

Amesbury Street: Dune Walkway Profile

Site Assessments: March 26, 2024, July 29, 2024, and May 23, 2025

Structure Conditions and Observations	
Road to Beach	433 ft
Boardwalk Length	363 ft
End of boardwalk to beach	70 ft
Walkway Width	4 ft
Boardwalk Material	- Asphalt apron - pressure treated wood connected by galvanized cable
Attached pathways	1
Benches	4
Additional Features	- Railings & viewing platform - Fire hydrant at entrance
*Human-made pathways connected to the municipal walkway	



Ecological Conditions and Observations			
Community Types Present	Rare Species	Other Native Species of interest	Species of Concern
Beachgrass grassland	- Wooly beach heather (<i>Hudsonia tomentosa</i>)^{S2} - Tall wormwood (<i>Artemisia campestris</i>)^{S1}	- Beachgrass (<i>Ammophila breviligulata</i>) - Seaside goldenrod (<i>Solidago sempervirens</i>) - Beach pea (<i>Lathyrus japonicus</i>) - Common Milkweed (<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>)	- Beach rose (<i>Rosa rugosa</i>)^W - Cypress spurge (<i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i>)^W
S1 = endangered in NH, S2 = threatened in NH, P = prohibited species in NH, W = NH invasive watch list)			



Walkway Entrance



Landward Side



Seaward Side

Walkway Observations

Landward Side of Dune

- The walkway is relatively straight and flat, with a gentle incline leading up to the dune crest.
- A small number of boards show signs of bowing or tilting.
- A railing is installed along the south side of the walkway on the incline section.
- Milk weed, a native species, was observed along the landward side of the walkway (Figure 1).
- A small patch of wooly beach heather, a rare species, is growing near the homes. The area around is sparsely vegetated (Figure 2).
- Areas of degraded habitat exist along landward side of the walkways, as evidenced by invasive species and species non-characteristic of dunes (Figure 3).
- A walking path runs perpendicular to the municipal walkway along the landward edge of the dunes (Figure 4).



Figure 1. Milkweed near entrance



Figure 2. Wooly beach heather near homes



Figure 3. Vegetation non-characteristic of dune



Figure 4. Perpendicular paths connect to

Dune Crest

- A viewing platform is located at the crest, with benches positioned on both the north and south sides, each oriented parallel to the walkway.

Seaward Side of Dune

- The beachgrass grassland is well-established and the seaward end of the walkway is well vegetated (Figure 5).
- Two benches are located about halfway between the dune crest and the beach entrance—one on the north side, oriented perpendicular to the walkway, and one on the south side, oriented parallel to it (Figure 6).
- The end of the boardwalk is partially covered by sand.



Figure 5. Well established grass and vegetated seaward end



Figure 6. Seaward side benches

Potential Action Items

- Conduct regular maintenance to prevent future sand buildup, especially after storms. Also inspect and replace any missing or damaged planks to ensure a safe walking surface
- Install a Mobi Mat or similar ADA-compliant beach access mat at the end of the walkway to improve accessibility.
- The walking path running perpendicular to the municipal walkway along the landward edge of the dunes is a nice example of landowner access paths to the beach that limit impacts to the dune. Consider this approach at other walkways.
- Relocate the seaward side bench currently located in the dune to minimize impacts to the dune vegetation. Benches placed at an angle (~45°) generally appear to have less impact on the surrounding dune than benches placed perpendicular to the walkway. Consider positioning benches at a 45° angle to the walkway when practicable and revegetating the areas around them, other than directly in front.
- Revegetate areas of bare sand and sparse vegetation with native sand dune species with a focus on the areas around benched and large disturbed areas.
- Remove invasive species. Consider replacing the vegetation along the landward side of the walkway, where habitat quality is low, with native dune species.
- Remove excess sand from the walkway surface to maintain accessibility. Redistribute the excess sand evenly within the adjacent dune system.

Resources

- GoBotany – Native Plant Trust: <https://gobotany.nativeplanttrust.org>
- NH Guide to Upland Invasive Species: <https://www.agriculture.nh.gov/publications-forms/documents/upland-invasive-species.pdf>
- NH Comprehensive Invasive Plant list: <https://www.agriculture.nh.gov/publications-forms/documents/nh-invasive-plant-list.pdf>
- Planting Guide for Tidal Shoreline Erosion Management in New Hampshire (beach and dune sections): <https://www.des.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt341/files/documents/tidal-erosion-planting-guide.pdf>
- UNH Extension resources on invasive species: <https://extension.unh.edu/natural-resources/forests-trees/invasive-species>