ORONO BOG BOARDWALK

Building on the past... ...to create a solid future.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR RECONSTRUCTION

www.oronobogwalk.org
ORONO BOG BOARDWALK
A Success Story and a Challenge

After three years of planning and construction, the Orono Bog Boardwalk opened in June 2003. Managed by a committee of representatives of the University of Maine, Orono Land Trust, and City of Bangor, along with a Director, the Boardwalk is truly a collaborative effort providing educational and recreational opportunities for people in the greater Bangor area and beyond.

The Orono Bog Boardwalk begins in the Rolland F. Perry (Bangor City) Forest, and continues on University of Maine land that is protected by a Conservation Easement held by the Orono Land Trust. An attractive utility cabin and orientation kiosk are at the beginning of the Boardwalk. The 4,200 foot wooden walkway makes a circuit through wetland forests and onto the open bog. The walkway includes seven interpretive stations. It is the longest wetland educational boardwalk with the most active educational program of any boardwalk in northeastern United States. Boardwalk volunteers inform people on the environmental and economic importance of wetlands, knowledge that will be even more important in the future as development increases.

Admission is free to Boardwalk visitors, but a contribution box is present for those wishing to donate toward the costs of Boardwalk operation.

A website (www.umaine.edu/oronobogwalk/) is maintained to inform Boardwalk visitors of Boardwalk resources and programs.

The Orono Bog Boardwalk
Primary Purpose:

1. Education regarding the ecology, natural history, environmental importance, conservation of wetlands/peatlands, and compatible research

2. Nature study, including watching birds and other wildlife, observations of plant life, photography, and appreciation of natural beauty

3. Outdoor, non-motorized recreation consistent with the above purposes; and access to a wetland for persons unable, for reasons of disability, to traverse a wetland on foot.
FACTS

• The Boardwalk is 4,200 feet long and is composed of 509 hemlock sections 8 feet long and 4 feet wide, plus connector bridging at turns.

• Seven interpretative stations plus an orientation kiosk educate Boardwalk visitors about the various habitats and wildlife present as well as the geologic history of the Orono Bog.

• Benches every 200 feet provide visitors rest areas and are placed at wheelchair turnaround sections.

• The Boardwalk took over 8 months to build by more than 100 volunteers, as well as the Maine Conservation Corps, carpentry crews from the Charleston Correctional Facility, and other groups.

• In 1974, the Orono Bog, which contains the Boardwalk, was designated a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service.

• The Boardwalk is maintained as an ADA accessible facility for wheelchair users. The Maine Disability Education Association awarded the Boardwalk and its volunteers a Certificate of Appreciation in 2010.

• Currently, over 50 volunteers help to maintain the Boardwalk, guide tour groups, lead nature walks, and do the countless other jobs that allow visitors to have an enjoyable experience.

• Every year school and other community groups take advantage of our free guided walks. In the last 5 years, 86, k-12 school groups (2,806 students), 40 civic and other groups (466 attendees), and numerous self guided college and university classes came to the Boardwalk.

• Since June 2003, over 300,000 visits have been made to the Boardwalk. In the first 14 weeks of the 2012 season, over 14,800 visits were recorded.

• Volunteers in 2013 contributed over 3,700 hours in work at or for the Boardwalk. Since opening in 2003, volunteers have provided over 30,000 hours of work.

“Precious few locations exist in Maine, or beyond, where a person with a significant disability can enjoy immersion in nature. The Orono Bog Boardwalk shares that gift freely and is critically important to our community.”

— Jeremy Libby, Independent Living Specialist, alphaOne, Bangor, Maine
THE CHALLENGE

As the boardwalk approaches the 13th year of operation the wooden walkway is deteriorating because of heavy pedestrian use and natural processes, including wood-decaying fungi, carpenter ants, and other wood-boring insects. We expect that by 2016 volunteer staff will be unable to ensure the safety of Boardwalk for users unless large-scale replacement of sections and boards is underway.

Our project, therefore, is to replace the boardwalk with more durable materials, including composite decking and aluminum supports, as recommended by engineers, ecologists, and other experts consulted. Replacement of the wood with long-lasting (30-40 years) composite materials will reduce maintenance costs and the volunteer labor needed, and allow more time for education, guided tours, and outreach services to the public.

We have replaced the first 104 sections and hope to replace the next 150 section by the end of 2015. We will then move in to Phase 3, the replacement of the remaining 250+ sections by the end of 2017.

Facilities in Rolland F. Perry City (Bangor) Forest at beginning of boardwalk are (from left): cabin for storage of tools and supplies, and for sheltering volunteers; informational kiosk; rules sign (brown); picnic table; bike rack; and a boulder with bronze plaque indicating National Natural Landmark status of bog.
CURRENT STATUS

After 12 years of constant use and natural processes, including wood-decaying fungi, carpenter ants, and other wood-boring insects the Boardwalk is deteriorating at a rapid rate.

In 2013, 400 deck boards were replaced because of rot. One entire section was replaced because of carpenter ant infestation and fungi.

In 2014, more than 200 deck boards and 2 whole sections have already been replaced.

Our volunteer maintenance crew can barely keep up with the accelerating need of repairs, and soon will not be able to do so.

Phil Locke, who heads up the boardwalk maintenance volunteers, is shown in 2012 replacing a rotten deck board (on bench at extreme right) at one of the interpretive stations along the boardwalk.
Aerial view of the 3,400 ft loop of the 4,200 ft boardwalk, looking roughly south. The Orono-Bangor town line shows at upper-right. The additional 800 feet of walkway extends beyond the top of the photo through forested peatland to the edge of the peatland and the boardwalk cabin. The red color of the open areas of bog is due to the red peat moss, Sphagnum rubellum.

Jennifer Lund, Research Technician, University of Maine, conducts a nature walk about insects of the bog.

**The Reconstructed Boardwalk**

A reconstructed Orono Bog Boardwalk will feature:

- Same footprint as the current Boardwalk
- Enhanced longevity — 30 years or more
- Continued ADA wheelchair compliance, but more easily achieved
- Substantially lower costs to maintain the structure

The reconstructed Boardwalk will allow volunteers to enhance outreach and educational programs!

“The Maine Chapter of The Nature Conservancy supported the construction of the Orono Bog Boardwalk in 2001 and we strongly endorse its reconstruction.”

— Nancy Sferra, Director of Science and Stewardship, The Nature Conservancy In Maine

“I lead two tours each year [for Dirigo Pines Retirement Community], and frequently when residents see me at Dirigo events their first question is, ‘When are we going on the next Bog Boardwalk tour?’ I hope never to need to say the Orono Bog Boardwalk is closed forever.”

— John Pickering, Boardwalk volunteer, Orono
HOW YOU CAN HELP

Boardwalk volunteers are in the second phase of a capital campaign to raise $1,100,000 to replace the entire Orono Bog Boardwalk with long-lasting wood composite material. As of November 2014 we have raised more than $200,000 through private donations and grants towards Phase II. For Phase III we need to raise $500,000. We hope to complete Phase III by the end of 2017.

NAMED GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boardwalk Volunteer and Utility Cabin</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretative Station (7 available)</td>
<td>$25,000 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardwalk Kiosk (2 available)</td>
<td>$25,000 each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boardwalk Comfort Station</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardwalk Sections (447 available)</td>
<td>$1,000 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardwalk Benches (4 available)</td>
<td>$500 each</td>
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"The Boardwalk is a great gift to the community of surrounding towns and cities allowing nature to be a part of our busy commercial lives of schedules, deadlines and demands."

— Mary E. Andrews, former Boardwalk volunteer, Orrington, Maine

Orono Bog Boardwalk donors are encouraged to name one of the meaningful gift opportunities offered above. The recognition may be in one's own name, in honor of a friend, family member, or in memory of a loved one.
GIFTING

What type of gifts can be made to support the Orono Bog Boardwalk?

- Cash gifts
- Appreciated Securities
- Real and Personal Property
- Bequests
- Deferred Gifts
- Life Insurance

How Can I Learn More?

All inquiries are kept confidential. For more information about ways to support the Orono Bog Boardwalk or about methods and advantages of charitable giving through the University of Maine Foundation, please contact:

Jeffery N. Mills, President/CEO
(207) 581-5100 or 800-982-9503
email: jeffmills@maine.edu

The tax laws are specifically designed to encourage charitable giving by lowering the cost of making a donation. The Foundation encourages donors to seek financial and legal counsel when making charitable gifts.

Checks should be made payable to University of Maine Foundation with Orono Bog Boardwalk Campaign written in the memo line and mailed to University of Maine Foundation, Two Alumni Place, Orono, ME 04469-5782. You may also give by visiting the Foundation’s secure online giving page www.umainefoundation.org/onlinegiving/index.html

If you have questions about the Orono Bog Boardwalk and its reconstruction or this capital campaign please contact Boardwalk Director Jim Bird at jim.bird@umit.maine.edu or (207) 581-1697.

“It [Boardwalk] is too important a resource to lose or let fall into disrepair. It is a wonderful resource in the community, not only for schools but families as well.”

— Joseph Alex, Director; Joanne Alex, Educational Director; Stillwater Montessori School, Old Town, Maine
"...the bog boardwalk is an extremely valuable resource for the surrounding community, and every effort must be made to raise the funds required to maintain the boardwalk structure in the face of ongoing wood decay."

— Christopher Cronan, Professor, School of Biology and Ecology, University of Maine