
Baltimore City Recreation & Parks

Druid Lake Vision Plan

Baltimore, Maryland



Once a drinking water reservoir in one of the nation's oldest public parks, Druid Lake is transforming into an ecological and recreational oasis in the middle of Baltimore.

SERVICES

Conservation Planning
Ecological Restoration
Water Strategies

Druid Lake was created in the 19th century to serve as the City of Baltimore's primary drinking water reservoir. Although the lake was built in a historic stream valley, storm flows from the watershed were intentionally diverted from the lake to keep them separate from the drinking water supply. The system is largely sterile and incapable of supporting aquatic life. When safety protocols required that the potable water supply be placed in subterranean tanks on one side of the lake, the City recognized the opportunity to rethink the ecological and social function of more than 100 acres of lake and landscape. As ecological experts on a team led by Unknown Studio Landscape Architecture & Urban Design, Biohabitats helped the City develop a Vision Plan for the site that reconnects the Lake to the stream valley that currently bypasses it and to the larger 220-acre watershed.

Biohabitats began by performing a rapid ecological assessment of the lake edge and examining the site within the context of its watershed. Biohabitats reviewed and presented an alternative to a proposed aeration system designed to oxygenate the lake once potable water would no longer be pumped into it. The alternative strategy directs stormwater and flows from naturally occurring springs on the site into the lake and includes created wetlands to provide filtration and biological diversity, maintains a sustained water levels for recreation while enhancing the lake and local ecology. Biohabitats participated in a series of workshops with City officials, park stakeholders, and citizens to collaborate on a new vision for a Druid Lake that benefits the people and ecology of the City by providing recreational experiences, ecosystem services, and new connections to nature in a highly urban environment.