The Story of Two Raindrops and their associates

This story of the life of two raindrops helps illustrate what happens when a heavy rain event enters a watershed. Our two main characters in this rain story are Imp (short for impervious) and Perv (short for pervious). It should be made clear at the outset that these raindrops are only following “natural laws” and the “actions of man” in their life story. They are, one might say, a product of their environment.
Imp and Perv started out in the same cloud. One spring day, when conditions were right, they were released through the heavens towards the earth below. Along the way they, and countless other water droplets picked up the matter of the atmosphere. In this part of the world the air is not exactly pure, so like molecular structures do (especially water), they picked up their share of chemical compounds such as sulfur oxides, nitrous oxides and other contaminants discharged by an industrial society.
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Imp

Due to the force of impact, imp tore up some soil, enhancing a gully that was being formed, which was channeling runoff onto a nearby roadway and down a storm drain. Along the way, Imp picked up some clay particles, which were glad to go along for the ride. However, Imp was not acting alone, and the combined effects of Imp and associated raindrops created a severe erosion condition on the Raintree Estates subdivision site.

Perv

Perv had a much gentler landing onto the earth's surface. Touching down on a nice spongy mat of moss, where it immediately felt at home.
Rushing through the storm sewer system Imp and associates quickly reached the nearby stream. Here, they teamed up with more comrades and began wreaking havoc immediately. As they flooded the stream banks, trees began to topple over and wash away. Houses in the floodplain became part of the river. Bridges became submerged, and often lost their grip on the shoreline. Rushing on, these swollen, sediment laden, contaminant filled waters substantially altered the course of a major river, causing immense damage and destruction along the way.

Meanwhile, Perv was continuing a slow migration through the subsoil and into the groundwater. Here, Perv and associates helped restore an aquifer that was being depleted by over pumping and decrease in surface recharge area. These waters helped supply humans with well water and maintain the stability of the regional ecosystem.
Imp and associates continued downstream, picking up things in one place, dropping them off in another, dramatically changing the landscape along the way. Fully spent by an intense “joy ride” to the sea, Imp turned salty and became part of a vast ocean of raindrops, waiting to again return to clouds and continue their hydrological journey.

Perv, on the other hand, slowly migrated through the underground, surfacing several months later into a stream now in need of as much water as it could obtain. Summer drought had brought about low flow conditions and the local ecosystem desperately needed freshwater to survive. Perv and associates eventually were sucked into an intake pipe, to be channeled through a water filtration system and becoming part of local drinking water supply. This led Perv and associates on a whole new adventure, but that’s another story.
This story doesn’t really have an ending, at least as of yet. However, one thing is certain, as long as we continue to have more Imps and fewer Pervs, we are going to jeopardize the health and stability of our entire natural ecosystem, including the human component. It is important to remember that Imp and Perv did not willfully choose their roles. They are and will continue to be “a product of their environment”. As man has more and more impact on that environment, he will determine how many Imps and how many Pervs will be part of our world.