

Jeffrey Hall <jch@lowell.edu> Wed, Jun 9, 2021 at 11:07 AM  
To: localgroup@lowell.edu

Hello everyone -

Here's the latest from Lowell.

**Astronomy Discovery Center:**

In preparation for the start of construction on the Astronomy Discovery Center (ADC), work is underway to install a construction fence and storm water protection around the perimeter of the construction zone, which includes roads, parking lots, and the building itself. The construction fence is being installed for the safety of all our guests and their pets that use the trails on the Lowell property daily. Once construction is underway, there will be many hazards within the construction zone--such as deep foundation excavations, machinery, and material lay down areas--that could pose threats to individuals and pets. The construction zone, and future ADC, will result in changes to some of the trail network, but will not prevent access to the extensive trail system, as the trail head has been moved to a new location off the gravel overflow parking lot and other trails are available to access the system. Once the ADC is complete, some of the trails will be reconnected to the new parking lot. In addition, we are working with the City of Flagstaff and our community group regarding possible expansion of the FUTS to connect to the ADC and the Lowell property beyond.

**Section 17:**

Mark Loseth of American Conservation Experience has completed a thorough mapping of the Section 17 trails, and I have sent his conclusions on to our community committee for consideration. We'll be meeting in the near future to discuss our impressions of his work and how we connect our Section 17 trails to the larger trail plan for City open space. We will tie this input to our plans noted above for the ADC.

**Lowell operations:**

We moved to Phase 2B of our reopening plan on May 24. We have a larger number of guided tours throughout the day, though they are still small groups of 10 or less. It has been wonderful to see more signs of life on our campus!

We no longer require masks outdoors, though we still request that guests wear them indoors. Hikers therefore no longer need to don masks if you are walking outdoors near or around our campus.

The next phase of our reopening is 3A, and this will be the first time we reopen our general admissions. This probably will not happen until late July at the earliest. At this time, we do think we meet the CDC gating criteria to move forward to our Phase 3, but we are waiting until overall immunity/vaccination levels are a bit higher and our staff feel more comfortable interacting with larger groups. As are we all, we're feeling our way forward out of the global mess as sensibly as we can.

**Mars Hill Overlook:**

Since the end of the school year, we have reduced our security hours to 5-11 PM daily. The security staff should let hikers through, though we assume hiking will end at sunset. We will keep an eye on usage of the overlook and will maintain security to help keep calm in the west side neighborhood and help FPD with enforcement.

I hope this update finds everyone well and starting to return to some semblance of normality.

Jeff