



Project: Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge Boardwalk and Observation Platform

Client: U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish & Wildlife Service

Contractor: Dissen & Juhn Company

PROJECT SCOPE:

Dissen & Juhn Company completed the construction of a new wildlife observation platform for the U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish & Wildlife Service. Located in the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Dorchester County, MD, the 7½' wide x 210' long boardwalk connects a small parking lot to two observation platforms precisely situated in the tidal marsh. With a deck elevation ramping up to 11', this ADA-compatible structure provides an unobstructed view of the surrounding countryside and waterways.

The structure is founded on 10" diameter timber piles, 25' and 30' long. To reduce our "footprint" in the marsh, the 70 piles were driven with a Link-Belt LS-98A crane fitted with 80' of boom and working off 12" crane mats. An environmentally friendly drop hammer was used to drive the piles to a 5-ton bearing capacity.



The 210' boardwalk is founded on timber piles.

A unique feature of the project is that the superstructure is made from pre-cast concrete components manufactured by PermaTrak. The concrete pile caps, stringers (beams), stairs and deck panels were precision cast to facilitate ease of installation. All the concrete components were rigged-in with the crane.

The deck elevation of the "high" observation platform is 11' above the marsh grasses and measures 20'x 25'. Three hundred sixty degree deck-mounted binocular viewers provide long distance viewing of birds, animals, and a wide range of geographical features.

The "low" platform measures 10'x 10' and is designed for close-up viewing of water plants and bottom dwelling creatures.

Concrete stairs take visitors from the 11' elevation down to a 2' elevation.

A timber guard rail with aluminum handrail, bicycle rack, waste receptacles and information displays complete the installation.



"Low" observation platform for "close-up" viewing



PermaTrak pile caps and stringers (beams)



PermaTrak deck panels



"High" observation platform with expansive views