GRORUD VALLEY PARK (WALK)

IFLA 2019 Common Ground / Walks + Talks #1a

A river walk along the reopened Alna River in Grorud valley, through waterfalls, wetlands, a water cathedral and more.

**Meeting point:** Narvesen Grorud, Bergensveien, Oslo

**Time:** 08:45 – 12:00
Please make sure to be on time, as the tour begins at 08:45

**Remember to bring:**

- a good pair of walking shoes
- a bottle of water
- an umbrella/raincoat (if the weather is unreliable)
- a return ticket for local transportation “Ruter Impuls”, distributed upon registration in Oslo Congress Centre

**If you have any tour related questions, please contact:**

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Narvesen Grorud (START)

1. Grorud initiative / Ammerud Outdoor Gym (breakfast)

2. Ammerud Tunnel

3. River dam / Storm Water Treatment

4. Grorud Park / Pond / Amphi Theatre

5. Urban Nature + Ecology

6. Bleikedammen

7. Leirfossen

8. Hølaløkka

9. Grorud Station (END)
The city of Oslo takes pride in its rivers and the reopening of several rivers and streams in the city have been given high priority. The opening of the Alna river through the parkland in Grorud is one of the pioneering projects that has influenced this development, from the early ideas and visions were introduced in 2002, until today with the gradual opening and restoration of waterfalls, wetlands, dams and flowing river. Along the recreational route from Ammerud to Hølaløkka, this walk follows the river and visits landscape projects that interact with the natural and urban systems, a gym inside a metro underpass, a water cathedral under the highway, a stage at the water edge, viewing platforms, steps and bridges allowing access to and across the river.

**STOP 1: GRORUD INITIATIVE / AMMERUD OUTDOOR GYM**

**Time:** 08:50 - 09:30  
**Theme:** Groruddal initiative and the participation project  
**Speaker:** Grorud initiative, District of Grorud, Oslo municipality - Cecilie Kjølnes Skar  

Groruddalssatsingen is an initiative from the municipality of Oslo and the government to create various improvements in selected services and neighboring communities in the Grorud district. The initiative and investments last from 2017-2026.

The projects around Ammerud started with a comprehensive participation process to make a clear-cut framework for design and content. A special desire and need for meeting places related to exercise and physical activity and a stage and play-area for young children were identified. The project was built in two phases, The Ammerud Gym and The Ammerud Atrium the following year.

**Breakfast:** sandwich and coffee/drinks (grab n’ go)

Walk from stop 1 - 2: 3 min

**STOP 2: AMMERUD TUNNEL (WALKING THROUGH)**

**Theme:** Groruddal initiative and the participation project

The development and design of The Ammerud Tunnel was initiated by a student project from AHO. The tunnel is a part of several other projects at Ammerud that has transformed areas that were previously negative and dark infrastructure space, to become attractive and identity-strong meeting places in the local community. The tunnel has a climbing wall and the city's longest monkey bar.

Walk from stop 2 - 3: 5 min

**STOP 3: RIVER DAM / STORM WATER TREATMENT**

**Time:** 09.40 – 09.50  
**Theme:** Introduction to storm water treatment along the Alna river, reopening river  
**Speaker:** Vidar Berget Alnaelvas venner and LINK Architecture, the project Landscape Architects
Grorud Park extends over 2 km and was completed in the period 2009-2013. The area has been developed both as a nature area and city district park. Earlier urban development has had a strong negative impact on the Alna watercourse over the last decades. Over long sections the river is led into pipes and it is today, together with Hovinbekken, Oslo's most polluted watercourses. The Alna river running through the park has been reopened, processed and made available to make it a living and vibrant waterway where people travel and meet. North of the Grorud pond the stormwater from the highway and surrounding areas is cleaned within bioremediation ponds before it is released into the River Alna and Groruddammen. Because of this and other cleansing measures the water quality in the river has improved significantly.

Walk from stop 3 - 4: 5 min

STOP 4: GRORUD PARK / POND / AMPHI THEATRE
Time: 09.55 – 10.15
Theme: Grorud amphi, storm water treatment along the Alna river, river opening
Speaker: Link Architecture - Grorud amphi, project Landscape Architect

The realization of Grorud Park was an important step within the Grorud initiatives goal to establish a designated park in each city district. The tour continues under the highway to the Grorud pond and amphi, the heart of the Grorud park. The park introduces facilities for athletics, play, recreation, youth programmes, social interaction and cultural activities for the diverse local population. Interventions in the landscape are adapted in the most gentle way possible so that the natural environment is affected to the least possible extent. Link landscape was the project landscape architect, under commission from Oslo Municipality's Department of water and sewage.

Grorud pond is an important historical and cultural element of the watercourse and was originally built to provide hydropower to the industry below the dam. The dam is beautifully rehabilitated and tells the story of former local industry. Over the dam's floodplain, a sheet of steel is laid as a walkway. The granite elements used give the pond a solid but rustic appearance. Ponds and watercourses are planted with native water and swamp vegetation which helps to purify the water that runs through the park. Improvement of water quality in Groruddammen through various soil cleansing techniques, was also a central part of LINK Landscape’s role. The project is a pilot project in Norway and incorporates phytoremediation (a 2 to 3 year process by which soil pollutants are bound to vegetation), reducing carbon emissions associated with transporting soil for off-site remediation.

Walk from stop 4 - 5: 10-15 min

STOP 5 - 6: URBAN NATURE + ECOLOGY AND BLEIKEDAMMEN
Time: 10.30-10.50
Theme: Urban ecology around the Alna river
Speaker: Kristoffer Bøhn from SABIMA (environmental organization who focuses on biodiversity loss)

Looking at how Oslo is placed geographically, facing south, close to water, well protected and with a friendly climate, it’s easy to understand that people settled here thousands of years ago. It’s also easy to understand that the area must have been a unique hotspot for biodiversity. More surprisingly perhaps, the modern Oslo still holds a rich wildlife. Careful planning will contribute to maintain as much of possible of the “green city”, and that will be of great value not only for nature itself, but also for the well-being of its inhabitants.

Grorud park project established a continuous landscape and recreational corridor from Lillomarka, via Grorud park, through to Leirfossen (waterfall) and Hølaløkka. The open watercourse with thresholds that form small and larger water levels create good biotopes for animals and plants. Water quality has improved significantly, as a result of measures for natural cleansing of stormwater, the soil and increasing the watercourses self-cleansing ability.

Walk from stop 6 - 7: 10 min.

STOP 7: LEIRFOSSEN
Theme: River opening, adjusting constructions to nature
Time: Walking through

Walk from stop 6 - 7: 10 min.

STOP 8: HØLALØKKA
Time: kl. 11.10 – 11.30
Theme: Storm water runoff, security against flooding, recreational dam project.
Presentation: Link Architecture, the project Landscape Architect

Hølaløkka was the first part of the reopening of the Alna river. The area has existed as a unattractive leftover space between residential and industrial areas since the 1970s, when the river was laid in a culvert.

The starting point for the project was the area’s potential as a recreational area and as the start for the new blue-green structure in the Grorud valley. An important aspect of the design have been to improve the self-cleaning ability of the partly heavily polluted watercourse, with sedimentation ponds and infiltration areas, as well as to restore biological and ecological diversity. The area has been given a robust, almost industrial feel when it comes to using materials and design to be able to withstand less maintenance. It functions as a recreational spot and a meeting place for both residents and passersby.

Walk from stop 7 - 8: 5 min.

STOP 9: GRORUD STATION TO RÅDHUSPLASSEN (arrival at Rådhusplassen 12.00)