

AES Philosophy on Conservation Development

Preserving open space and natural ecosystems enhances the quality of our lives by making our communities more worthwhile and enjoyable places to live, work, and play. Open space becomes increasingly important as it is recognized as the last vestige of nature in a developing suburban setting. Thus, good stewardship of these lands becomes a paramount concern to the community as surrounding open lands become scarcer each year.

With a more acute awareness of the diminishing amount of open space around us, many communities, developers and corporations across the country are beginning to focus on preserving and restoring healthy natural resource areas. These natural resource areas are seen as integral components of development plans and infrastructure because they offer compelling and justifiable reasons for protection within the context of the public and private concerns.

Commercial, residential and recreational development projects that intertwine natural and constructed features are referred to as “Conservation Development”. This exciting new concept holds that preservation and restoration of healthy natural resources within developments offers a multitude of benefits ranging from increased property values and reduced infrastructure (i.e., storm sewer systems, etc.), to greater human values and higher quality of life. Properly implemented, conservation development projects offer a win-win opportunity for economically viable development projects within the context of good land stewardship. AES is a strong advocate of this development philosophy and has been privileged to serve as ecological team leader on several Conservation Development projects.

When planned and implemented from an ecological perspective, Conservation Development offers a seamless transition from the built environment to the natural one. In this type of arrangement, human needs are met while healthy ecological systems are sustained.