



Chicago River, Illinois

Riverbank Shoreline Stabilization

33rd Ward, Chicago; October 2007

Project Background

The City of Chicago wanted to enlarge a small parking lot located behind the 33rd Ward Sanitation Plant along the Chicago River.

However, due to the site limitations, the proposed expansion was required to be built on the unstable riverbank shoreline. In order to successfully execute this proposal, the shoreline had to be permanently stabilized first.



Problem

Aesthetics: The City of Chicago recognized that this site is highly visible due to the proximity of the Belmont Avenue bridge, but that the present landscaping was not aesthetically pleasing. The shoreline adjacent to and opposite the site includes a number of eyesores, all the way down to the water line: rip rap, iron pilings and concrete poured over mesh.

Geotextile Soil Lifts: As engineered and permitted, this site was required to utilize geotextile soil lifts, but the actual project construction integration made the lifts extremely difficult, if not impossible, to install.



Solution

Flexibility: Robert Ebl, Inc. proposed that the city use the Envirolok system because of the flexibility that is one of the hallmarks of the system. The wall was installed in November of 2007. In the spring of 2008, the wall will be planted with native plants and hydroseeded.

Aesthetics: The integration of native plants as a construction element of the Envirolok system makes the site more pleasing.

Stormwater: The stormwater discharge pipe is integrated into the Envirolok system. It infiltrates the stormwater that is collected in the parking lot. Mayor Richard M. Daley is committed to improving the water quality of the Chicago River.

“This is our first Envirolok job, and after completing the installation, and seeing the engineering, integration and on site flexibility of the system, I can see that we have created a permanent, living solution for this site.”

Robert Ebl



Landscaper



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NOTE: Do not burn native vegetation growing on the Envirolok system. The bag fabric is flammable. When fully vegetated, bags retain their integrity up to 200 years, depending on conditions.

NOTE: Advice from an engineer is recommended when building walls more than 4' in height, or when site conditions include unusual erosion or weak soil conditions.



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