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## Progress Report: East Lyme's Overlook Park

*R.S. De Santo, East Lyme Public Trust Foundation*

The eastern 2,500 feet of the reconstructed Overlook walkway and its new 10 acre beach, benefited from storm Sandy on October 29 that struck the coast with its 6 foot high storm surge. It was further helped by the Northeaster of November 7th.

The storms pounding the new beach moved and reworked the sand, sorting and smoothing it and moving hundreds of cubic yards up the beach, depositing it along the seawall and filling in spaces between the 3 ton boulders that armor the park's 10 foot wide walkway.

The new 220 foot long groin at the eastern end of the beach did its job to trap sand and thus it essentially stabilized and kept the beach uneroded and in place.

A ten foot portion of the concrete ramp, at the eastern most beginning of the walkway, was not yet armored with stone and so storm waves undercut it. That section now requires repair.

Unfortunately, the western 2,500 feet of the walkway, which was still awaiting redesign and repair by East Lyme for prior storm damage when Sandy struck, received significant new erosion and damage (see photograph above left). Evaluation of that original design by the Foundation found that storms with frequencies of as little as one year would damage the structure as compared with the recent storms that were much more powerful than one year frequencies.

Photographed at dead low tide on November 12, 2012, Overlook Beach and its walkway is seen in photo (above right) taken from the top of the eastern most stairways to the beach. There are three other access points to the beach, with one being a ramp for handicapped access that is 800 feet west of this first stairway.

Before work is completed on the reconstructed Overlook Park, the commemorative plaques (2,483 of them) will be replaced on the fence that lines the water side (left) of the walkway. Fifty-two commemorative benches will be returned to their original locations along this half of the Overlook against the retaining wall on the right side of the walkway. The remaining benches will be held by East Lyme until they too can be returned to their original locations along the western half of the Park, once it is redesigned and repaired.

For more information on Overlook Park, its specifications, and its reconstruction progress see: <http://publictrustfoundation.org/news.htm>

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