

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape **SUCCESS STORY**

By: City of Easton, Urban Forestry www.easton-pa.com
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Streambank Restoration/Demonstration Forest Protection (Awarded 2020)

SUMMARY

This project encompassed an initial riparian restoration of an unnamed tributary that feeds into the Bushkill Creek, located in Lower Hackett Park. The addition of a 10-foot-high deer fence with double entry gates surrounding the Demonstration Micro- Forest and the planting of 36 native trees on either side of the creek, an expanded parking area and within the Micro-Forest. Interpretive signage along with Identification tags for all trees and shrubs located within this newly protected area.



CHALLENGE

Altering antiquated philosophies regarding how we are supposed to work the land and what we have been told is the “Right” or “Accepted” way is our most challenging obstacle. Manicured, weedless lawns, perfectly pruned shrubbery along with topping trees must become something of the past. In a time where we are interconnect Globally resulting in the intentional and accidental introduction of invasive plants, insects and pathogens our environment and communities have become anything but balanced. In creating our Demonstration Micro-Forest in 2019, the City of Easton is empowering the community with the knowledge and vision through a living example of what was once a lawn and how this was quickly transformed into a Micro-Landscape teaming with life. Small spaces in urban communities are vital to keeping this balance in nature, consisting of highly concentrated areas of impervious and heat absorbing surfaces, creating Heat Islands. Through education and demonstration, anyone can create a small oasis in their tiny yard. Sometimes the first step is the most difficult but through guidance and support this experience of “Greening” is life altering.

FUNDING

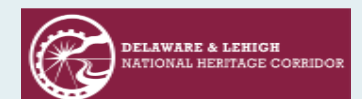
Grant Award:
\$7500.00

Match:
\$20,510.67

Total Project Cost:
\$22,789.26

PARTNERSHIP IS KEY

We received support and much enthusiasm from residents, some donating native pollinator plants, shrubs and tree seedlings, the non for profit PAZA Tree of Life, has donated bird houses/nesting material structures and will be volunteering their resources towards maintenance of these areas along with additional plantings of Persimmon and Paw Paw trees.



SOLUTION

The need for climate awareness and education is a top priority in our community, in 2019 the City of Easton developed a living, outdoor, model in Lower Hackett Park, we have deemed this space “The Demonstration Micro-Forest”. Lower Hackett Park is comprised of diverse ecosystems from open lawn/meadow, riparian/lowlands, transitional and mature woodlands and wetlands. With the existence of these unique ecosystems within walking distance of each other we are slowly developing an educational area rooted in Sustainable Conservation. The Micro-Forest being a place of respite in an urban environment, presenting to the community how fast a landscape can change and for the better! Hard work at first is required to keep at bay all the invasive species of plants, but after an initial restoration and continued maintenance, these actions will lead to reactions from our natural environment and its inherent desire to live in balance.

RESULTS

Utilizing the online program i-Tree Design we have calculated from the current year 2021 until 2026 the environmental benefits the addition of these 36 native trees will provide. Since there are no structures in this location, we have focused on the resulting benefits of Stormwater interception, Air Quality and Carbon Dioxide sequestered.

Here’s what we found; these 36 trees in the 5-year period will intercept a total of 14,372 gallons of rainfall and help avoid 2,151 gallons of stormwater runoff. This is accomplished through holding rainwater on their leaves, branches, bark and root systems, which provides the additional benefit of erosion control. Air Quality over the next 5 years will mostly be benefited by the absorption of Ozone (O3) pollutants and intercepting particulate matter (PM25) less than 2.5 microns in size such as dust, ash and smoke. Greatly adding to Oxygen (O2) production through photosynthesis and lowering local air temperatures. During the next 5-year period these 36 trees will sequester 1,060 pounds of Carbon Dioxide (CO2). The trees will hold CO2 within their roots, trunks, stems and leaves while actively growing. This is just a short-term example of what a few dozen trees can provide to our local community and most importantly the environment. By continually planting trees using a Successional planting plan there will always be a next generation of trees to provide these crucial benefits to the environment and combat climate change.

Contact



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