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ALLEGHENY ARBORETUM AND INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

# Confluence Discovery Park - Allegheny Arboretum at Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Indiana, Pennsylvania



A former metal scrap yard and brown field is envisioned as a new Arboretum and outdoor laboratory for Indiana University of PA students.

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*A post-industrial landscape to transform into beautiful, ecologically-rich learning environments.*

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## SERVICES

Engage  
Assess  
Plan

**S**panning the entire 374-acre campus of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, the Allegheny Arboretum is a living museum with a mission to “provide a learning environment that will advance our global understanding of temperate forests, cultivate an aesthetic appreciation for regional flora of the Allegheny Plateau and demonstrate practical applications of woody plant materials to modify and mitigate local environmental conditions.”

As a key member of a planning team led by Andropogon, Biohabitats helped develop a master plan for the Confluence Discovery Park, the centerpiece of the Arboretum. The aptly named park marks the spot where Stony Run and White’s Run join to form Marsh Run, which ultimately flows to the Conemaugh River, a major tributary to the Allegheny River. For more than a century, the site was used for industrial and commercial purposes. While this contributed to its cultural history, it caused ecological degradation. In creating the park, the University and planning team recognized an opportunity to transform a post-industrial landscape into an expansion of the Arboretum, a new gateway to campus, and an academic, community, and ecological asset.

After locating and assessing plant community boundaries on the former industrial parcel and brownfield, Biohabitats documented a variety of ecological challenges given the site’s history and its urban watershed. Biohabitats then identified opportunities to restore ecological functions, building upon the site’s remaining wetlands, riparian forests and meadows. Plans for restoration will begin to redefine the narrative of the site and set in motion the process of functional ecosystem development.