

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape **SUCCESS STORY**

By:
Lehigh County Conservation District
www.lehighconservation.org
4184 Dorney Park Road, Suite 1C
Allentown, PA 18104

Lehigh County Conservation District Resilience Park in the City of Allentown (Awarded 2023)

SUMMARY

The Lehigh County Conservation District, in partnership with the City of Allentown Parks & Recreation Department and Public Works Department, received funding to address the nature deficit many urban residents are facing through creation of a nature-focused pocket park and its future expansion. Previously an unlawful refuse disposal site, the parcel has become a safe place to enjoy the outdoors. The park includes a pollinator garden, nature journaling bench, magnifying station, balance beam, reduced mowing, edible and aromatic native trees and shrubs, large rock boulders, and an outdoor classroom with rustic tree stump seating. Project partners are proud to provide outdoor recreation opportunities for underserved communities through this resilience park.



CHALLENGE The biggest challenge that project partners faced was reclaiming underutilized urban land for the benefit of community members. After the massively impactful clean-up initiative in 2021 by the Environmental Advisory Council, the District sought to provide accessibility to green space and opportunities for outdoor



environmental education, conservation, and stewardship. It took a lot of reaching out to local organizations and communication with city residents to find the perfect spot to facilitate problem solving, exploration, and social interactions for youth in a community that was lacking green space and ecological infrastructure.

FUNDING

Grant Award:
\$4,700

Match:
\$7,902

Total Project Cost:
\$12,627

PARTNERSHIP IS KEY

With support from the City of Allentown Parks & Recreation Department and Public Works Department, Mayor Matthew Tuerk, and the Environmental Advisory Council, the District was able to implement the project successfully. Resilience Park will provide a green space, while encouraging local residents to connect to nature for overall well-being and quality of life.



SOLUTION

With these funds, the Lehigh County Conservation District was able to create an interactive, outdoor classroom with amenities for both organized group and informal community use. The classroom overlooks the pollinator garden hosting vibrant native perennials to assist in pollinating native edible trees also acquired through grant funds. American linden, northern pecan, wild plum, redbud, and American persimmon trees have been planted to shade and beautify the site. At maturity, their fruit and nuts will offer supplemental nutrition to the urban community. In addition, a walking trail was created upslope of Trout Creek, and three bilingual educational signs have been installed around the park.



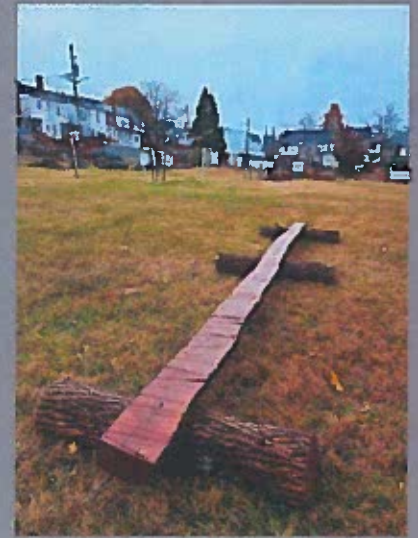
RESULTS

Partners successfully distributed information to 82 students and families at Jefferson Elementary School Open House on September 19, 2023, including a mapped walking route from the school to the park location.

A Community Planting Day Open House was carried out on October 7, 2023, with 8 attendees. Low attendance may be explained by downpour on the day of the event.

Residents of neighboring homes have reported increased wildlife sightings since the park's installation, including songbirds, deer, and fox.

Several environmental education programs have been carried out by project partners, including home schools and Veterans.



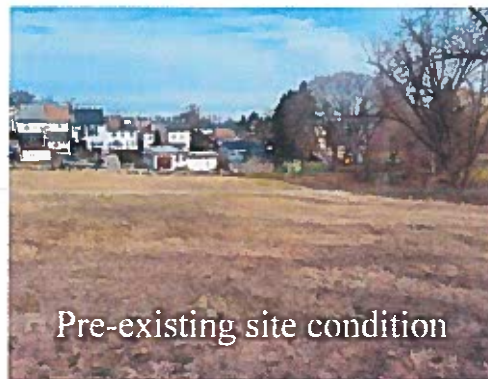
Contact



www.LVgreenways.org

Brit Kondravy, Conservation Coordinator
Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor
2750 Hugh Moore Park Road
Easton, PA 18042
610-923-3548 ext. 225
Conservation@delawareandlehigh.org
www.delawareandlehigh.org

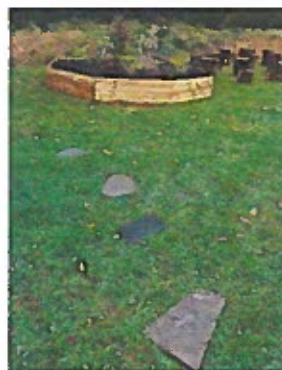
Rob Neitz, Manager
Jacobsburg EE Center
PA DCNR Bureau of State Parks
610-748-2801
meitz@pa.gov
www.dcnr.pa.gov



Pre-existing site condition



Tree planting with the City



Pollinator garden
& stepping stone path



Project partners
with
educational
signage