

Acacia Reservation Ecological Restoration Master Plan

Cleveland, Ohio



from top: Initial conditions;
Assessing the site

Cleveland Metroparks' 22,000 acres of open space form one of the most interconnected, extensive urban park systems in the U.S. Encircling the city, the parks, trails, zoo, and recreational facilities are collectively known as Cleveland's "Emerald Necklace." In 2012, a new jewel was added to this necklace: Acacia Reservation, a 155-acre property that had been a golf course, for the past 100 years. Euclid Creek, a tributary to Lake Erie, flows through the site. The watershed is home to over 60,000 people and has been greatly impacted by development,

A 100-year-old golf course is transformed into a 155-acre park that regenerates local ecology, enhances wildlife habitat, reconnects people to the landscape, and builds upon one of the most interconnected urban park systems in the United States.

which in turn has impacted the health and function of the creek, feeling the effects of urban runoff.

Cleveland Metroparks wanted to restore the property to a natural state, and do so in a way that would encourage public access and stewardship, protect the Euclid Creek watershed, and create a landscape consistent with adjacent reservations along the "Emerald Necklace." The envisioned reservation not only regenerates the local ecology, but recreates a variety of habitats, including wetlands, woodlands, streams, and meadows. For help in transforming this suburban golf course into a natural and cultural resource, Cleveland Metroparks turned to Biohabitats.

Biohabitats began by performing an assessment of site conditions, including soils, hydrology, ecology, and landform patterns. The project included a planning charrette with Metroparks' staff to develop a consistent understanding of the Parks' ecological restoration goals, and meetings to engage and inform the public. In addition to restoring native ecosystems, the Master Plan includes innovative stormwater management, green infrastructure, education, and interpretation of landscape change and ecological function.

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