

Feasibility study of integrated flood protection for the Laveggio River



While the goal of securing the Laveggio River as a flood-protected, public-access area with an abundance of valuable flora and fauna is clear, it is less clear how the goal is to be achieved. In the context of a participative process involving various stakeholders, EBP identified a number of deficits in the river's current state, drafted several key development measures and devised a plan for project implementation.

Laveggio River deficits

From the confluence of the Laveggio and Morée to the mouth of the Laveggio at Lake Lugano, the banks and bed of the engineered river offer little variation. Indeed, the short, approximately 300-meter stretch of river that has been restored to a natural state stands in stark contrast to the remaining 2.2-kilometer stretch. Regrettably, the river has the character of a barrier between its two banks rather than a link for humans and local flora and fauna. Altogether, the littoral zone is narrow, highly exposed to the risk of flooding and of little value as a public-access, recreational area.

Stakeholder conflicts

Despite its deficits, however, the Laveggio is an important feature of the overall landscape. Young and old alike frequent the river on their breaks from work or school and stroll or bike along it mornings and evenings. The river is actually cherished by local residents and people from neighboring communities, and is also valued by the canton, environmental groups, the regional fishery, farmers associations and other organizations.

Client

Riva San Vitale und Cantone Ticino, ufficio dei corsi d'acqua

Facts

Period	2016
Project Country	Switzerland
Participating organizations	15
Length of stretch of river	2.5 km

Contact persons

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While all of the many stakeholders agree that the Laveggio's current state is unacceptable, their proposals for its development and use diverge. Conflicts relating to the river's future therefore seem unavoidable.



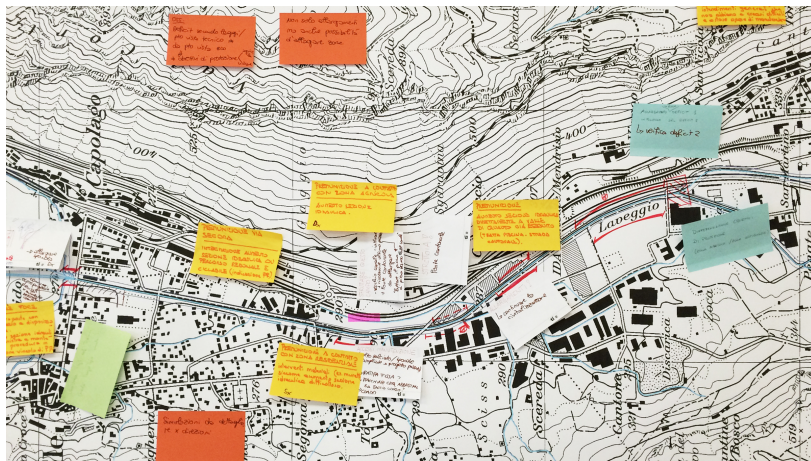
View in direction of River Laveggio close to the sewage treatment plant

Reconciling differences and establishing a common goal via dialogue

Working on behalf of the municipality of Riva San Vitale and the Canton of Ticino, EBP arranged for a participatory process to give all of the stakeholders an opportunity to voice their concerns, describe what they regard as deficits, specify parameters and propose development measures. In the context of various workshops and steering committee meetings, EBP developed a vision for the Laveggio together with the stakeholders. The vision offers an example of how taking an integrated approach to apparently competing interests can lead to reconciliation and a common goal.

Consensus as the key intermediate goal

Using the feedback given by the stakeholders as a basis, EBP then devised a list of prioritized intervention zones along the Laveggio, drafted initial project sketches and estimated the costs of the Laveggio's long-term development. The most important result is that we have all arrived at an integrated solution that accommodates all of the various interests while at the same time remedying the deficits in a careful and targeted manner. An important basis for further negotiation on a detailed development plan has thereby been established.



Partial results of a workshop

Header image: View in direction of river Laveggio south to Via Giuseppe Motta