



PLAYING THE GAME OF STORM WATER

The Monthly Dirt
A monthly newsletter on the California
Construction General Permit

Take time to learn the rules of the game of storm water.

As a kid, baseball was my favorite pastime. I not only lived baseball, but I also ate, drank, and breathed it! Because I grew up in Anaheim, California, the Angels were my team of choice. I would listen to their games almost daily on the radio and, whenever I had the opportunity, I would go to the stadium to watch them play. I remember seeing Nolan Ryan get one strikeout after another with his 100 mph fast balls, Rod Carew never missing a throw at first base, and then, of course, Mr. October, Reggie Jackson, doing his postseason magic. In the summer, when I wasn't listening to or watching a game, I would be at the local park playing pickup baseball games. But the problem was...I was just like Charlie Brown. Loved the sport but could not hit a baseball for the life of me and was never on a winning team. However, I did learn a thing or two about the rules of baseball. One of the first things that needed to happen before a game started was for the coach to give the umpire a lineup card listing not only the positions and batting order but also the player names next to each position. In this month's edition of **The Monthly Dirt** we are going to be learning about the different players of the game, and how you, as the storm water inspector player, can help your storm water program have a winning record.

Being an inspector is a lot like being an umpire in a baseball game. You're calling it balls and strikes—you have to call it the way you see it when you go out into the field. And just like the umpire, you need to know the strike zone and the rules of the game. If you are a QSP, QSD, or even a delegated QSP inspector, you need to know what the Construction General Permit requires and what the SWPPP says the contractor needs to be doing. Because, as the inspector you're looking at the erosion controls, sediment controls, and the good housekeeping practices happening on site and making an assessment to see if they are in the strike zone. And in order to do that, you need to know the strike zone—what's compliant and what's not compliant. However, an inspector is not an enforcer. An inspector is just someone who reminds everyone what the Permit and the SWPPP say. The inspector helps everyone on site play by the rules. As such, the SWPPP inspector is a neutral person – they're not the enemy (although nobody likes the ump!), they are there to assist the discharger, the permit holder, the contractor, and the subcontractor – everyone who is out

there playing the game – in playing by the rules of the game. As a storm water inspector, you are calling certain things a strike, or ball, or walk, and why that is not compliant with the Permit through an inspection program. Without an inspection program, you won't know if there is a disconnect in the storm water program. And when there is a disconnect in the storm water program that's probably because the SWPPP developer or QSD has not done a good job of communicating through the SWPPP or the QSP through the inspections about what is expected. As an inspector, you're acting as an umpire and calling it as you see it, and being impartial, but at the same time, you might also be taking on the role of the coach too. You're there to encourage and give some training and counsel on how you should best install a sediment control device, or what would be a good way to prevent spills from occurring. Your job is to come alongside the discharger, be honest with what you see, and offer some suggestions on how to mitigate the situation or propose some options that

they can consider implementing.

But just like a baseball umpire, don't get swayed by the crowds shouting and jeering or the teams getting in your face and threatening you. And while that doesn't usually happen to inspectors, what usually happens is pressure to conform or pressure to look the other way. But a good umpire and a good inspector do not look the other way. They pay attention and they are impartial and call it the way they see it. When you do your inspection reports, be honest with how you see it. Don't be too pessimistic and assume things are worse than they actually are; but on the other hand, don't sugar coat it either. Be honest in your evaluations. At the end of the day, honesty, integrity, accurate observations, thorough documentation, and good communication skills, will serve you a long way in being an inspector.

In order to successfully play a game of baseball, you need to be able to identify who the players are – what are their names and jersey numbers, who's team are they on, what's their position? In storm water, it's the

same way. You need to be able to identify the players by name, position and contact information, but instead of jerseys and a lineup card, you'll find this information in the SWPPP. A properly developed SWPPP should be like a lineup card. It should list the various positions involved in the project's storm water compliance program. Instead of pitcher, catcher, outfielder, and shortstop, SWPPP positions include:

- **Legally Responsible Person (LRP)**
- **Duly Authorized Representatives (DAR) / approved signatories**
- **Project Managers / Resident Engineers**
- **Contractor and subcontractors**
- **Qualified SWPPP Developer (QSD)**
- **Qualified SWPPP Practitioners (QSP)**
- **Trained delegate inspectors**
- **Analytical testing laboratory**
- **Active treatment / passive treatment contractors**
- **Erosion and sediment control installers**
- **Street sweeper**
- **Spill response contractors**

Usually, you need to get your hands on the SWPPP lineup card right away and don't have time to look through a massive document for it, so having it located at the front of the SWPPP is crucial. Be sure the names and contact information for all the players are listed and up to date so in case of an emergency you can get ahold of them right away. Additionally, all SWPPPs are uploaded on SMARTS so everyone can see your SWPPP lineup card. If the State Water Board inspector is going to visit a site, they can contact all the crucial players to make sure they are there for the inspection and know who's to blame for fouls they might find during their visit. As the storm water inspector, you also need to know who the players are before you go to the site. You need to know who you are talking to, who to turn to for direction and clarity on the SWPPP, and who holds the ultimate responsibility for the site's compliance. Take note that the CGP requires the QSP to keep the lineup card current.

In order to play to win, you need to familiarize yourself with the rule book. What's the rule book for storm water? It's the Construction General Permit. By understanding the rules, it actually works to your team's benefit. Understanding what's allowed and what is prohibited will provide the coach the greatest ability to play the game for the benefit of the team. There is nothing more beneficial than storm water inspectors who have spent time reading the Permit. A storm water inspector

who hasn't spent time in the Permit is not going to be a good inspector because they don't know what authority they are acting in or what breaks the rules. They may see issues happening on site, but without knowing what the Permit says, they don't have the authority to call out issues. That being said, you don't need to have the Permit memorized, but if you know the rule book, you are going to be able to speak from a position of authority rather than just opinion. So, get to know the Permit.

But you can't play the game if you don't know the plays of storm water – like erosion and sediment control. How do you learn the plays? You get educated. As a storm water inspector, we recommend joining a storm water professional organization like [CASQA](#), [Erosion Control Technology Council](#), [IECA](#), or others like them. Attend talks like [Storm Water Awareness Week](#) workshops or other educational opportunities to familiarize yourself with the different plays of storm water compliance. Utilize all the different resources that are available to you to train yourself – magazines, podcasts, newsletters, lunch and learns. Something that's really important in your development as an inspector, is to get certified. In California, it's required that you get your Qualified SWPPP Practitioner (QSP) or Qualified SWPPP Developer (QSD) certificate. There are also a variety of credentials available for both national and international projects on top of those State specific credentials. After you have obtained your certificate and credentials, don't stop there. Keep learning. Read, watch, attend. Take any opportunities you get to improve yourself and stay on top of your professional development.

As an inspector, you need practice, practice, and more practice. And how do you do that? The best way to practice is to work as a QSP delegate inspector. You have to follow guidelines provided by CASQA to become a delegate inspector and receive 2 hours of foundational training, during which you will learn the basics about the Permit. Next, a QSP delegate is required to have site specific training by reviewing the SWPPP and learning about the site's storm water program and doing a site walk. If you are a storm water inspector in training, the best way to learn is to work under a seasoned inspector - have the seasoned inspector take you around and show you the different

aspects of that site and how the SWPPP is being implemented. Another good way to practice is to train your eyes to be observant. The more you do this, the more your eyes will be trained to pick up issues on site. A rookie steps over big issues like track out or illicit discharges because their eyes haven't been trained. When you go on the jobsite, be training your eyes to observe relevant things. Who are the trades on site, what do they do, what do they bring to the job site, what do they leave at the job site? Each of those players come to the game with their own pollutants and activities which can cause problems. So, when you learn who these different individuals are through observation, you will know what to look for. Also, be looking for non-storm water discharges. Familiarize yourself with the geographical area as well as the typical climate and where any potential discharges of water are coming from. If there's water leaving your site in August, most likely it's not from rain. But do you know that for sure? Don't just observe it, investigate!

Lastly, look for opportunities to turn a double play. As a storm water inspector, sometimes we can come up with an idea which will help the contractor and the team be able to accomplish more and get more bang for their buck. We can help them move their project forward and maybe be more economical and at the same time help them be more compliant. Be looking at the plans and the site and be thinking and planning ahead. Look for those opportunities to be resourceful and help them think through ways they can accomplish their goals and storm water quality goals simultaneously – like utilizing landscaping mulch as ground cover or getting impervious surfaces like asphalt laid down before the next wet season starts.

Above all as a storm water inspector, be fair and impartial. When you're out there doing inspections, call it as you see it. Document the good as well as the bad. Be fair. Don't play favorites. And ... play ball!

Please contact us if you have any questions ... **The Monthly Dirt**

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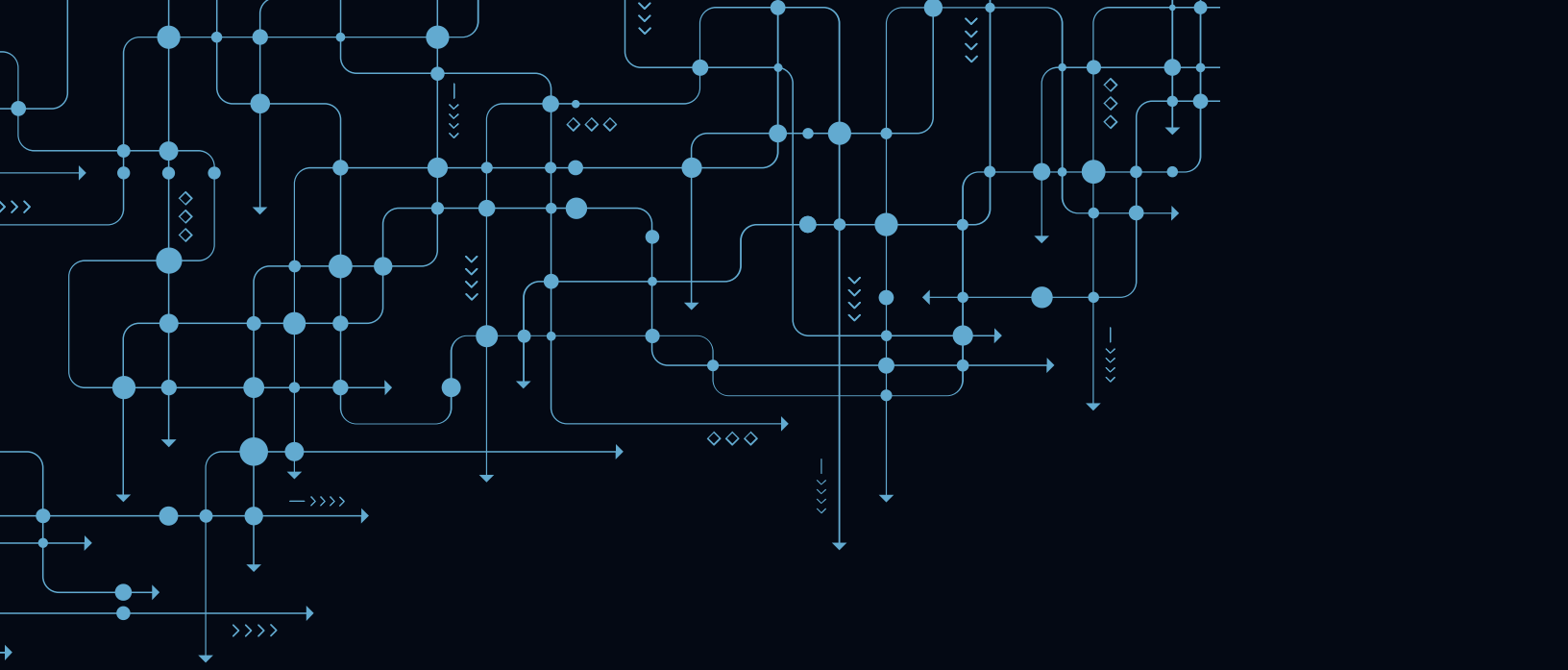
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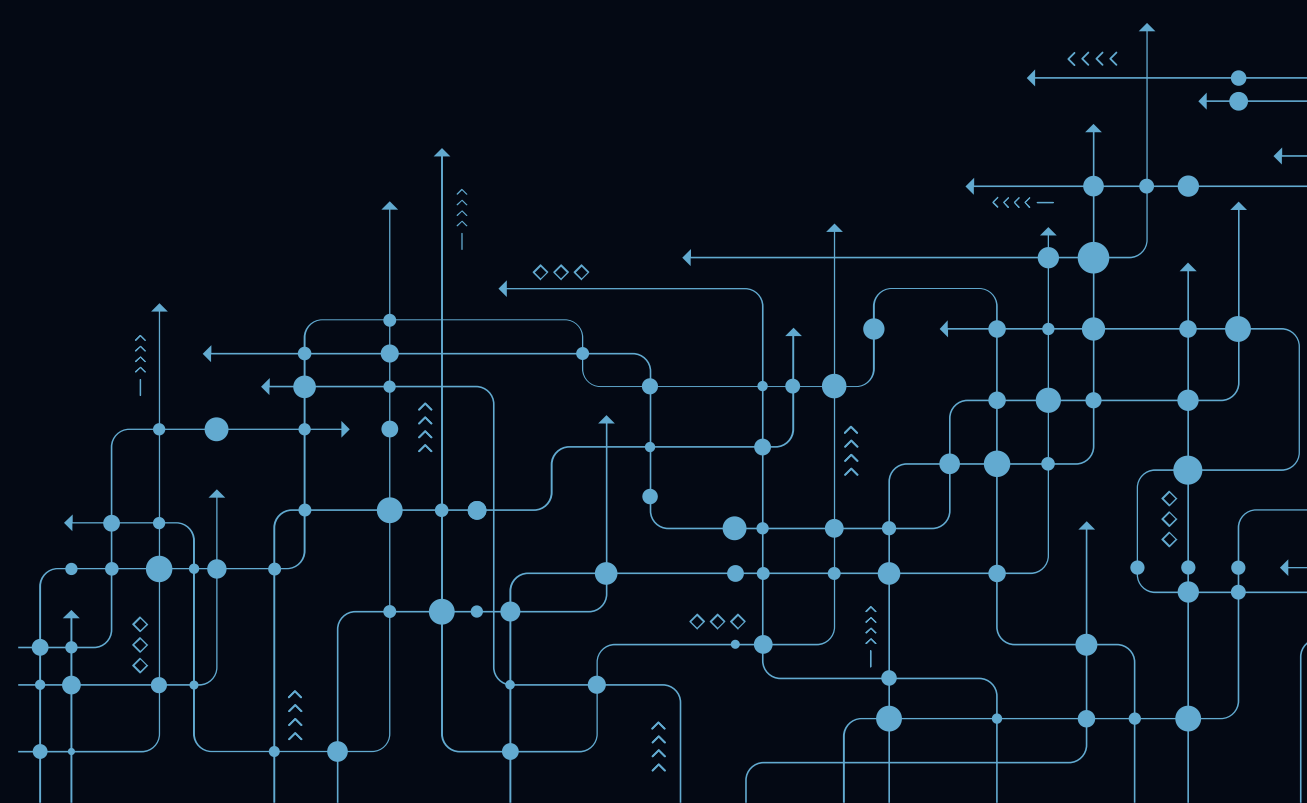
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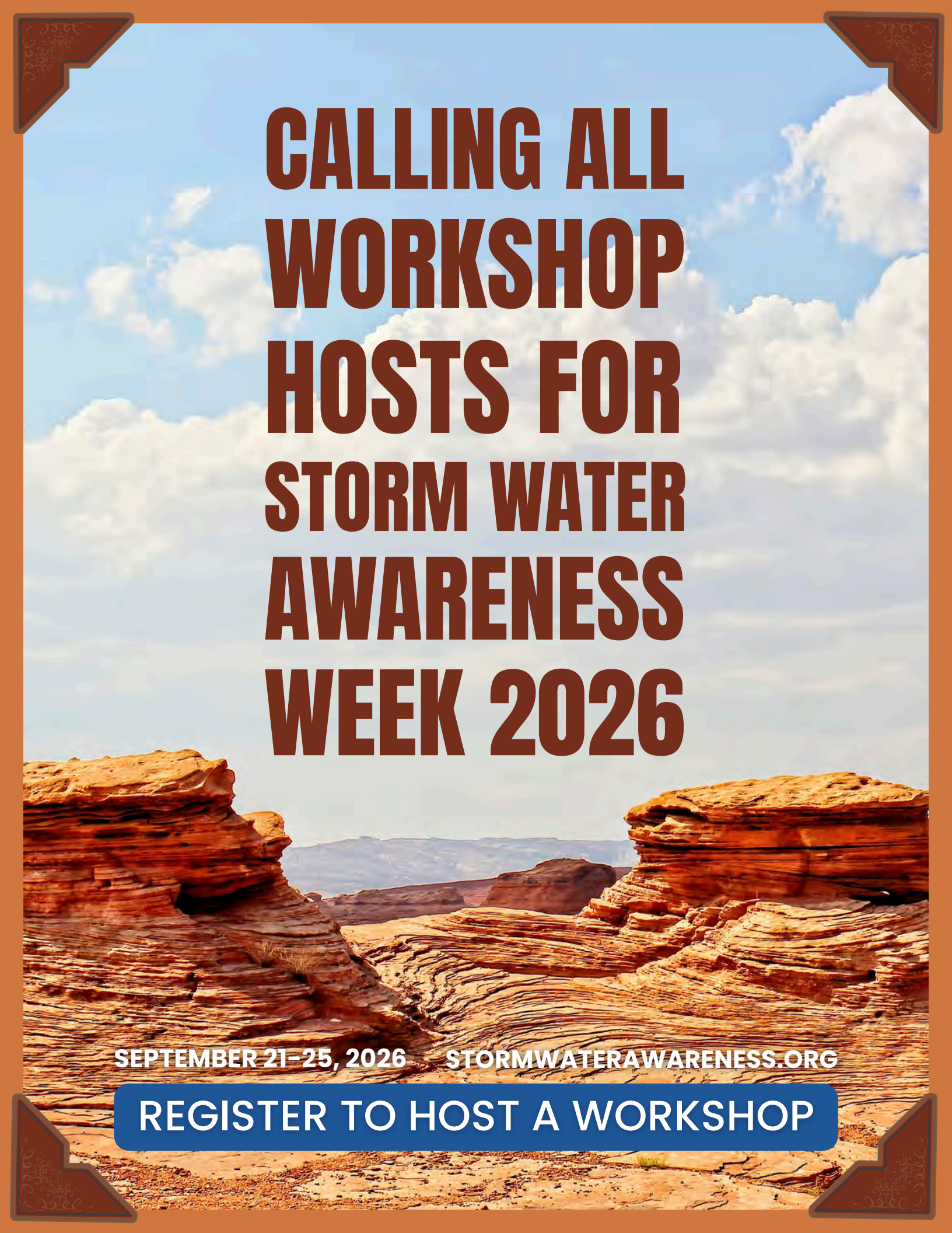


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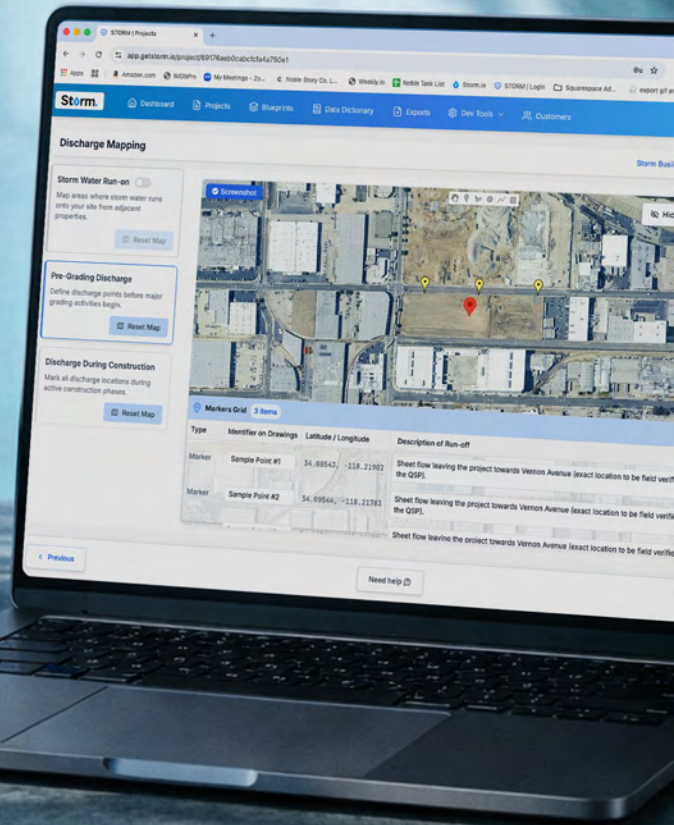
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