

Central Delaware Wetlands Park Trail & Landscape Assessment

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



The Master Plan for the Central Delaware River describes an ambitious project of transforming a section of Philadelphia's industrial waterfront to a large wetland park as part of the revitalization and redevelopment of the waterfront. Central to that plan is a green corridor from Pier 53 to Pier 70 that includes a section of the Delaware River Trail. An interim trail currently runs through the wetlands section, but does not yet meet its potential as an attraction or habitat area. In 2012, Biohabitats assessed the ecological and cultural potential along this stretch of waterfront, provided

An ecological assessment for an urban trail along South Philadelphia's industrial waterfront celebrates the site's historical and natural significance, and guides progress toward the vision of a green corridor along the Central Delaware River.

a vision of what the area could become, and developed a road-map to achieve it.

Biohabitats performed an ecological assessment of the soils and habitat types along the trail, and developed practical, adaptive management strategies for controlling certain invasive species while allowing some hardy non-native species to continue to play their important role in bank stabilization.

Moreover, the assessment articulated some of the unique qualities of the place, which should serve as a foundation for further planning. The area itself is an artifact, a remnant of the industrial and maritime history and testament to the ingenuity that has shaped Philadelphia's economy and culture since its inception. Since the abandonment of industry along this

stretch of waterfront, nature has reclaimed the infrastructure, revealing patterns that reflect the tension between human endeavor and the immutable forces of nature. Biohabitats took these characteristics into account to craft a concept that plays to the site's strengths, opportunities and challenges.

The result of the assessment was a document that highlights three nodes with high potential for passive recreational use and great views of the Philadelphia skyline. The assessment also includes a vegetation management plan that aims to enhance the vegetation composition and habitat of this novel ecosystem.

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