

STORMWATER

It can make the world green.



THAT'S THE POWER OF STEP.

STORMWATER IN THE HIGH LINE CANAL

The **Stormwater Transformation and Enhancement Program (STEP)** will bring a new life to the High Line Canal as a green infrastructure system that provides for stormwater management.

The High Line Canal Conservancy is working with Denver Water, Mile High Flood District and local jurisdictions through STEP to advance stormwater solutions in the Canal for both existing and new conditions.

High Line Canal as Green Infrastructure



Benefits to the Canal and region include:

WATER

Reduces the amount of pollution going into the waterways, improves water quality and upholds flood management

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Improves air quality, increases wildlife diversity and abundance and reduces the urban heat island effect

COMMUNITY HEALTH & LIVABILITY

Encourages healthy lifestyles, builds climate resilience and fosters stewardship

STORMWATER 101

What is stormwater?

Stormwater is precipitation that runs off impervious surfaces, such as driveways, parking lots or rooftops, and flows into storm drains and eventually into our waterways.

Why is it important to manage?

Increased stormwater runoff is a significant cause of environmental degradation of our waterways. As stormwater drains toward waterways, it can pick up contaminants, polluting the runoff that may cause harmful effects on water supplies, recreation areas, fisheries and wildlife. Managing stormwater with green infrastructure can significantly reduce these negative effects, while also decreasing the risk of localized flooding.

What is green infrastructure?

Green infrastructure is a sustainable, cost-effective, resilient approach to managing wet weather impacts by mimicking the natural environment to slow down stormwater runoff and improve water quality. Types range from smaller-scale rain gardens and detention ponds to large-scale naturally occurring systems like forests and floodplains.



CURRENT PROGRESS

To understand the technical aspects of using the Canal for stormwater management, two studies were done – the 2014 Feasibility Study and the 2018 Stormwater and Operations Master Plan. These studies concluded that it is technically feasible to use the Canal for regional water quality benefits and further explored formalizing the management of existing and new stormwater in the Canal. To learn more about these studies, visit:

highlinecanal.org/stormwater



UPCOMING PROJECTS

Denver Stormwater Project

The Denver Department of Public Works has planned for a stormwater demonstration project in Mamie D. Eisenhower Park to increase water quality. This will incorporate a set of dams or weirs to collect stormwater runoff that currently flows into the Canal and hold it to allow for natural infiltration. **Status:** Design is complete, and construction is anticipated to begin in Fall 2019.

Greenwood Village Stormwater Project

Greenwood Village will repurpose a section of the High Line Canal for stormwater treatment and conveyance. It will install two water quality berms to reduce localized flooding and naturally treat the stormwater already flowing into the Canal. **Status:** The study is complete and construction is planned for Fall 2019.

Support for STEP was provided by a grant from the Pisces Foundation, which seeks ways to accelerate to a world where people and nature thrive together. The project has also been generously supported by the JPB Foundation through the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, an administrative partner in issuing and managing this grant.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Will stormwater projects help the Canal's natural environment?

Yes. In fact, the 2014 Feasibility Study found that the Canal bottom could be wet an additional 100 days with stormwater, making it ideal for the natural landscape and environment to thrive.

Will stormwater management mean we'll see more trash or debris in the Canal?

No. The stormwater infrastructure will include features to filter out any trash or large sediment from water entering the Canal.

Will there be permanent standing water in the Canal?

No. Per Colorado State water law, water can only be detained for 72 hours, which will allow for maximum infiltration of pollutants and will keep standing water moving throughout the Canal to nearby waterways.

To learn more about stormwater management in the Canal, please visit highlinecanal.org/stormwater.

“The story of the Canal and its beginnings was like a promise of a better future. Those who used it were able to enhance their lives and enhance their property. This is a new way for us to bring that promise of a new future.”

– Tracy Young, High Line Canal Conservancy Board Member



HIGH LINE CANAL
CONSERVANCY



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