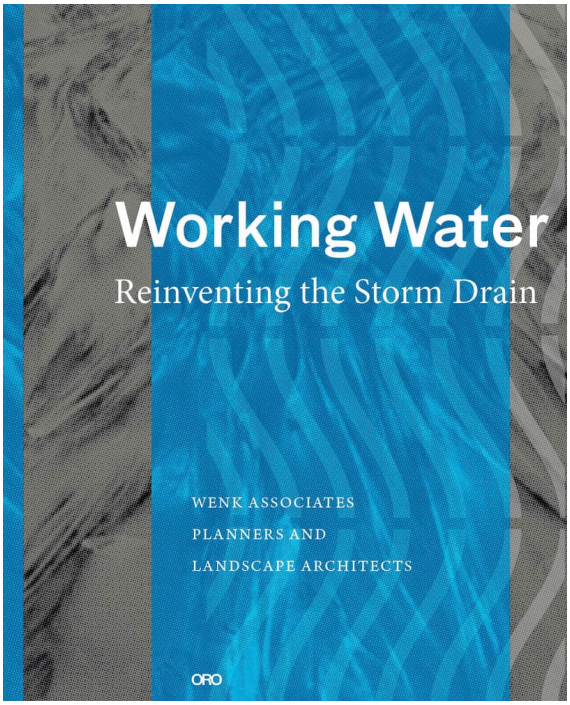
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Working Water

Reinventing the Storm Drain

Bill Wenk

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- Built projects that range in scale from an experimental stormwater garden at the firm's former offices in Denver, to large-scale redevelopment of derelict industrial lands in central Milwaukee organised around a green infrastructure stormwater system
- Planning projects that range from surface stormwater strategies for a planned infill urban district in central Denver, to a multi-generational plan for restoration of the Los Angeles River that requires profound changes in stormwater management policies and practice
- Projects that add value through the creation of parks and open spaces as part of providing required stormwater infrastructure
- Alternative ways of describing beauty as a result of adapting functional infrastructure to promote functioning natural systems and human use

Water is far too valuable of a resource to be disposed as a waste. *Working Water* presents the work of Denver landscape architecture firm Wenk Associates, highlighting their projects that treat stormwater, and the infrastructure that controls it, as a resource that supports functioning natural systems and enhanced urban open space. Built projects illustrate how stormwater runoff can be directed to support an intimate private garden, to the large-scale redevelopment of derelict industrial lands in Milwaukee organised around a stormwater park and open space system. Planning projects range from a plan for a surface stormwater system developed incrementally for a redeveloping urban district in central Denver, to a multi-generational plan for restoration of the Los Angeles River that will require profound changes in stormwater management policies and practice for full implementation. The final chapter describes the challenges, strategies, and lessons learned over the firm's 37-year history as part of implementing new approaches to infrastructure design that can withstand the test of time.

Bill Wenk is founder and President of Wenk Associates, Inc., a Denver-based landscape architectural firm. For over 37 years, Bill has been influential in the restoration and redevelopment of urban river and stream corridors, the transformation of derelict urban land, and the design of public parks and open spaces. He is recognized nationally for utilizing stormwater as a resource. Bill's extensive portfolio includes a master plan for the reclamation of the 32-mile Los Angeles River corridor in California; green infrastructure planning and implementation for the redevelopment of abandoned railyards, and restoration of the Menomonee River in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and transformation of the South Platte River Valley in the heart of Denver into a mosaic of parks, open spaces and in-fill development. All projects focus on site and district-scale infrastructure systems that incorporate stormwater as a multi-benefit resource. Bill lectures frequently at universities and conferences across the nation on the integration of stormwater systems and public space as a component of green infrastructure. He served on a National Science Foundation committee assembled to recommend revisions to Federal rules and regulations governing nonpoint source stormwater pollution. He has served as a visiting professor at several universities. Bill holds a Master of Landscape Architecture from the University of Oregon and a Bachelor of Science, Landscape Architecture from Michigan State University and is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects.







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