

Dracut Street: Dune Walkway Profile

Site Assessments: March 5, 2024 and July 9, 2024

Structure Conditions and Observations:	
Road to Beach	498 ft
Boardwalk Length	410 ft
End of walkway to beach	88 ft
Walkway Width	4.0 ft
Walkway Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asphalt apron • Pressure treated wood connected by cable
Attached pathways	2
Benches	4
Additional Features	NA
<i>*Human-made pathways connected to the municipal walkway</i>	



Ecological Conditions and Observations			
Community Types Present	Rare Species	Other Native Species of interest	Species of Concern
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beachgrass grassland • Hudsonia maritime shrubland 	Woolly beach heather (<i>Hudsonia tomentosa</i>) ^{S2}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beachgrass (<i>Ammophila breviligulata</i>) • Beach pea (<i>Lathyrus japonicus</i>) • Northern Bayberry (<i>Myrica pennsylvanica</i>) • Virginia creeper (<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asiatic bittersweet (<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>)^P • Beach rose (<i>Rosa rugosa</i>)^W • Shrub honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera species</i>)^P • Olive (<i>Elaeagnus species</i>) - <i>E. angustifolia</i>^W and <i>E. umbellata</i>^P • Scotch pine (<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>)^W • Yucca species (likely <i>Yucca filamentosa</i>) • Hoary alyssum (<i>Berteroa incana</i>) • Scotch pine (<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>)^W
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 initial portion of the walkway is flat and stable.
- There are two benches at the beginning of the walkway positioned parallel to it.
- Areas of bare sand exist within the dune, including adjacent to the walkway, that appear to be a result of pedestrian traffic (Figure 1).
- Scotch pine (*Pinus sylvestris*, NH invasive species watch list) and possibly Japanese black pine (*Pinus thunbergii*; nonnative) or jack pine are present on site (Figures 2 & 3).
- The landward end of the walkway is colonized by predominantly nonnative species including species considered invasive or potentially invasive in NH (Figure 4).
- This area has well-established, contiguous and dense beachgrass grassland.



Figure 1: Bare sand strip perpendicular to walkway



Figure 2: Possibly Japanese Black Pine (*Pinus thunbergii*)



Figure 3: Scotch pine (*Pinus sylvestris*)



Figure 4: Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) a native vine that turns red in fall and bares berries that are important for

Dune Crest

- The walkway is relatively straight and flat, with a moderate incline over the dune crest.
- *Hudsonia maritime* shrubland intact.

Seaward Side of Dune

- The lower portion of the walkway is buried in sand near the beach access point (Figure 5).
- There are two benches, one on the north and south sides of the walkway. Each are positioned at an approximate 45-degree angle to walkway.
- The seaward end of the walkway is narrow and there is evidence of new beachgrass growth (Figure 6).



Figure 5: Bottom of walkway buried



Figure 6: Seaward end of walkway with new beachgrass growth

Potential Action Items:

- Remove excess sand from the lower portion of the boardwalk to restore accessibility and reduce the risk of structural strain.
- Conduct regular maintenance to prevent future sand buildup, especially after storms.
- Install a Mobi Mat or similar ADA-compliant beach access mat at the end of the walkway to improve accessibility.
- Limit pedestrian traffic through the dune and revegetate the bare areas of dune near the walkway.
- Remove invasive species and revegetate the areas adjacent to the walkway near the road with native dune species.

Resources

- GoBotany – Native Plant Trust: <https://gobotany.nativeplanttrust.org>
- NH Comprehensive Invasive Plant list: <https://www.agriculture.nh.gov/publications-forms/documents/nh-invasive-plant-list.pdf>
- NH Guide to Upland Invasive Species: <https://www.agriculture.nh.gov/publications-forms/documents/upland-invasive-species.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>