



## Stearns Trail Construction: Frequently Asked Questions

1. Will there be construction noise throughout the project? Noise will be minimal and will mostly consist of back up beepers and some machinery.
2. What environmental studies have been done prior to beginning construction on the APT? Wetland delineation; stream geomorphology; geotechnical survey; and tree and shrub survey.
3. What will traffic be like in and out of the Nature Center? There will be some construction traffic as workers come into and out of the site. However, we expect it to be minimal and concentrated in the morning and late afternoon.
4. How will these projects impact parking and visitation? Parking will be limited during construction and part of the parking lot will be closed with construction fencing. Additional parking will be on South Park Blvd. to the south of the Nature Center and on West Park Blvd. to the southeast of the Nature Center. A parking map is provided on the construction update web page. The All People's Trail will remain open during construction of the Stearns Trail.
5. Why were some trees removed along the trail? Most of the removal is for bridge relocation, which will support stream restoration work. Some are also either invasive, diseased (Ash), or dead.
6. When trees are replanted will the same species be used (for example: Ash/Beech)? Our Natural Resources Specialist is currently working on a habitat restoration plan, selecting species of the tree/shrub replacement. He will be using all native trees and shrubs suitable for the habitats and environment on Stearns Trail.
7. What will be done with the trees that were felled for the project? The trees that can be removed without disturbing the wetlands and forest will be removed immediately. Others will be left in place to become part of the habitat ecosystem. If possible, some felled trees may be removed once the matting is down and the construction contractor is able to remove them. About a half dozen felled trees, and their root balls, will remain and be used as part of the stream restoration work to inhibit erosion near the new bridges.
8. How will this project impact the wildlife and bird nesting sites? In the short term we will see a decrease in wildlife, but birds and other wildlife will utilize the nearby habitats within our 20 acres as well as the adjacent Shaker Parklands. Long term, after habitat restoration has been completed, we expect to see an increase in wildlife biodiversity throughout the marsh and forested areas.

9. Is this disrupting migration? No, the birds will utilize the nearby habitats like the large marsh and Lower Lake.

10. What was wrong with the trail that it needed to be renovated? The existing trail and infrastructure is in need of repair. It has reached the end of its life expectancy.. It also needs to be improved in order to bring it up to today's safety standards; provide larger gathering spaces for classes and other programs; replace deteriorating bridges; and make it more welcoming, engaging, and user-friendly. Overall, the new trail will provide a better visitor and educational experience.

11. What are we doing with the old trail and construction waste? Unfortunately, in the early 1980s, pressure-treated wood was treated with arsenic, and there is a possibility that there may still be some residual left in the wood. The contractor will be responsible for hauling all the wood off-site, and it will be delivered to an EPA-approved facility to discard.

12. How are we controlling for pollution from construction equipment? The construction specifications for the Stearns Trail project address hazardous procedures and specify that hazardous chemicals are not permitted as part of the project. We also have the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approval to work in the wetlands and stream and will be following their permit guidelines.

13. How is the trail going to be better? The Stearns Woodland Trail has provided many with hours of tranquility and nature exploration over the years and is a cornerstone of the amenities offered here. The enhanced, reimagined Stearns Trail will retain the qualities that make it the quiet, natural respite our visitors enjoy. The renovated trail will follow the same general route as the existing trail, but will include new features such as:

- Creating a more welcoming main entrance from the Nature Center's parking lot;
- Adding a nature play area featuring moveable, natural materials for imaginative play;
- Constructing a treehouse that will provide bird's-eye views of the forest canopy;
- Constructing a wetland observation deck with seating along our south marsh;
- Creating reflection spaces with benches to enjoy the natural surroundings;
- Rebuilding bridges, boardwalks and trail infrastructure for added safety and security; and
- Welcoming the community with renovated entrances on South Park and West Park Boulevards.

14. How long will the construction process take? If all goes as planned, we anticipate construction will take approximately 5 months, beginning May 13, 2020 and ending around October 31, 2020.

15. How are construction costs for the new Stearns Trail being funded? The capital construction costs are being funded through our capital campaign and support from the Board of Trustees, individual donors, grants, foundations, and staff.

16. Are the improvements funded with tax dollars? No, this is not a tax funded project.

17. How much will the trail reconstruction cost? \$1.2 million.

18. Is there a plan to do any additional work on the property after the Stearns Trail is complete? Depending on fundraising, we anticipate beginning the design process for either renovating the Friends Pavilion or conducting overall site improvements (parking lot, driveway, and Wildflower Garden renovations) in Fall 2020.

19. Where can we go to find updates? We will have updates in our *Rookery* newsletter, our Nature Break e-newsletter, our website, and our social media channels including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

20. Will there be public opportunities to help with planting and restoration? Most definitely! Beginning this fall, our Natural Resource Specialist, Nick Mikash, along with volunteers, will begin habitat restoration. Contact Jeanette Moore, Volunteer Coordinator, at [moore@shakerlakes.org](mailto:moore@shakerlakes.org), or visit our website to sign up to volunteer.

21. When will restoration/habitat improvement begin? We have already started habitat restoration on the All People's Trail, and we will begin working on the Stearns Trail as soon as construction is complete.

22. Will the Pavilion still be available for people to use? Yes, the pavilion is not located within the construction fence and will be open to visitors and staff during construction of the Stearns Trail.