

University of Delaware Capacity Study

Newark, Delaware



from top: Proposed rain gardens manage stormwater and add beauty to the campus; Initial conditions

As the University of Delaware embarked on a strategic planning process, University officials wanted to approach future campus growth through a lens of sustainability that would not only lead to a more resilient campus, but to new opportunities in research, education, and stewardship.

A key member of the planning team selected to conduct a capacity study for the University's main campus in Newark, DE, Biohabitats prepared an ecological characterization of the site and identified important ecological connections between the

By integrating ecological assessment and stormwater planning into its strategic planning process, the University of Delaware maximizes the natural capital value and sustainability potential of its main campus.

campus and the surrounding region. The ecological assessment consisted of a compilation of existing information and field reconnaissance to document existing features important to site and regional ecology. Information and observations were mapped and analyzed using a geographic information system (GIS).

Biohabitats also provided stormwater planning guidance to support the planning effort. This involved reviewing stormwater-related infrastructure, verifying key drainage and stormwater management features, and identifying of potential stormwater retrofit opportunities to improve water quality, ecological function, and habitat connections. Practices that provide shallow groundwater recharge and volume reduction, along

with natural landscapes that provide vegetative filtering and uptake of pollutants were emphasized. Biohabitats also worked with the University to develop a general philosophy and strategy to managing stormwater on campus general design guidelines to apply to future efforts.

Biohabitats services helped the University recognize the ecological and financial value of the campus' living infrastructure as well as its potential to achieve sustainable site goals that include native vegetation, healthy soils, beneficial use of rainwater, and dynamic and diverse habitats.

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