



Left: A mural adorns the Esperanza building. Right: Construction begins in the adjacent parking lot. © Julia Holz

Breaking Ground at Esperanza

Green stormwater infrastructure will aid Philadelphia community organization

Earlier this summer, construction crews broke ground on a green stormwater project at Esperanza, a faith-based nonprofit organization located in the Hunting Park neighborhood of North Philadelphia. Founded in 1987, Esperanza strengthens and serves predominantly Hispanic communities.

The new initiative, developed in tandem with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the engineering firm AKRF, will retrofit the existing stormwater management basin at the nonprofit's headquarters site to increase its capacity to retain and clean runoff during heavy rainfall events. The modifications include redirecting a portion of roof runoff from the Esperanza Academy Charter School building to the existing basin and adding vegetated flow-through areas within existing islands of the parking lot to store and filter runoff. In addition, 24 newly planted trees will increase canopy cover and provide shade in a section of the city that can be up to 22 degrees hotter than other Philadelphia neighborhoods during extreme heat events.

TNC's urban conservation program is focused on creating greener, healthier, more equitable and resilient urban communities by mainstreaming the use of nature-based solutions like green stormwater infrastructure. TNC seeks to support the voice and vision of local communities to co-develop innovative nature-based conservation solutions

with social benefits and strives for more just and inclusive communities where nature positively impacts the health and wellbeing of all people.

TNC and Esperanza hope that, once complete, the project will serve as a proof of concept that will catalyze even more stormwater retrofits in Hunting Park and throughout the city. Private landowner partners like Esperanza stand to benefit greatly from green approaches to stormwater management and will ultimately play a critical role in helping cities achieve healthier waterways. The Esperanza project was largely funded by the Philadelphia Water Department with additional support provided by the William Penn Foundation.

"Esperanza is a powerful voice and a community anchor within Hunting Park and greater North Philadelphia, constantly striving to improve quality of life and opportunities for members of these communities," says Lyndon DeSalvo, Urban Project Manager for TNC in Pennsylvania and Delaware. "The green stormwater infrastructure project at Esperanza's headquarters will provide immediate benefits to the organization and the communities it serves by increasing tree canopy to mitigate extreme heat, improving local water quality, and reducing monthly payments on its water bill."

Watch a video of the Esperanza green stormwater construction project at [nature.org/PAurban](https://www.nature.org/PAurban).

SUPPORT OUR WORK

Make a donation at [nature.org/PAgiving](https://www.nature.org/PAgiving) and [nature.org/DEgiving](https://www.nature.org/DEgiving)

Nature's Comebacks

December 28, 2023, will mark the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Endangered Species Act, a landmark bill that has proved to be one of the most important tools in protecting some of America's most iconic plants and animals. To celebrate, we're highlighting success stories right in our backyard.



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Delaware: Staggerbush

Known for its delicate clusters of white and pink tubular flowers, staggerbush has been re-emerging at TNC's Ponders Tract Preserve thanks to our conservation efforts. Prescribed fire thins out dense brush and restore soils by recycling nutrients, which is great news for the native birds and insects that rely on these plants during their life cycle.

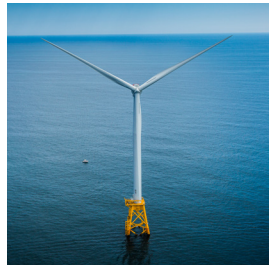
Find comeback species stories from all 50 states at [nature.org/comebacks](https://www.nature.org/comebacks)

Pennsylvania: Bog turtle

One of North America's smallest turtle species at just 3 to 5 inches long, the population at TNC's Acopian Preserve in southeast Pennsylvania have been surveyed since 1969. In 2020, two turtles were determined to be at least 62 years old, and a 57-year-old was spotted in 2022, making them the oldest known bog turtles anywhere in their range.

Advocacy Agenda

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions requires a rapid transition to a clean energy economy. TNC supports the sustainable development of offshore wind that avoids potential impacts to habitat and species through use of the best data available and engagement with key stakeholders.



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Earlier this year, Delaware took a major step forward by passing the bipartisan Senate Bill 170, which requires the state to study the transmission impacts of offshore wind and to work with key energy partners and neighboring states. TNC supported the legislation and surveyed Delawareans on their views of offshore wind, finding that nearly two-thirds of people have a positive or very positive attitude on offshore wind power. More than three-quarters of people believe development of offshore wind power projects in Delaware should be encouraged. Fewer than 10% believe it should be discouraged.

There is much more work to do on offshore wind, and there will be many important public conversations to come. As the 2024 Delaware legislative session approaches, TNC will continue to advocate for the careful, thoughtful buildout of renewable energy as we work together to reduce the impacts of climate change.

PENNSYLVANIA DELAWARE



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Director's Note

As the end of the year approaches, we're giving thanks for our TNC members and supporters who make our conservation work possible. Along with our partners in Pennsylvania and Delaware we're hard at work preserving the lands and waters vital to the health, wellbeing and sustainability of people and nature.

With your help, we'll continue making progress toward TNC's organization-wide 2030 goals, and by working together, we'll bring about the meaningful change we want to see in the world.

Yours in conservation,



Lori Brennan

Executive Director,
Pennsylvania and Delaware