

Red Butte Creek Riparian Restoration Projects

Salt Lake City, Utah



from top: Red Butte Creek at Miller Park after restoration with inset showing initial conditions; bottom: Liberty Lake Park and newly created wetland benches

Red Butte Creek flows through two of Salt Lake City's parks, the Miller Park Bird Refuge and Nature Preserve and Liberty Park. Both vital green spaces have been popular for the City's people as well as critical wildlife oases for an otherwise urbanized environment. The creek, which was already stressed by a history

An innovative regenerative design provided stability and restored habitat in a nature preserve while emergent and floating wetlands added habitat, beauty, and new outdoor experiences to Utah's oldest public park.

of surrounding development, suffered severe impacts after a 2010 oil pipeline spill.

In Miller Park, Biohabitats helped the parks department regenerate ecosystem health and function to a severely degraded reach of Red Butte Creek. The project included invasive species control, native plant establishment, streambed restoration, bank stabilization, and trail and signage improvements. The design not only slows down, detains, and treats stormwater; it also hydrates the floodplain, allowing riparian vegetation to flourish. Riffle/pool sequences provide aquatic habitat.

In Liberty Park, Biohabitats helped the City restore vitality to Liberty Lake, which is fed by Red Butte Creek, by establishing native, emergent wetland edge with willow shrubland, creating floating wetlands, and improving vegetation on an existing island.

For both projects, Biohabitats worked with Design Workshop to prepare concepts and assist public meetings. We created final construction drawings and complete bid documents. We also provided construction oversight services. Construction was completed in Fall 2014. Miller Park has since weathered several large storms, including one exceeding the 100-year discharge. In Liberty Lake, the new wetland system adds habitat, helps clean water, and includes interpretive signage created in collaboration with the nearby Tracy Aviary.

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