



Fresh Kills Lives

New York officials are hoping that an international design contest—similar to the one that led to the creation of New York's Central Park—will transform the Fresh Kills landfill on Staten Island into one of the world's largest parks. In the meantime, Steven Handel, an associate professor of natural resources at Cook College, is helping the city sanitation department prepare for the day the landfill officially closes by planting over 70 species of trees, plants, and grasses. "It's a wonderful workshop for plant physiology students; we've worked on ecological restoration since 1993," says Handel. "This landfill—three times the size of Central Park and at some points as high as a 20-story building—will one day be filled with natural forests, wildflower meadows, athletic fields, hiking and jogging trails, and a marina." Handel's response to skeptics: "F. Scott Fitzgerald once wrote about a stinking mass of burning, rotting trash and the fires of hell he had to pass on his way back to Long Island from the city. That spot is now Flushing Meadows Park, the site of two World Fairs."