

Dow Woods Project

Report to FOBWR Board of Directors

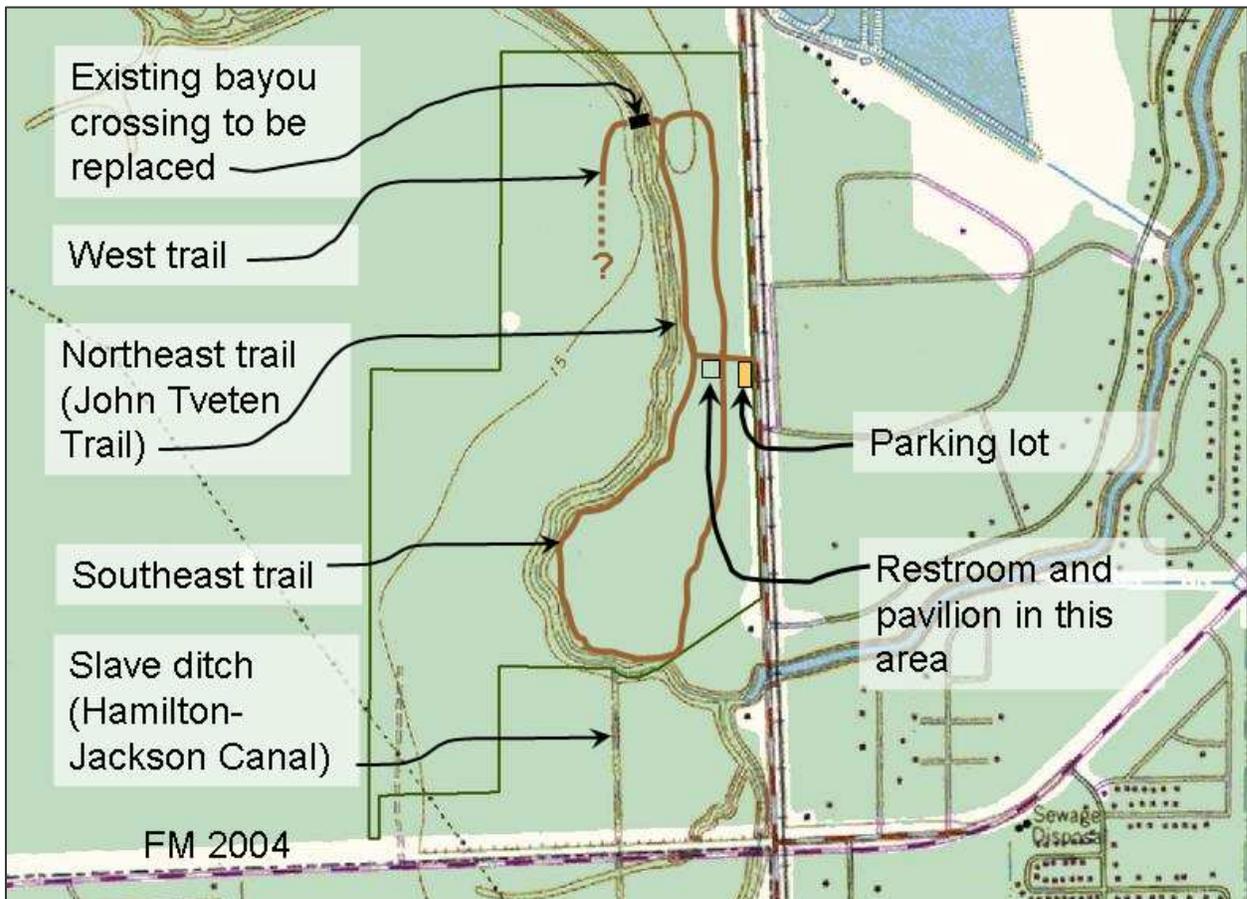
Neal McLain 02/11/10

As most of you know, Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges has received a substantial grant from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for the construction of trails and restroom facilities at the Dow Woods Unit of San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge. Marty Cornell prepared the grant application, and we recently received funding.

Jennifer Sanchez asked me to take over this project during Marty's absence. Here's a status report.

TRAILS

Three trails are planned:



Several of us have "walked out" the Northeast trail to establish the route, determine where boardwalks will be required to cross over wetlands, and to measure the trail for budgetary purposes:

- USFWS personnel Tom Schneider and Shane Kasson moved through first to determine the best route for the trails.
- FOBWR and TMN-COT volunteers Ed Johnson, Denis Mudderman, Archie Pratt, and I followed along behind to document GPS waypoints. We established a waypoint at every turn or bend in the trail route, and at significant natural or historic features along the trail.

We are currently working on the southeast trail. Work on the west trail is on hold at the moment, pending the results of engineering studies related to the existing bayou crossing.

A significant feature along the southeast trail will be the Hamilton-Jackson Canal (the "Slave Ditch"), connecting Bastrop Bayou with Oyster Creek. USFWS plans to place an interpretive sign at the edge of the bayou opposite the canal.

RESTROOM

USFWS is planning to construct waterless double restroom, with an attached storage room, located about 400 feet west of the existing parking lot. Based on Marty's preliminary work, I have prepared procurement specifications for this building. As soon as we receive USFWS approval, we will issue the specs to potential bidders.

PAVILION

Future plans call for a pavilion near the bayou and close to the trail. The Pavilion is expected to be similar to existing structures at San Bernard NWR and Brazoria NWR.

The present grant does not include funding for the pavilion. We hope of obtain funding by means of a future grant.