

Fresh Pond Reservation

Cambridge, MA

The Fresh Pond Reservation consists of 162 acres of open space, surrounding and protecting the 155-acre Fresh Pond Reservoir, which is part of the drinking water supply system for the City of Cambridge. Much of the soil in the northeast sector of the reservation has been degraded over time due to changes in the local environment and from overuse. Some areas were used for dumping fill from construction projects, contributing to less-than-desirable soil characteristics and poorly functioning soils with little porosity.

(left) Shrubs in new soil under green fiber erosion control matrix.



Soil consultants Pine & Swallow Associates were hired by landscape architects Carol Johnson Associates to design seven different soil types that would optimize water holding while maintaining adequate drainage over time in different areas of the Reservation. Recognizing the challenge of making soils to specification, Emanouil Bros., the landscape contractor on the project, subcontracted with Agresource and with Read Custom Soils to make the mixes. Together, the two companies combined their resources to mix on-site soil with sand and compost to meet strict specification requirements as well as handle the entire submittal and approval process on a tight schedule. (right) Plantings established in new soil.



Specialty soils made on the project site included a Marsh Basin Mix, Wet Meadow Mix, Meadow Mix, Lawn Mix, Sports Field Mix, Backfill Mix, and Garden Mix. These custom made soils will provide for thriving plant material while protecting local natural resources for a long time to come.

(left) Wet meadow mix is spread.



(right) Sports field mix is ready to be spread.



