



Monmouth County Park System Claypit Creek Area Improvements, Hartshorne Woods Park

PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Public improvements are planned and permitted for the Claypit Creek Area of Hartshorne Woods Park. These improvements include improved and expanded access to the waterfront for fishing, crabbing, kayaking and general enjoyment with public support facilities such as restrooms, expanded parking and accessible pathways that meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Improvements will also support recreational and educational programming.

Specific improvements at Claypit will be phased over time and include:

1. An accessible shoreline deck and boardwalk allowing water access for fishing, crabbing and viewing while protecting the southeast shoreline and high salt marsh vegetation.
2. A perimeter trail around the open field utilizing the existing packed earth trail and stone paths for walkers and joggers.
3. An open shelter to support programming and small group use.
4. A designated tent pad area.
5. A small permeable patio area for views down the creek
6. A wildlife blind overlooking the freshwater pond.
7. Public rest rooms in the existing carriage house.
8. Expanded parking area of pervious pavement with accessible spaces and accessible pathways to site facilities and features. The existing lot is within a regulated zone must be relocated. The proposed lot will be screened by the woodland.
9. Repair of deteriorated spillway for the existing freshwater pond, valuable birding habitat.

Other improvements at Claypit include the removal of deteriorated bulkhead on the southwest shoreline, the removal of invasive phragmites and the establishment of low and high salt marsh. The salt marsh establishment will provide habitat while protecting the shoreline from erosion. The American Littoral Society expressed an interest in helping implement this project, which was completed in the winter of 2017 (see supplementary project information sheet).

REASON FOR PROJECT: Claypit Creek is one of the few areas in Hartshorne Woods with frontage on the water where the topography is conducive for visitor access (level, open etc.) A major reason for the acquisition was to provide waterfront access. The fact that deteriorating existing structures on the site, the bulkhead and spillway, were potentially compromising the existing shoreline and pond require needed action. The Park System prepared an overall comprehensive plan to enhance public access while protecting the site and improving habitat.

DESIGN APPROACH: Provide public access while protecting the site and its critical resources. Minimize disturbance; take advantage of views, maintain openness of site. Improve habitat.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS: Site borders C-1 waters, the highest water classification in the State requiring sustainable stormwater management practices. Critical freshwater habitat. Tidal marsh attempting to establish itself. Wave action and shoreline erosion. CAFRA zone. Invasive plant species compromising the native vegetation.

PROJECT STATUS: The CAFRA permit for the project has been approved by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection. In partnership with the NJDEP, a contractor implemented the shoreline bio-stabilization in the winter of 2017 at no cost to the County. Repair of the spillway and construction of a new parking area are scheduled for 2019.

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Claypit Creek Living Shoreline growing out August 30, 2017



November 1, 2017