

FAQ

The Nature Conservancy is excited to bring a new feature, the Boardwalk Trail, to our South Cape May Meadows Preserve. This inclusive and accessible nature trail, along with updates to the parking lot, entrance and existing trails, will connect people of all abilities and backgrounds with nature.

Why are you building this new trail?

The new trail is one of many ways we are trying to make nature accessible to everyone. Our goal is to bring people of all abilities and backgrounds closer to nature.

How did you approach the trail's design?

We consulted with groups that have historically experienced challenges accessing nature, and are incorporating their insights in the design to remove common barriers. To create a thoughtful, inviting design, we worked with a licensed engineering firm and landscape architect.

What are the trail's benefits?

The fully ADA-compliant boardwalk will open previously inaccessible portions of the preserve to all visitors, offering beautiful landscape views and enhanced birding opportunities for a wider audience.

When will construction begin/end?

Construction for the Boardwalk Trail, parking lot, existing trails and welcome center will start in the spring of 2024. The trail construction is expected to last three months.

Where will the trail be sited?

With an entrance off the Main Trail, it will wind through the southwest portion of the preserve, which includes beautiful wetlands and freshwater ponds. The loop shape will have offshoots that connect to existing trails. (Turn page over for draft rendering of new trail).

Will the preserve be open during construction?

Yes. Temporary closings or detours of certain trails will be posted onsite and on the preserve's website.

What will the trail be made of?

The semi-raised boardwalk will be made from a durable and sustainably-minded combination of aluminum and recycled plastic.

How long will the new trail be?

At just over ½ mile, the trail can be a stand-alone, out-and-back experience, or can connect users to the Cape May Point State Park trail system for further exploration.

What features will the trail have?

The six-foot wide, flat boardwalk will provide a stable surface and be navigable by assistance-providing devices like wheelchairs and strollers. ADA-compliant benches and pullout areas along its length serve as rest stops, and a visually unobtrusive handrail on one side offers guidance to users who need it. Additional exciting accessibility features include an audio tour, interpretive braille signs, and a bird observatory and seating area.

How will people access the trail?

To improve access to the trail, we will pave ⅓ of the existing parking lot, which will include three ADA-compliant van spaces. The existing entrance trails will be updated to a firm and stable surface and the welcome center will be modified to meet ADA requirements.

Are bikes or dogs allowed?

Bikes and animals, except trained service dogs, are prohibited.

Will the trail harm the preserve's ecology?

Advanced construction technology employed under the watch of licensed engineers and wetland scientists will minimize impact on the landscape. The completed trail will foster connection with the outdoors and help expand the community that loves and speaks up for nature.

FAQ

This draft plan for the Boardwalk Trail is subject to modification.



Figure 1

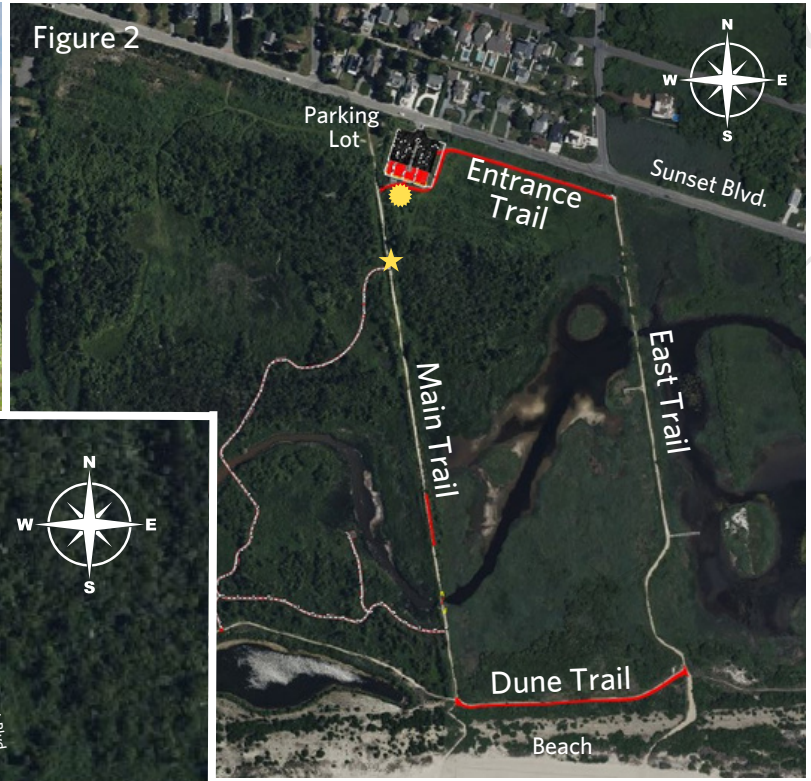


Figure 2



Figure 3

Map Key

-  Welcome Center
-  Boardwalk Trail Entrance

The red areas in Figures 2 and 3 indicate existing preserve amenities that will be modified. The entrance trail, portions of the Main Trail, and the Dune Trail will be updated to a firm and stable surface. The welcome center will be redone to meet ADA requirements.



Figure 4

New accessible amenities, like dual viewing scopes, a handrail (Figure 1) and supportive ADA-compliant benches, will be incorporated into the trail.