


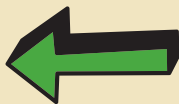
IN 2020, COMMUNITY CONNECTION WAS HARD TO FIND. SO WE WENT LOOKING FOR IT.

We are on a mission to build an outdoor space that offers a tangible opportunity for more people to not only experience the power of nature but to also feel included and actively welcome. We are building a Universally Accessible Trail in New Hampshire's largest and most diverse city at our Manchester Cedar Swamp Preserve.

To gather input on how we can best ensure the trail is built in a way that serves everyone in the Manchester community we held five virtual, community-led conversations. The events focused on identifying barriers that individuals from the Black, LGBTQ+, disability and senior communities face when looking to access nature. This document provides an overview of these events and what was learned.

2020 VIRTUAL EVENT OVERVIEW

In 2020, The Nature Conservancy in New Hampshire held 5 virtual community conversations over 5 months with...

 **323 total event attendees** 

Physical Access to Nature Event: 66 Attendees
Community Coffee Update: 18 Attendees
LGBTQ+ in Nature: 50 Attendees
Black in Nature: 148 Attendees
Active Seniors in Nature: 41 Attendees

The events were community-led and focused on 2 main goals:

- 1** Increase awareness of the Manchester Cedar Swamp Universally Accessible trail.
- 2** Bring attention to unequal access and barriers to the outdoors through moderated discussions.

Below are the actions those who attended the events have committed to taking in order to help build this trail:



- 21 attendees said they plan to talk to their local officials about making nature more accessible in their town.
- 5 attendees said they plan to donate directly to the trail build.
- 15 attendees said they plan to tell 2+ people about the trail and post about it on their personal social media.
- 13 attendees said they plan to take learnings from these events back to their own organizations.

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

(SO FAR)

Below are some of the many barriers and recommendations we received as a result of our virtual community conversations.

BARRIERS OF TRADITIONAL TRAILS

No public transportation to trails.

Not enough pull-off areas or rest areas or they're too small.

Trail signage and maps are often not accessible.

Narrow trails are not wide enough for wheel chairs, guide dogs, strollers, etc.

Individuals who are unable to walk/hike all the way to the end or vista feel like it's not worth the trip.

Interpretative panels and maps not accessible to non-English speakers or individuals with visual impairments.

No bathrooms, or gendered bathrooms that are not accessible or family-friendly.

Unfamiliar with the area and don't see myself as a welcome user.

WAYS TO MAKE TRAILS MORE ACCESSIBLE

Expand bus stops to local trailheads.

Include trail-side pull-off areas large enough for wheelchairs/strollers.

Ensure trail markers and signage are in large clear text and maps are accessible.

Ensure the trail is at least 5ft wide.

Have rest-areas and trail-side info at regular intervals.

Provide audio tours or multi-sensory panels with translations and inclusive language.

Non-gendered, accessible bathrooms large enough for families, with adult changing station.

Welcome diverse user groups by inviting non-traditional outdoor role-models to lead group trips.