Hooksett Street: Dune Walkway Profile

Site Assessments: March 5, 2024 and July 29, 2024

Structure Conditions and Observations	
Road to Beach	NA
Boardwalk Length	109 ft
End of boardwalk to beach	NA – walkway ends right at the beach
Walkway Width	8 ft
Boardwalk Material	• Asphalt apron • Pressure treated wood connected by cable
Attached pathways*	0
Benches	2
Additional Features	• Emergency Access point • Wide enough for vehicular access.
**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**
NA	None observed on assessment dates	• Beachgrass (*Ammophila breviligulata*) • Seaside goldenrod *(Solidago sempervirens)* • Beach pea *(Lathyrus japonicus)* • Northern Bayberry *(Myrica pennsylvanica)*	None observed on assessment dates

Right side of walkway – large adjacent pathway

Walkway entrance

Left side of walkway – adjacent dune

Observations:

- This location features a flat, wide pathway that is not situated on a dune.
- The boardwalk is noticeably wider than others observed.
- The boardwalk runs parallel to a sand pathway that provides pedestrian and vehicle access to the beach, which is used by emergency response and maintenance vehicles.
- Portions of the boardwalk, particularly along the side closest to Ocean Dr, appear to be partially buried by sand and encroaching vegetation (observed March 2024).
- Beachgrass growing along the walkway on both sides of the beach entrance.
- Beachgrass to the north of the walkway is bordered by northern bayberry.
- Planters with annual species (e.g., marigold) are present among the beachgrass to the north.
- No dune present to the south. The dune present to the north angles steeply to the north.
- Two benches are set within the dune to the north (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Dunes present adjacent to the walkway

Potential Action Items:

- Conduct regular maintenance to remove accumulated sand and vegetation from the boardwalk edges to preserve its full width and functionality.
- Any improvements or accessibility enhancements should be coordinated with the Department of Public Works and Emergency Management to maintain vehicle access for emergency and maintenance purposes.
- Restore sand dune to create a narrower path on the seaward end of the walkway.
- When dunes are restored, consider orienting the walkway away from the dominant wind and wave directions.
- 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.

Resources

- GoBotany – Native Plant Trust: https://gobotany.nativeplanttrust.org
- MA Office of Coastal Zone Management Tips: Basics of Building Beach Access Structures that Protect Dunes and Banks
- 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