
Save the Sound

Mill River Trail Green Infrastructure Corridor

New Haven, Connecticut



A green infrastructure “parklet” restores beauty, biodiversity, and ecological function to a neglected urban site while connecting it to a larger riverine trail system and managing stormwater runoff.

SERVICES

Ecological Restoration
Water Strategies

With its 2017 Mill River Trail Framework Plan, the City of New Haven began reclaiming the river, which had long been associated with industry, as the City's central corridor. The plan aims to create a riverside trail linking over 300 acres of green space and reconnecting people to nature. Separately, in attempt to address water quality, Save the Sound produced the Mill River Watershed Based Plan, which called for the implementation of grey and green infrastructure to manage stormwater and prevent Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) and urban runoff discharges to the Mill River.

At one site along the proposed Mill River Trail, a 12,000-square-foot section of dead-end, unused, and frequently flooded roadway has become an eyesore. Save the Sound turned to Biohabitats to help retrofit the site to provide recreational and stormwater management benefits.

After reviewing background information, visiting the site, and analyzing its hydrologic conditions, Biohabitats developed contract drawings and prepared a cost estimate for a green infrastructure stormwater management design based on a concept that had been prepared for the Mill River Watershed Based Plan. The design removes impervious surface and creates a “parklet” featuring bioretention practices, public gathering areas, native plantings, and a multi-purpose path linking to the larger Mill River Trail. Save the Sound used the plans to successfully apply for construction funding, and Biohabitats provided construction oversight. The parklet receives and treats runoff from the adjacent roadway while enhancing the beauty, connectivity, and ecological function of the Mill River Trail and the surrounding community.