

Penn Urban Ecology Roundtable

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

An exchange of leading edge research and projects related to urban ecology furthers opportunities for collaboration and improvement in the field.



from top: Concept for living infrastructure—a repurposed pier that filters and cleans water, enhances dissolved oxygen, and creates aquatic habitat; Natural wastewater treatment and reuse in Portland, OR



GBD Architects

In February 2015 Keith Bowers was invited to participate in an urban ecology roundtable, hosted by Richard Weller, the Meyerson Chair of Urbanism and Landscape Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania. The event brought together a select group of professionals and academics committed to the ecological improvement of urban environments.

The purpose of the roundtable was two-fold: to share current research and professional activities and to discuss, in an open and relatively informal manner, the advancement of research related to urban ecology. The event built upon the successful 2014 launch of an Urban Ecology seminar at the University of Pennsylvania and an affiliated design studio, both of which seek to apply urban ecological knowledge in innovative, productive, and practical ways.

Each participant in the Penn Urban Ecology Roundtable delivered presentations on their current urban ecology

initiatives in the context of addressing the following questions:

1. What are the pressing topics in regard to urban ecology in North America?
2. What are the major gaps and most exciting research opportunities in the current theory and practice of urban ecology?
3. What is the current relationship between theory (the academy) and practice (professions/organizations responsible for the built environment) in regards to urban ecology and how can it be improved?
4. How can we work together, and what can Penn do to help build better research alliances to more actively progress emerging theories and practices of urban ecology?

Forging relationships, learning more about ongoing work in urban ecology issues, and exploring collaborative initiatives with like-minded firms and institutions greatly reinforced urban ecology as one of Bioworks core research areas.

