



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

Governor Cuomo Announces New Accessible Boardwalk Complete at Stewart State Forest

WILLIAM J. LARKIN JR. August 20, 2015

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New Boardwalk Will Provide Increased Access to the Great Swamp

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced a new accessible boardwalk and trail are now open to the public at Stewart State Forest in Orange County. Two new 400-foot sections of the boardwalk spanning the Great Swamp have been completed, providing visitors increased access to view the swamp habitat and wildlife. The \$434,000 project was funded by the NY Works program. From fishing and hiking to biking and cross-country skiing, New York provides a wealth of opportunities for people to enjoy the great outdoors," Governor Cuomo said. "The new trail and boardwalk at Stewart State Forest will provide even greater access to this area's natural beauty, making it a prime destination for residents and visitors alike. I urge everyone to come and experience this great part of the Hudson Valley for themselves. "Only 60 miles from New York City, Stewart State Forest is one of the most intensively used forests in the state with abundant large and small game that attract hunters from all over New York," said Acting DEC Commissioner Marc Gerstman. "In the winter, cross-country skiers and snowmobilers flock to State forest's many trails. This beautiful boardwalk, new kiosk and trails will help visitors access and enjoy some of the more distinctive features of Stewart." Senator Bill Larkin said, "Governor Cuomo and I both believe that the new

boardwalk is an important enhancement for the Stewart State Forest. Greater accessibility will turn this local landmark into a national destination for sportsman and tourists. The breathtaking sights have never been this accessible for our residents and I look forward to more families enjoying all that it has to offer." The boardwalk and newly created trail are American with Disabilities Act-compliant and connect at the western end of the boardwalk with existing trails and create a loop that hikers, bicyclists and cross-country skiers can enjoy. The trail between Schofield Lane and Maple Avenue will be the second connection between Maple Avenue and the western portion of the property. As part of the project, crews built a small, new ADA-compliant parking area at the eastern end of the boardwalk, a new half-mile access road and installed an informational kiosk near the boardwalk. The Lange Farm and Buchanan Hill Trails have also been rehabilitated. The boardwalk and the new pathway constructed on the island midway across the swamp are accessible to people with disabilities from the eastern shore of the Great Swamp. Volunteers organized by the Stewards of Stewart (SOS) helped to construct the new trail from the western end of the boardwalk to the Schofield Lane trail. SOS is a non-profit organization devoted to maintaining and improving the trail system at Stewart State Forest. SPARC President Sandra Kissam said, "The Great Swamp, visible from I-84, the most spectacular wetland in Stewart State Forest, can now be observed intimately from the new boardwalk and connecting trails. Thanks to Governor Cuomo, DEC staff and SOS citizen volunteers, we now can enjoy this captivating closeness to, and stewardship responsibility for, the Great Swamp." Special care was taken during construction of the boardwalk to minimize disturbance to the swamp. Workers did not use heavy equipment, instead transporting materials by boat or carrying them by hand through the swamp. Helical piles support the boardwalk and are designed for use areas with unstable soils, like the swampy wetlands found at Stewart State Forest. It allows for a clean, quick and affordable installation that reduces impact to the surrounding environment. The smooth pipe design also helps to

prevent frost damage in colder climates. Photos of the new boardwalk are available below:

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/thumbnails/image/Stewart%20SF%201>

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