

Hellcat Trail Project

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge announced in December that the long-anticipated Hellcat Trail replacement project is under way. During this exciting project, the entire Hellcat Trail boardwalk will be replaced. The current structure is in bad repair, very difficult to maintain, and incorporates many steps. In the end, the new boardwalk will be much safer, fully accessible by strollers and wheel chairs, and significantly wider so that visiting and observation will be even more enjoyable.

The Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge have played an important role in advocating for the new boardwalk, and we've donated \$40,000 toward construction expenses. The Friends raised funds for the project through the sale of engraved planks to generous donors. These planks have been installed at Lot #1, thus upgrading the boardwalk that leads from the parking area to the beach.

During the yearlong construction, Hellcat Trail boardwalks will be closed to the public. The Friends encourage visitors to explore other trails on the refuge. The Pines Trail just south of Hellcat offers a loop path that leads through maritime forest to a platform with beautiful views of the saltmarsh. The new trail at Stage Island offers great wildlife viewing opportunities – it leads past Stage Island Pool, along saltmarsh vistas, and through upland fields for views of Plum Island Sound and Ipswich.

The Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge encourage your participating in refuge and Friends events and welcome your membership and financial support.

Bill Gette, President of the Friends of Parker River NWR