

The Baylands Nature Interpretive Center Improvement Project

The Project

The City of Palo Alto is improving the Baylands Nature Interpretive Center from October 17, 2016 through April 28, 2017. Project construction includes decking, siding and guardrail replacement, fascia repairs, structural framing repairs, interior flooring refinishing, exterior lighting replacement, electrical panel upgrades, ADA and restroom accessibility upgrades, fire sprinkler heads replacement, piping and conduit repairs, and additional design features described below.

Bird deterrent glass panels will be inserted at three railing locations as an interpretive feature. The glass panels will allow for clear viewing of the surrounding Baylands environment. The removal of select deck sections will allow swallow droppings to fall directly into the marsh. The deck openings to the marsh below will act as an interpretive design feature, while reducing the need for on-going cleaning and maintenance. New guardrails will be installed for safety, and swallow-nesting boxes will be installed in areas favored by birds.

The Center

The Center is located within the City's Baylands Nature Preserve. Built on piles above the salt marsh in 1967, the Center was the first educational facility within this Bay Area ecosystem. The Center offers various educational experiences for the public, including a wet laboratory for drop-in visitors, and tidelands flora and fauna displays. The Center also provides support for local schools. City educators facilitate hands-on standards-based programming for more than 3,000 elementary school students each year from 30 local schools. Approximately 80,000 visitors a year enjoy the Center's exhibits, wet lab and surrounding marsh environment.

Sensitive Habitat Means Careful Work

The Center is located in areas of potential habitat for nesting avian species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), and other listed species such as the Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse and the Ridgway's Rail (formerly California Clapper Rail). An on-site biologist will conduct surveys and inspections, prior to and during construction, to determine the presence or absence of these species and to verify habitat impact.

Education Programs Moved to Cooley Landing Education Center

During construction activities, the Center will be unavailable to both the public and City programming staff. In order to continue its educational services during construction, Community Services has relocated its Baylands Open Space Education Program to Cooley

To learn more about the project, visit <http://www.fogprojects.com/portfolio/lucy-evans-baylands-interpretive-center/>