

Blackbird Creek Reserve Ecological Restoration Master Plan

New Castle County, Delaware



Recognizing the need to conserve and manage over 350 acres of newly acquired land for the Blackbird Creek Reserve, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control turned to Biohabitats to develop an Ecological Restoration Master Plan. The Blackbird Creek Reserve is part of the Delaware National

Estuarine Research Reserve, one of 27 protected areas comprising the National Estuarine Research Reserve System. This site presents an opportunity to further the System's mission to practice coastal and estuarine research and education.

The Reserve gets its name from Blackbird Creek, an

Reserve lands, treasured since they were originally granted to settlers in the 1600s, will be restored and preserved for the coming decades.

area of natural habitats for many fish, wildlife and plant species. With its rich history as working land for farming, fishing, hunting and trapping, the area serves as a cornerstone for the local community and its economy. School children, researchers and people of all ages and backgrounds come to the Reserve for an unforgettable experience of natural beauty and a glimpse into the way Delaware's wild lands once were and can be in the future.

Working with Reserve staff and local stakeholders, Biohabitats conducted an existing conditions assessment, developed a restoration and research framework, and made ecological restoration recommendations. The effort involved an assessment of native plant communities, streams, wetlands, wildlife

habitat and critical habitat for rare, threatened & endangered species. Biohabitats recommended restoration strategies and projects, and identified potential restoration areas to be phased in over 25 years.

The master plan also included recommendations for stewardship and sustainability measures for proposed reserve features, including a canoe/kayak launch, parking areas, agricultural lands stormwater best management practices, environmental education, research and interpretive trail opportunities.

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