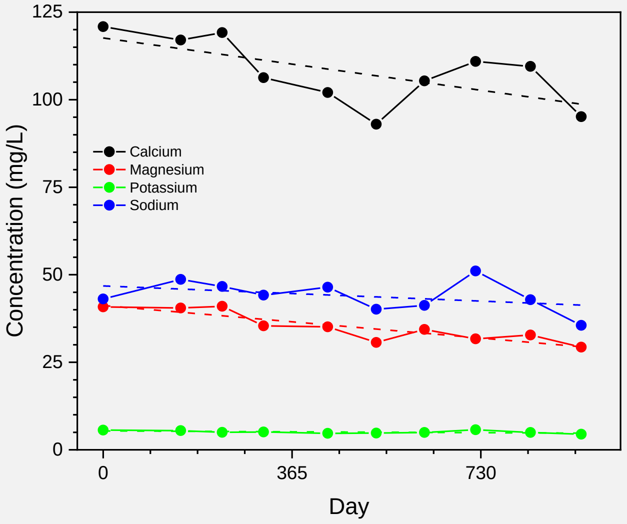


Major Cation Trends



Major Cation Trends

- Calcium
  - Significantly decreasing p= 0.036
  - Rate= -7.48 mg/L/yr
- Magnesium
  - Significantly Decreasing p= 0.001
  - Rate= -4.65 mg/L/yr
- Potassium
  - Decreasing p= 0.054
  - Rate= -0.25 mg/L/yr
- Sodium
  - Slightly decreasing/ Stable p= 0.108 (not significant)
  - Rate= -2.16 mg/L/yr



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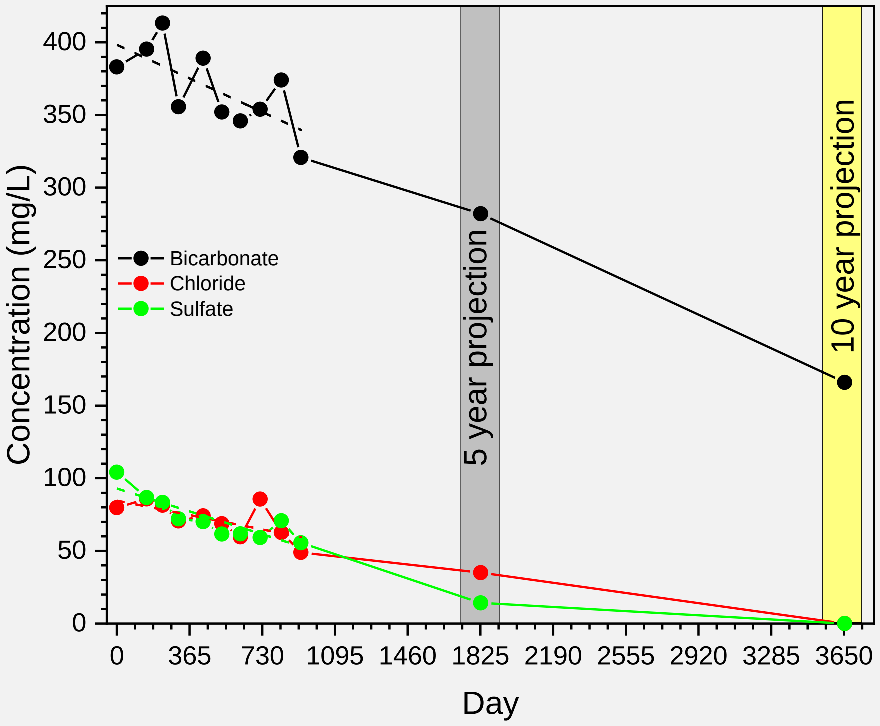
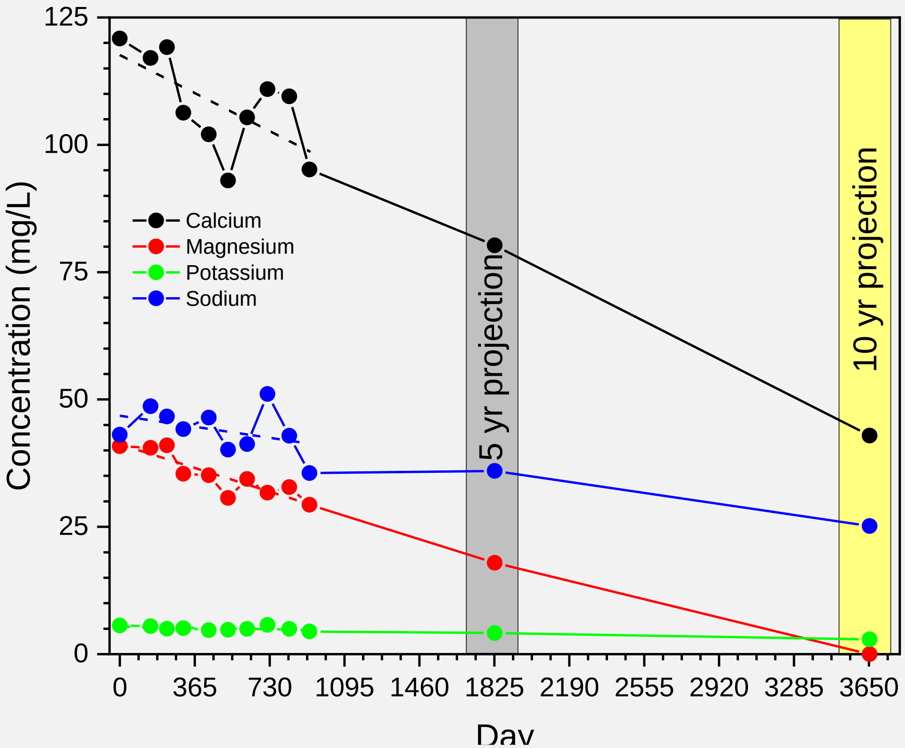
Major anions 5 year and 10 year Extrapolations

- Assumptions
  - Current rate of change is constant (?)
  - No other geochemical process will modify concentrations (?)
- Dilution of all anions



Major Cations 5 Year and 10 Year Extrapolations

- Assumptions
  - Current rate of change is constant (?)
  - No other geochemical process will modify concentrations (?)
- Rate of change Mg & Ca> Na & K
- Dilution of cations
- Ca concentrations becoming more similar to Na concentrations



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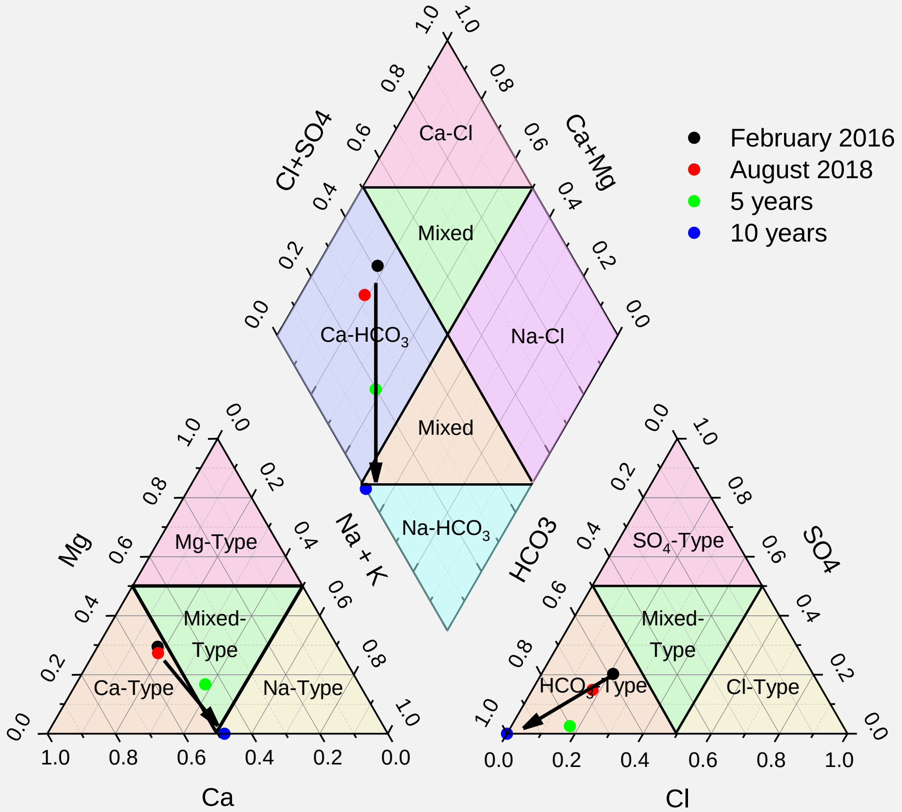
Water Quality Changes- Major Anions and Cations

- Water is shifting from a Ca-HCO_3 water to a more Na-HCO_3 type water.
- Cations- Ca dominant → Na dominant
- Anions- HCO_3 is becoming even more dominant



Other Trends in Groundwater

- Phosphate and Nitrate
- Chromium, Copper, and Nickel in groundwater near Main St.

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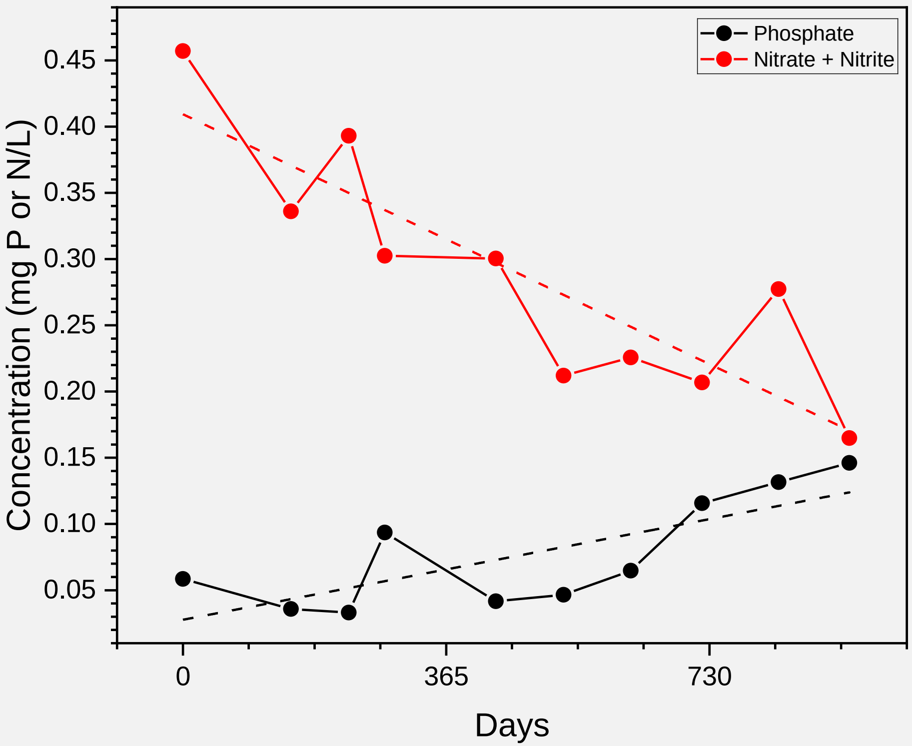
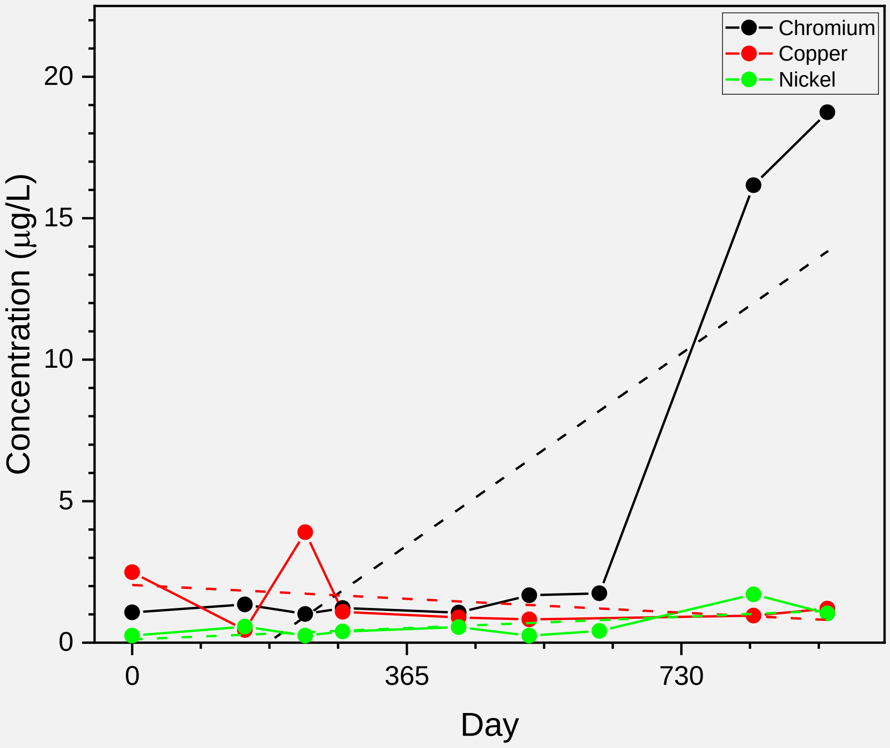
Phosphate and Nitrate + Nitrite

- Phosphate
  - Significantly increasing p= 0.005
  - Rate= 0.038 mg P/L/yr
- Nitrate + Nitrite
  - Significantly decreasing, p<0.001
  - Rate= -0.094 mg N/L/yr



Chromium, Copper, and Nickel

- Chromium
  - Significantly increasing p= 0.006
  - Rate= 6.79 µg/L/yr
- Copper
  - Stable p= 0.452
  - Rate= -0.49 µg/L/yr
- Nickel
  - Increasing p= 0.075
  - Rate= 0.69 µg/L/yr



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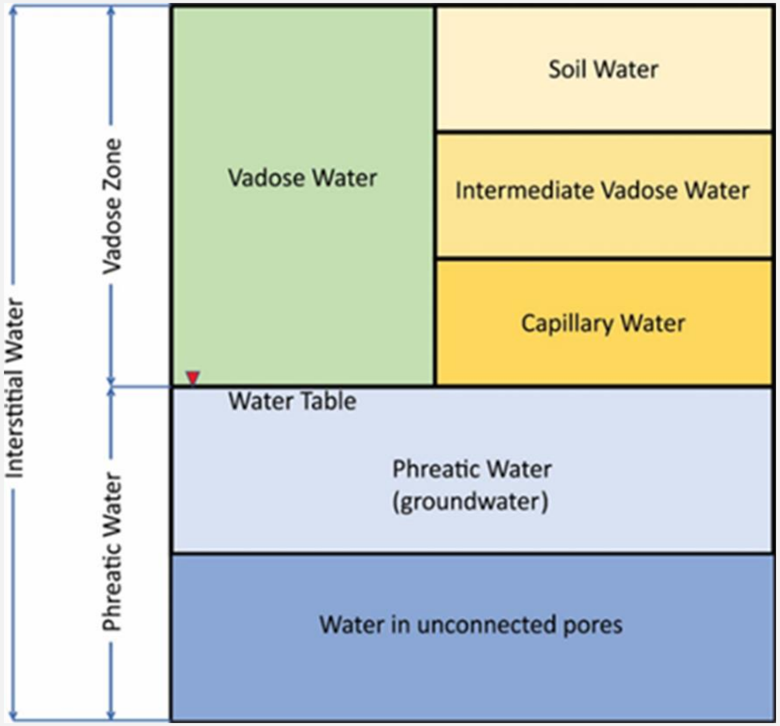
Phosphate, Nitrate + Nitrite, Chromium, Copper & Nickel Extrapolations

Analyte	August 2018	5 years	10 years
Phosphate	0.146 mg P/L	0.218 mg P/L	0.408 mg P/L
Nitrate + Nitrite	0.16 mg N/L	BDL	BDL
Chromium	18.8 µg/L	30.6 µg/L	64.6 µg/L
Copper	1.20 µg/L	BDL	BDL
Nickel	1.03 µg/L	2.11 µg/L	4.10 µg/L

- Chromium anomaly
- Need to monitor chromium concentrations

Vadose Zone

- Can alter stormwater chemistry during infiltration
- Types of reactions
  - –Ion exchange
  - –Sorption
  - –Precipitation/Dissolution



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Ion Exchange Reactions

- Ion Exchange

$$Ca^{2+}_{(aq)} + 2Na - Solid = 2Na^{+}_{(aq)} + Ca - Solid$$

  - Ca replaces Na bound to solids

- Reverse Ion Exchange

$$2Na^{+}{}^{+}_{(aq)} + Ca - Solid = Ca^{2+}_{(aq)} + 2Na - Solid$$

  - Na replaces Ca bound to solids

- Chloro-Alkaline Index can be used to distinguish between these ion exchange reactions (Schoeller, 1965, 1967; Zaidi et al., 2015)

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Chloro-Alkaline Index (CAI)

$$\mathrm{CAI\ 1} = \frac{\mathrm{Cl^-} - (\mathrm{Na^+} + \mathrm{K^+})}{\mathrm{Cl^-}}$$

$$\mathrm{CAI\ 2} = \frac{\mathrm{Cl^-} - (\mathrm{Na^+} + \mathrm{K^+})}{\mathrm{Cl^-} + \mathrm{HCO_3^-} + \mathrm{SO_4^{2-}} + \mathrm{NO_3^-}}$$

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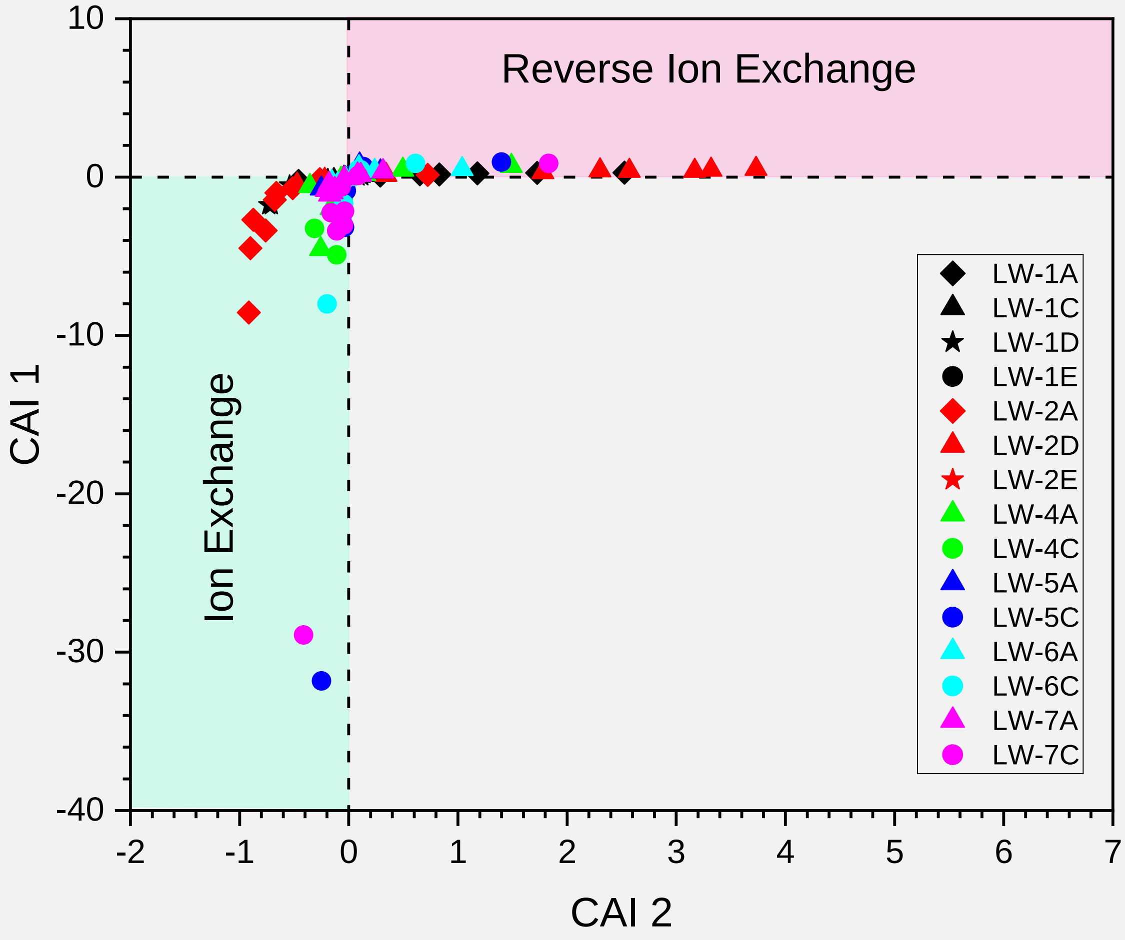
Soil Porewater



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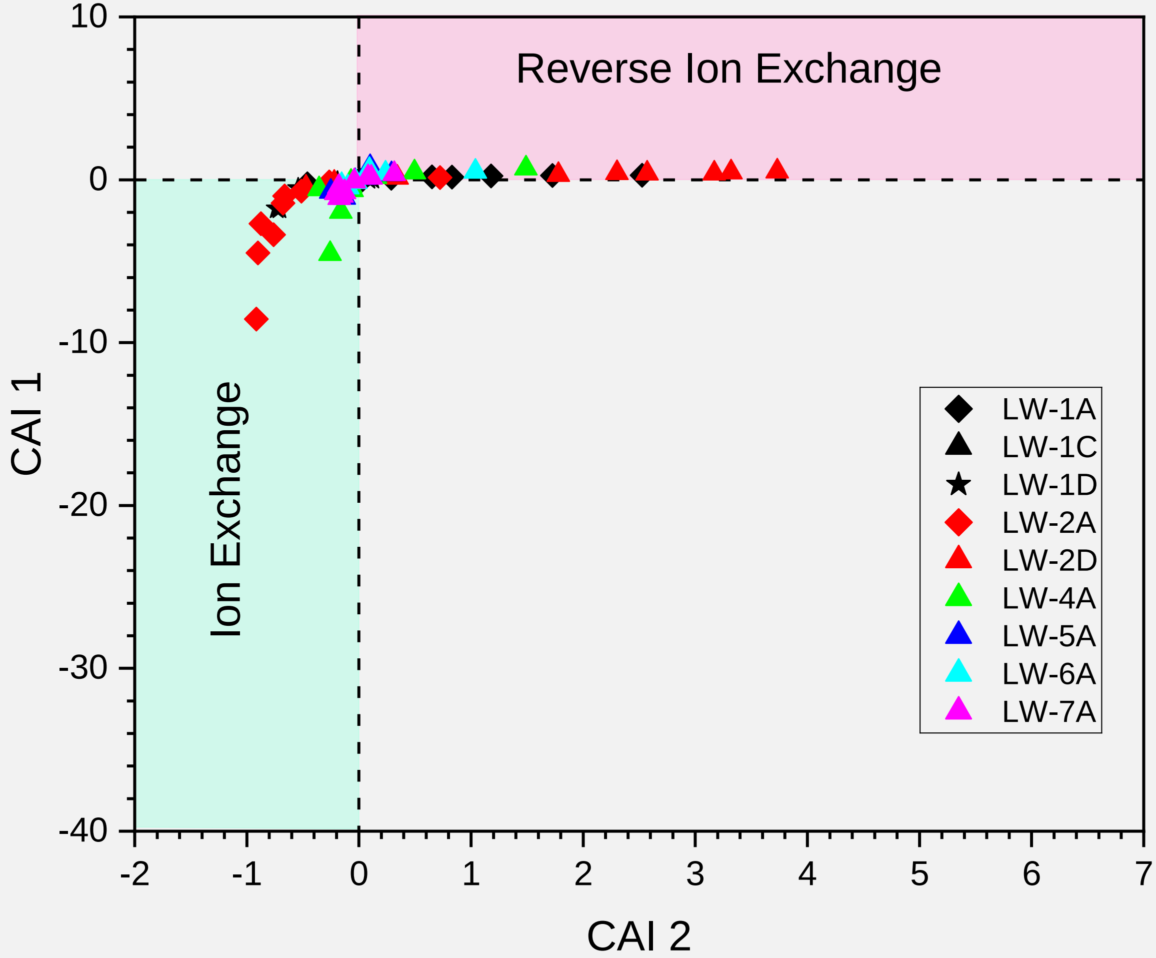
Soil Porewater (>130 m-msl)



Potential Problems With Reverse Ion Exchange

- Reverse ion exchange loads sodium on the surface of vadose zone particles
- Excess sodium on particles can causes dispersion of the particles in the matrix
  - Slows or prevents infiltration
  - Clogging is undesired in a GI system
- Some samples collected in August 2019
  - Filtering with 0.45 µm filters
  - Significant sediment passed through the filters in some samples
  - Not previously seen

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Conclusions State of Science Report

- Results from the literature review report were mixed
  - Results ranged from no Impacts to potential impacts to impacts to water quality
  - There are gaps in knowledge
- Issues raised by the report
  - Experimental design, sampling strategies, monitoring duration
- More research is needed!

Conclusions Louisville Study Site

- Major anion/ cation chemistry impacts
  - Dilution of most major anions and cations were observed with time
  - It is unknown how long this dilution trend will continue
  - Dilution is causing a gradual shift for a Ca-HCO_3 type water towards a Na-HCO_3 type water.
- Nutrients
  - Phosphate concentrations are significantly increasing with time
  - Nitrate + nitrite concentrations are significantly decreasing with time

Conclusions Louisville Study Site

- Metals near the bioinfiltration areas
  - Chromium concentrations are increasing
    - Unknown if the current rate of increase will continue
  - Copper concentrations are decreasing with time
  - Nickel concentrations are increasing with time
- Trace metal concentrations away from the bioinfitration areas are stable and have low concentrations

Conclusions Louisville Study Site

- Potentially a sodium build up in the vadose zone
  - Infiltration changes in future??
  - Clogging??
- Future impacts??
- Study needs to be continued!

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Questions