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The LILLY ARBOR Project: An Ecological Restoration Program for an Urban Waterfront

The Lilly ARBOR Project is an experimental restoration project conceived by the Center for Earth and Environmental Science (CEES) to develop an outdoor experiential environmental research and education site. The project's educational objectives are to a) increase the number of faculty and students at IUPUI involved in experiential learning, b) engage students and the general public in the design, implementation, and monitoring of a restoration project, and c) provide a site for educational outreach for citizens, K-12 educators, and environmental professionals. The project's research objectives are to a) provide a research site for long-term study of river and riparian processes, b) evaluate restoration procedures currently utilized by restoration managers, and c) monitor the long-term growth and development of an urban riparian forest. The project involves planting and monitoring the growth and development of trees and shrubs planted along 8 acres of the riparian corridor along the White River in downtown Indianapolis. This ecological reforestation project will also complete the last key component of a conservation corridor through Marion County, Indiana.

Faculty from at least four IUPUI schools are using the site for teaching and research. The site is being be studied, restored, and maintained by a) students participating in either service learning courses or in more advanced courses for majors, b) students from local area high schools and middle schools, and c) corporate and community volunteers under an umbrella of long-term project responsibility and maintenance provided by CEES.