

Habitat Mitigation in Conjunction with Wetland and Waterfront Development Permits

ProLogis Corporation
Elizabeth, New Jersey

The ProLogis Corporation acquired an approximately 80-acre “brownfield” site that borders Newark Bay (former Allied Signal/Continental Airlines site) in the Port of Elizabeth. The project goal is to redevelop the property as a warehouse and logistics facility in support of port-related commerce. Redevelopment of the Elizabeth Seaport Site presented opportunities to restore economic productivity, remediate legacy soil and groundwater impacts, furnish public access to the Newark Bay waterfront via a 1,400 linear feet walking trail, and re-establish native-plant dominated wetland and upland habitats.

Princeton Hydro was responsible for completing wetland delineations and habitat surveys, coordinating regulatory agency involvement for sensitive species encroachment, wetland disturbance, transition area waiver, and waterfront development activities. The project also required submission of NJDEP Freshwater Wetland General Permit applications, including a GP4 for hazardous material remediation and a GP27 for Brownfield redevelopment. Studies performed in support of the applications focused on characterizing the site’s wildlife, particularly colonial wading birds, and vegetation communities as well as a freshwater aquatic setting. The project also necessitated the relocation of a man-made stream channel.

To compensate for wetland disturbance and waterfront development impacts, Princeton Hydro prepared a mitigation plan that will culminate in more than 30 acres of stream, wetland, and upland habitat creation, restoration, enhancement, and/or preservation. The mitigation plan was designed to increase the richness and diversity of native plants in order to provide nesting and foraging habitat for resident and migrating wildlife, particularly birds. Additionally, the mitigation plan proposed the enhancement of one of Newark Bay’s few remaining maritime forest patches. The first step in the implementation of this plan is to eradicate the extensive patches of common reed that cover much of the site’s wetland and upland areas.

