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IJ photo/Robert Tong

NEW TRAIL: Jose Escalante (right) and Manuel Martin of the Marin Conservation Corps unload 20-foot planks for a raised boardwalk across wetlands area near the Marin Municipal Water District's Sky Oaks Ranger Station near Fairfax yesterday.

Mt. Tam to get new boardwalk and trail

Environmentally friendly path near Fairfax

By Mark Prado
IJ reporter

Crews from the Marin Conservation Corps began work yesterday that will result in an environmentally friendly boardwalk and new trail on Mount Tamalpais near Fairfax.

The \$110,000 Sky Oaks Meadows project will take about a month to finish and will involve building a 180-foot-long boardwalk,

scuttling and revegetating a fire road and creating a new trail to improve access for users.

"The project was delayed a bit, but now we have the money and it's moving forward," said Casey May, chief ranger for the Marin Municipal Water District, which is overseeing the project. "This will be a nice upgrade for people who use the areas and it will protect the wetlands."

A state grant will pay \$89,000, with MMWD picking up the rest, officials said.

The project aims to



IJ map

solve a problem in an area of the meadows that turns

swampy during the rainy season.

Normally that would not be a problem, but hikers and equestrians like to use a trail that crosses the area, which becomes mush in the winter, officials said.

Some users even have put wooden planks across the road to make it more navigable as people pass between Sky Oaks Road and the Meadow Club, officials said.

Plans call for the 60-year-old fire road to be removed to let the natural plant life — such as California oak and purple nee-

dle grass — take over.

The elevated boardwalk will be constructed to allow plants to grow underneath while carrying walkers and equestrians. A trail will be built on the meadows' slopes to allow better drainage.

"I like the project," said Larry Minikes of the Tamalpais Conservation Club — a Mount Tam protection group — and an avid hiker of the peak.

"It serves to protect sensitive habitat."

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