

Ecological Master Planning Services for the Pearlstone Center

Reisterstown, Maryland



from top: The Ecological Master Plan highlights opportunities for restoration, conservation and habitat enhancement; Field assessment included a site tour with staff to understand current management protocols

The Pearlstone Conference and Retreat Center is a Jewish retreat and sustainable farm in Baltimore County, Maryland that fully integrates environmental stewardship into its operations and educational programming. When management of the entire property (which includes events pavilions, a day camp with camp sites, swimming pools, athletics fields, forest conservation easements, a pond, and wetlands) was delegated to the Pearlstone Center by the land owners, the Center’s staff initiated a campus master planning process. For

This master plan grounds itself in Jewish spirituality and the native ecology of the site, embracing and reflecting a sense of connection with the natural world and a duty to be environmental stewards.

help in creating a long-term vision for the property that reflects Jewish values, which include environmental stewardship, they turned to Biohabitats.

Biohabitats assessed the campus’ ecological resources and identified opportunities for sustainable and regenerative design, as well as approaches to more sustainable management of resources. An important goal of the master plan is to ensure that future development and maintenance efforts align with the Center’s core values: connectedness, living Judaism, environmental stewardship, and loving warmth. Innovative approaches to ecological resource management, organic farming, and alternative management techniques using grazing animals were identified as priorities.

At a planning charrette hosted by the Pearlstone Center Biohabitats provided input on natural resource opportunities including restoration and management of native meadow, wetlands, and forest areas, as well as feedback on integrated stormwater management and sustainable techniques to manage water and nonnative species. The master plan provides a comprehensive and forward-thinking vision of a landscape that connects visitor experience with the natural world, spirituality, mindfulness, and resilience, while prioritizing conservation of natural resources.

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*conservation planning
ecological restoration
regenerative design*



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