

DEER ISLAND OVERVIEW PLAN

A revitalization plan for [Deer Island](#) in **Amesbury, MA**, focuses on restoring this 4.7-acre conservation area to its full potential as a serene riverside retreat. The plan balances the preservation of its natural ecosystems with the need for safer, more accessible public recreation.

Core Revitalization Components

- **Entrance Safety:** Collaborate with the MA Department of Transportation to formally request a traffic safety assessment and the implementation of mitigation measures at the entrance to the **Deer Island parking lot**.
- **Debris Removal & Forest Health:** Systematically removing fallen trees and storm-damaged branches to reduce fire hazards and clear scenic viewpoints of the **Merrimack River**.
- **Trail Enhancements:** Improving the existing quarter-mile loop trail with fresh stone dust or gravel to ensure stable footing and clear navigation for hikers and birdwatchers.
- **Wildlife Shelter & Habitat Protection:** Creating dedicated wildlife shelters from natural debris and implementing strict "on-trail" policies for leashed dogs to protect the island's resident **bald eagles** and tidal marsh ecosystems.
- **Infrastructure Restoration and Additions:**
 - **Parking Lot:** Regrading the lot with fresh gravel and replacing decayed wooden rails to provide a safer arrival point for the "few dozen" cars the site can accommodate.
 - **Amenities:** Installing durable, weather-resistant **benches** and **picnic tables** at key overlooks to encourage longer visits and community use.
 - **Interpretive Signage:** Replacing outdated or damaged informational boards with new interpretive signs that detail the island's unique history, geology, and local wildlife.
 - **Memorial to Drowning Victims:** Offering space for individual commemoration, public safety awareness, and advocacy for prevention.

