

Huntley Meadows Park Wetland Restoration Project

For the next nine months, a restoration project will be taking place at Huntley Meadows Park. For more than twenty years, the park's central wetland has been slowly filling in with silt and debris, affecting water depth and wildlife habitat. What would happen if we did nothing? If left alone, the wetland would eventually become a forest or meadow. This restoration will lend nature a hand, and in doing so, ensure that generations to come will have the chance to know, understand, and enjoy Huntley's Meadows Park and its wetlands treasure.

The restoration will restore the wetland to its 1980s condition and provide long-term habitat for locally rare plants and animals. The restoration has 5 key features:

- An earthen berm to hold back water
- A water control structure to manage water levels
- Expansion of the wetland into the surrounding forest
- Five deeper habitat pools to provide year-round wildlife habitat
- Numerous brush shelters and logs for additional wildlife habitat.

While the park will remain open, there will be temporary trail closings, construction equipment, and necessary tree clearing. The boardwalk and observation tower will remain open, but the Hike-Bike Trail off of South Kings Highway will be closed during the project. While construction should be complete by December 2013, some cleanup tasks could last until March 2014. This \$3 million project is funded by park bonds and grants.

You can find more detailed information about the wetlands restoration project on the Huntley Meadows Park web site: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows-park/restorationproject.htm> and by calling Huntley Meadows Park Manager Kevin Munroe or the park's Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator, Kathleen Lowe, at 703-768-2525.