

Dow Woods Status Report 04/09/2010

Compiled by Neal McLain, Shane Kasson, and Marty Cornell



RESTROOM and STORAGE BUILDING

Specifications for the construction of the restroom/storage building were issued on 02/18/09. Five bids were received before the deadline 03/12/10. Shane, Marty, and I reviewed the bids on 03/16/10. Shane selected the low bidder, Ballard Builders of Angleton, after checking references and confirming their understanding of the project. Marty will arrange for the execution of a formal contract between Ballard and Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges. Ballard's bid was substantially lower than our estimate so we have additional funds for use elsewhere.

Shane has appointed Jim Payne, a Maintenance Mechanic for San Bernard NWR, as field inspector for the Restroom. Jim will be on site regularly to take photos, take notes, and work with the contractor and subcontractors.

I have sent (or will send) several documents to Jim to bring him up to date. Jim can be contacted at cell 979-299-9026 or email jim_payne@fws.gov.

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PARKING LOT and ACCESS ROAD

USFWS staff is constructing a parking lot extension:

- Extending the existing gravel parking lot to the south.
- Constructing two additional entrances connecting the parking lot with Old Angleton Road. This design will provide parking space for three school busses and space for each school bus to enter and leave the parking lot without having back up.
- Constructing a gravel road between the parking lot and the restroom site. This road will provide contractor access to the restroom during construction and for cleaning purposes after the building is completed.

Shane, Curtis Jones, Jim Payne and I met at Dow Woods on March 25 to sketch the design for the proposed gravel road. USFWS will provide all construction labor. All costs (labor and materials) will be covered by the FOBWR grant.



Dow Woods Unit parking lot extension under, under construction, looking south. Note the wide gates designed to accommodate school busses.

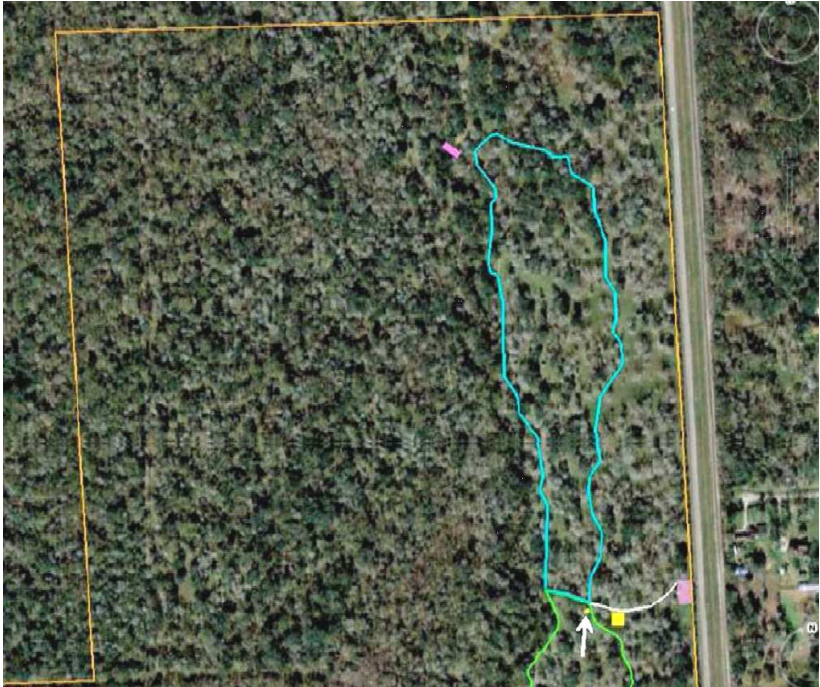
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HARD SURFACE TRAIL

Members of the hard-surface-trail subcommittee^[1] have met twice since the last status report.

At both meetings, the group reviewed estimates for various materials including concrete or decomposed granite. Shane asked Archie to prepare a firmer estimate for decomposed granite.

Consensus:

- Shane (with other USFWS staff and/or volunteers) will stake the actual final route of the trail centerline in the field. Staking will be done with flags designed for the purpose spaced at approximately 20 feet apart.
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- Unless the estimate for decomposed granite is substantially lower than concrete, the northeast loop trail will be constructed of concrete. If concrete is selected:
 - Construction will be contracted to a commercial concrete contractor.
 - USFWS staff and volunteers will impress the fresh concrete with animal tracks and leaf impressions at selected points along the trail.
 - USFWS staff and volunteers will stain the completed trail in an earthtone color and seal it. Shane estimates stain, sealer, and equipment to run 30-40 cents per square foot, or \$8,100-10,800 for the entire northeast trail.
 - Tom Schneider will compile is list of sources of materials necessary for making the animal track and leaf impressions in fresh concrete.
 - The southeast trail may be constructed in the same manner, although a final decision was postponed.
 - Archie Pratt and I were "nominated" (which apparently means elected) to prepare final procurement specifications for bidding purposes. Archie has prepared preliminary design specs; as of the date of this report, Archie is preparing construction drawings.

[1] Hard-surface trail subcommittee members: Shane Kasson (Chair), Phil Huxford. Archie Pratt, Don VanDragt, Tom Schneider, Neal McLain (ex-officio).

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BOARDWALKS and WOOD STRUCTURES

Members of the boardwalk subcommittee^[2] have met twice since the last status report, at the Complex office on March 25 and at Dow Woods on April 6. Jennifer Sanchez joined the April 6 meeting.

At both meetings, the group reviewed estimates for various materials (treated wood, recycled plastic) and the locations of boardwalks and other wood structures (platforms, guardrails, benches).

Consensus:

- **Materials:** Wood sub-structure with recycled plastic for the deck and foot rails.
- **Schedule:** The group is ready to start as soon as materials can be procured.
- **Locations:** The group identified the following locations for construction as soon as materials can be procured:

WAYPOINT				TYPE OF STRUCTURE	FEATURE	ILLUSTRATION
TRAIL	NUMBER	DATE	GPS			
North	015-017	01/27/10	Denis	Loop passing burl oak	A large live oak with a prominent burl on the trunk.	Sketch 1 Page 6
North	030-031	01/27/10	Denis	75-foot boardwalk over wide swale	Wide swale, normally dry	Sketch 2 Page 6
South	002-004	04/06/10	Shane	Raised viewing platform with bench and railing	View of Bastrop Bayou	None (similar to Sketch 1 but without the oak)
South	023-024	02/14/10	Shane	55-foot boardwalk over small creek	Narrow tributary of bayou, normally wet	None (similar to Sketch 2)
South	005-007	04/06/10	Shane	Raised viewing platform possibly with bench and railing	Trail passes between Water Oak and Bayou	None (similar to Sketch 1 but without the oak)
South	Unknown	N/A	N/A	54-foot boardwalk over wet area	25 feet north of Jennifer's favorite oak	None (similar to Sketch 2)

[2] Boardwalk subcommittee members: Shane Kasson (Chair), Billy Heck, Gerald Forrest, Kirby Rapstein, Marty Cornell, Tom Schneider, Neal McLain (ex-officio).

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BOARDWALKS and WOOD STRUCTURES continued

Jennifer Sanchez advised that if the cost of materials exceeds \$5000.00, we must obtain competitive bids. We agreed to the following procedure:

- Kirby Rapstein will compile a bill of materials for the estimated materials required to complete the structures specified in the table above.
- I will compile procurement specifications (including a copy of FOBWR's Tex Exempt Status letter) and solicit bids from the following vendors: Home Depot, Lake Hardware, Lowe's, and McCoy's.
- Marty Cornell (as grant administrator) will establish a charge account with the approved vendor for subsequent purchases.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Neal McLain

979-798-2284 (home)

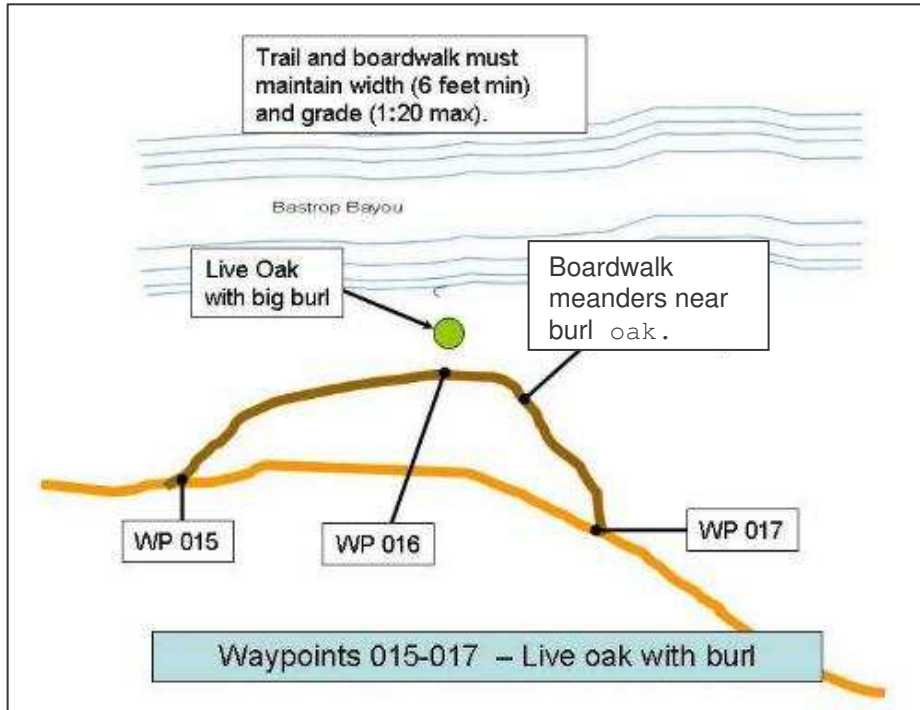
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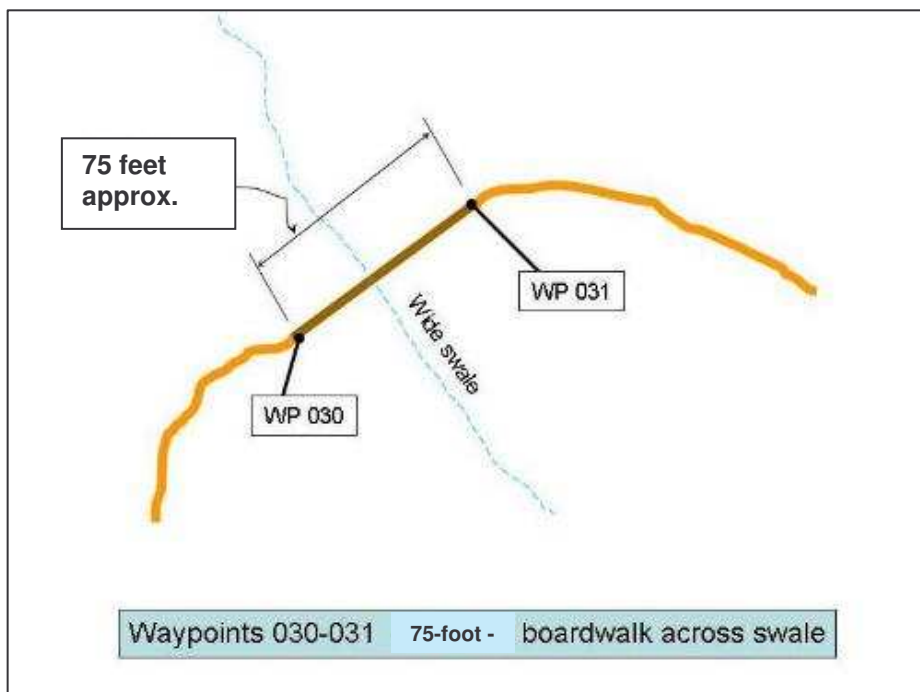
Attachments

BOARDWALK SKETCHES

Sketch 1 - Boardwalk loop passing "burl oak" (a large live oak with a prominent burl):



Sketch 2 - Boardwalk over a wide swale:



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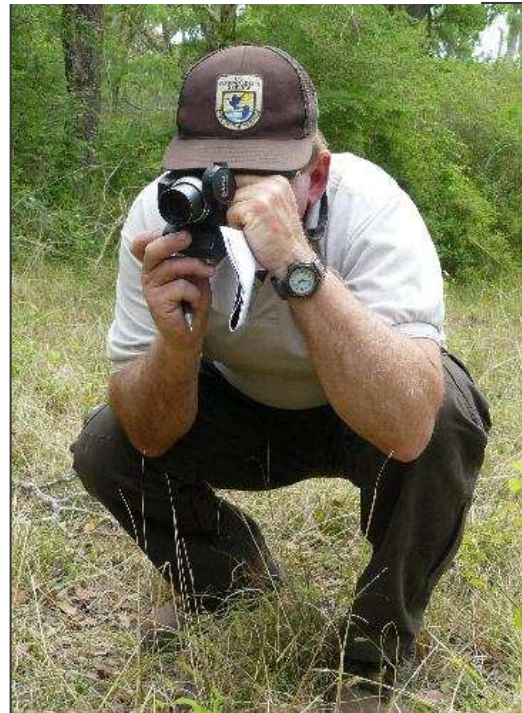
CREW PHOTOS



The Boardwalk Bunch, April 6: Gerald Forrest, Tom Schneider, Jennifer Sanchez, Kirby Rapstein, Shane Kasson, Billy Heck.



Jennifer's favorite oak



Master Photographer