A bioswale is a constructed channel designed to mimic a natural stream corridor carrying stormwater above ground. The West Campus Bioswale project included the construction of a series of vegetated swales (A) and bio-retention rain gardens (B) to channel runoff water through the site. Approximately 9 acres of land drains into this 1 ½ acre bioswale with the main channel being 600 feet in length. A series of three large pocket rain gardens range from 1750 sf to 4000 sf each.

All plants used in the swales and rain gardens were chosen for their ability to withstand the short periods of inundation and the drought conditions of Kansas summers. The plants are native or climate adapted to Kansas. The channels are planted with a mixture of native grasses that slow the water, while the swales are planted with native plants that remove some pollutants from the runoff as it infiltrates into the soil. The rain gardens are planted with large swaths of native perennials, providing an ordered and intentional look to the gardens.