



department of Conservation and Recreation

DCR's Belle Isle Marsh Reservation Proposed Wetland Boardwalk



DCR Public Meeting

September 17, 2013, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 pm

Topsider Room

Suffolk Downs Racecourse, East Boston, MA



department of Conservation and Recreation



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Governor

Deval L. Patrick

Energy and Environmental Secretary

Richard K. Sullivan, Jr.

Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner

John P. Murray



department of Conservation and Recreation

dcr
Massachusetts



Mission Statement

To protect, promote and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the well being of all.

History of Belle Isle Marsh Reservation

- 1975 – 152 acres acquired by the MDC through an agreement with MassPort
- 1978 – Belle Isle Marsh Reservation dedicated in June
- 1980 – MDC development of BIMR begins



History of Belle Isle Marsh Reservation

- 1986 – BIMR opened to the public in September
- 1997 – MDC constructed boardwalk in East Boston parcel
- 1985 – 2012 – 43.1 acres added to BIMR through acquisitions and gift of land



Description of Belle Isle Marsh Reservation

- 195.1 acres, including 150 acres of wetland and tideland, in East Boston and Winthrop
- Preserves Belle Isle Marsh, Boston's last remaining salt marsh – protected waters are nurseries to fish and shellfish and are a critical habitat to many salt marsh plants and wildlife rare to the metropolitan area.



Description of Belle Isle Marsh Reservation

- Includes a landscaped park, pathways, boardwalk, and 18' observation tower
- Guided walks cover topics such as saltmarsh ecology and the history of man's use of, and impact on, the marsh.



Project Consultant



A multidiscipline engineering and consulting firm that has worked on multiple award-winning and recognized projects including



River's Edge

A river corridor restoration & public access project in Medford & Everett



Gillette Stadium

The relocation of the Neponset River at Gillette Stadium

Purpose of Meeting

1. Review history of the project
2. Present project design elements
3. Review project benefits
4. Review project schedule
5. Obtain public input on design and implementation of the project

Project History

This project is being undertaken in connection with the settlement of an enforcement action, *United States v. Sterling Suffolk Racecourse LLC*, taken on behalf of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Clean Water Act.

The settlement required, among other things, The Belle Isle Marsh Boardwalk Supplemental Environmental Project.

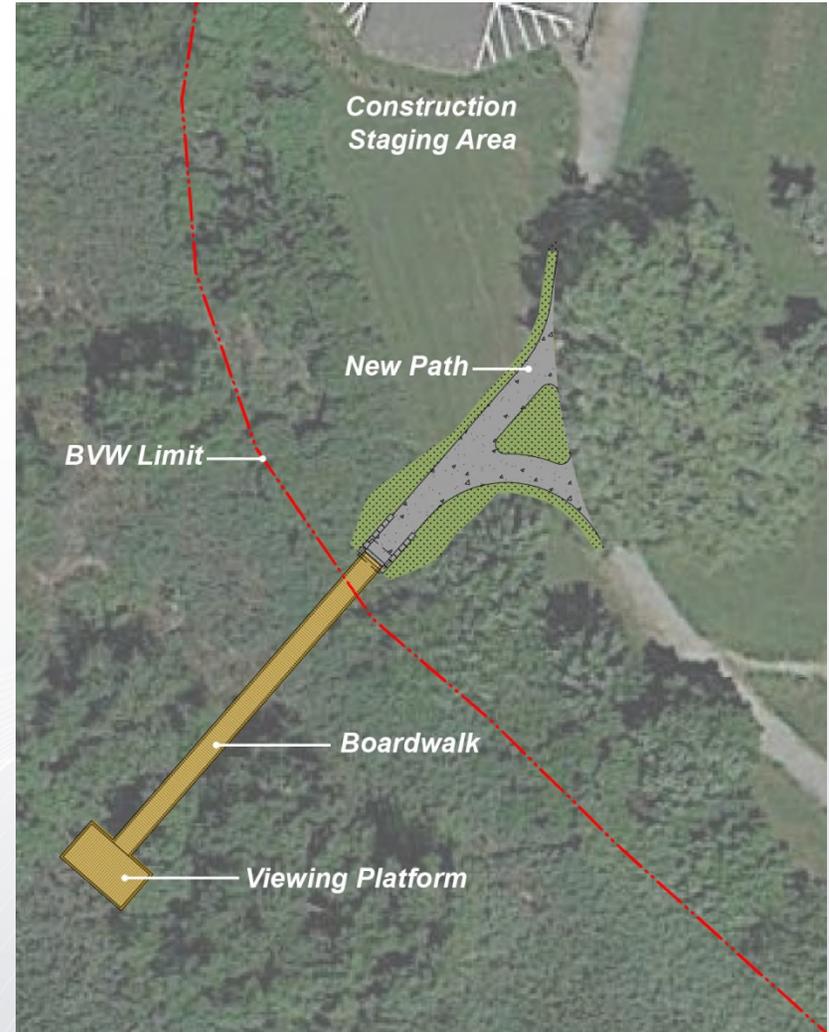
Project History

- Developed with Friends of Belle Isle Marsh
- MEPA ENF filed February 15, 2013
- EOEEA Certificate issued March 22, 2013



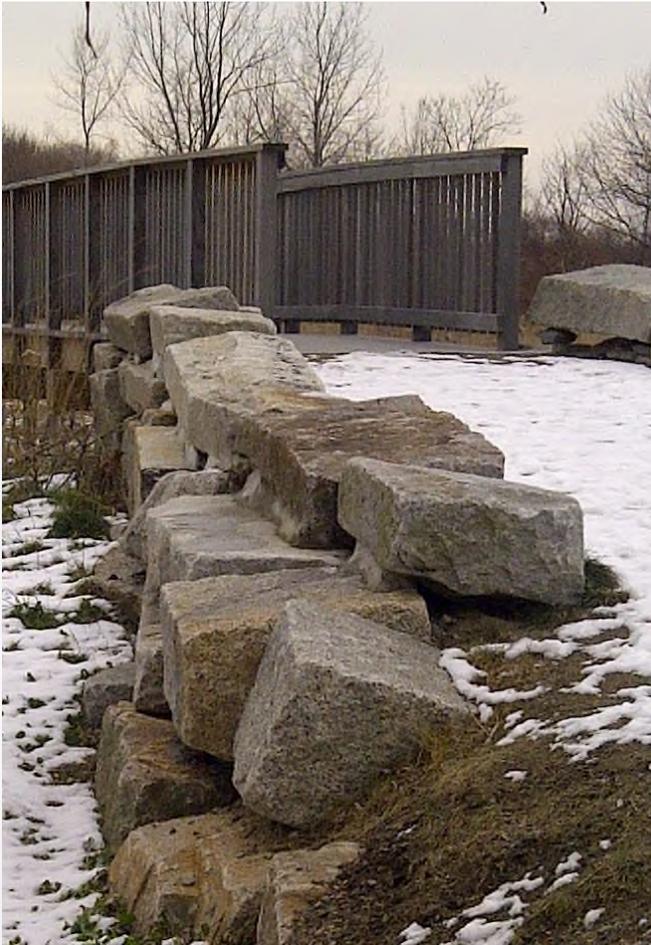


Locus



Project

Project Scope



- 90-foot boardwalk
- Helical-drilled pile supports
- Interpretive signage
- 90 feet of connecting stone dust walkway
- Estimated cost: \$157,000

Design Objectives



- Provide access to inland marsh areas
- Be ADA-compliant
- Provide observation platform for viewing/photography
- Minimize impact to existing trees
- Minimize impacts to water flow
- Minimize maintenance

Design Elements



Boardwalk

- Similar to existing boardwalks
 - ADA compliant –5 feet wide, level
 - Composite decking, spaced $\frac{3}{4}$ "
 - Reduces shading of vegetation beneath and alongside boardwalk
 - 16'x10' viewing platform
 - 1:1 height-to-width ratio
 - Minimizes shade impacts to marsh vegetation
 - Allows free passage of animals

Design Elements

Access Path

- Same width and construction as existing paths
- Pervious surface
- ADA compliant – 4.75% max slope, firm and stable surface
- Granite block abutment

Interpretive Signage

- Provide info on the functions and values of the marsh



Impacts and Mitigation



Wetlands

- Foundation installation
 - Helical piers – no excavation, 1.5” Diameter (< 20 sf)
- Water flow and light penetration
 - Meet clear height and deck spacing standards
- Runoff from construction
 - Erosion control plan and Order of Conditions

Impacts and Mitigation

Site

- Vegetation
 - Site access path and boardwalk to avoid existing trees within landscaped areas
 - Minimize clearing limits along boardwalk zone and locate it in an area having a low density of gray birch trees
 - Protection measures installed on trees adjacent to work area
- Parking
 - Locate staging/laydown in area not used for parking
- Access
 - Maintain access to existing paths

Maintenance

- Sterling Suffolk Racecourse has provided funding for a dedicated maintenance fund for replacement of decking



Project Schedule

- Certificate on ENF Issued – March 22, 2013
- Submit Notice of Intent to Boston Conservation Commission – January, 2014
- Order of Conditions Issued – February, 2014
- Issue for Bid - April, 2014
- Construction Start – June, 2014
- Construction Complete – October, 2014



MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF
CONSERVATION AND RECREATION recreation

A photograph of a marshy landscape with tall grasses and a line of trees in the background. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the title text.

Questions & Answers

Public Benefits

- Increased public access to the marsh in an ecologically protective manner
- Interpretive signage, improving the educational component of the reservation
- Reduced impact to marsh vegetation from use of un-designated trails into the marsh



Additional Information

- **For more information:**
 - Web: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/public-outreach/public-meetings/>
- **If you have questions or concerns:**
 - Email: dcr.updates@state.ma.us
 - Call: **617-626-4974**
 - Write: Department of Conservation and Recreation, Office of Public Outreach, 251 Causeway Street, Suite 600, Boston, MA 02114
 - Note: Public comments submitted to DCR by email or letter will be posted on the DCR website in their entirety, and no content, including personal information, will be redacted.
- **If you have questions or concerns or would like to be added to an email list to receive DCR general announcements:**
 - Email: MassParks@state.ma.us
 - Call: **617-626-4973**