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	abstract	We make some improvements to our previous results in [TV05a] and [TV05b] . First, we prove a version of our volume growth theorem which does not require any assumption on the first Betti number. Second, we show that our local regularity theorem only requires a lower volume growth assumption, not a full Sobolev constant bound. As an application of these results, we can weaken the assumptions of several of our theorems in [TV05a] and [TV05b]. Spaces satisfying such a curvature decay condition are said to have asymptotically nonnegative curvature. We remark that by standard comparison theory, (1.2) and (1.3) imply an upper volume growth estimate, for some constant V_0 . Moreover, only a lower bound on the Ricci curvature is needed for this upper volume growth estimate [Zhu94] . It has been understood that such a volume estimate is the core of extending orbifold-compactness theorems for Einstein metrics to metrics satisfying more general equations, such as anti-self-dual or harmonic curvature. To this end, in our investigation of critical metrics in [TV05a], [TV05b] , and in the work of [And05], spaces arise with curvature decay as in (1.2), but the function $k(r)$ only satisfies $k(r) \rightarrow 0$ as $r \rightarrow \infty$, and standard comparison arguments do not apply. In [TV05a] we proved an upper volume growth estimate in this case, but our proof required finiteness of the first Betti number to rule out the presence of so-called "bad" annuli. In this paper, we show that adding the condition (1.4) below, eliminates this pathology. For M non-compact, C_S is defined to be the best constant so that for all $f \in C_{0,1}(M)$ with compact support. Let Ric^- denote the negative part of the Ricci tensor. Theorem 1.1. Let (M, g) be a complete, noncompact, n -dimensional Riemannian manifold with base point p . Assume that $C_S < \infty$, and that $\sup_{S(r)} Rm_g = o(r^{-2})$, as $r \rightarrow \infty$, where $S(r)$ denotes the sphere of radius r centered at p . If $\int_M Ric^- ^2 \, dV_g < \infty$, (1.4) for some constant R , then (M, g) has finitely many ends, and there exists a constant C_2 (depending on g) so that $Vol(B(p, r)) \leq C_2 r^n$. Furthermore, each end is ALE of order 0.	We make some improvements to our previous results. First, we prove a version of our volume growth theorem which does not require any assumption on the first Betti number. Second, we show that our local regularity theorem only requires a lower volume growth assumption, not a full Sobolev constant bound. These results allow us to weaken the assumptions of our previous volume growth and convergence theorems.			
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