

Rockburn Branch Park Bioretention

Elkridge, Maryland



from top: Newly planted bioretention facility; Overseeing construction

Located along the densely-populated Baltimore-Washington corridor, Rockburn Branch Park is a 400-acre wooded oasis containing freshwater marshes, stream valleys, miles of trails, several multipurpose athletic fields, and numerous recreational facilities.

When the County wanted to correct drainage problems leading to excessive trail erosion within the park while maximizing water quality and impervious cover treatment with nature-like Best Management Practices (BMPs), they turned to Biohabitats to develop a

Bioretention enhances water quality, habitat, and beauty in a treasured public park.

nature-like solution that maximizes water quality and impervious cover treatment.

Biohabitats began by performing field reconnaissance to verify project mapping and topography, investigating the stability of the existing outfalls, evaluating soil profiles, and documenting problems or discharges associated with any of the park's nine outfalls. Opportunities for stormwater BMP retrofits were identified using the Retrofit Reconnaissance Inventory (RRI) protocols, and a feasibility analysis was conducted to evaluate alternatives. Working alongside the County, Biohabitats developed a concept for the preferred alternative: the retrofit of an existing curb cut located at the end of the park's entrance road into a bioretention facility.

The crux of the project was to design a stable discharge point that prevented excess water from concentrating and flowing along the existing trail network downslope from the BMP. The concept included local plants selected for their ability to take up nutrients and provide pollinator habitat. We provided almost 1,800 cubic feet of storage and treated 0.71 acres of impervious cover. After successfully leading the permitting effort, Biohabitats developed construction documents and then managed the construction process.

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