

Brownfields Revitalization/Phoenix Park

Delaware River Watershed (Greater Philadelphia Area); 2013 – Present

Summary

The Delaware River Watershed's brownfields revitalization efforts seek to identify urban brownfield sites and restore these locations to bring about economic production, environmental restoration, and recreational enhancement. Phoenix Park in Camden, New Jersey is one example of how Delaware River stakeholders worked in partnership to bring this effort to life.

Working with the community, city, county, state, and federal entities the Urban Waters Federal Partnership has been able to remove contaminated concrete, remove invasive species and plant native trees, and restore riverfront access. Now, a formerly abandoned waterfront site has been transformed into the 5.3-acre Phoenix Park. The next phase will be to develop a living shoreline along 600 feet of the river bank.



(Photo credit: Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority)

Federal Agency Partners include:

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Commerce

Non-Federal Partners include:

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, City of Camden, Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary

Goals

This project seeks to transform and revitalize the brownfield site to protect the health of affected local communities, while providing substantial social, environmental, and economic benefits. Specific goals include:

- Identify, assess, and cleanup the site,
- Promote community renewal and economic redevelopment in an underserved community,
- Incorporate green infrastructure to restore natural resources and improve water quality, and
- Provide increased public access to trails and greenways.

Major Actions to Date

Since 2013, the Phoenix Park project has become an important community asset. The work of many agencies, organizations, and the community has resulted in the following:

- The environmental remediation of 5.3 Brownfield acres into land suitable for public use,
- The removal of over 500 cubic yards of contaminated concrete,
- The planting of 68 trees, with more planned to be planted in the future, and
- Restoration of waterfront access to the community for the first time in decades.

In summary, the project has made strides to transform the abandoned site into a community asset that brings social, economic, environmental, and health benefits to residents while reconnecting the community to its urban waters.