Construction on Boston’s long-awaited Muddy River project has led to changes in where the Emerald Necklace Conservancy will work during its annual cleanup.

“Normally, we would do the Back Bay Fens all the way straight through the Riverway, but there’s a piece that will be inaccessible,” said Jeanie Knox, director of external relations at the conservancy.

The group plans to counter this limitation by focusing some of its work farther upstream. The exact areas have not been determined yet but could include spots near Olmsted Park and Jamaica Pond, according to Knox. She emphasized that members were not frustrated by this shift.

“We’re just so happy it started,” she said of the Muddy River Restoration Project. “It’s going to hurt before it heals. It’s going to look ugly for a while, but the end result will be terrific for everyone and the river itself.”

The conservancy’s cleanup efforts will take place on Saturday, April 20 from 9 am until 1 pm. Volunteers will focus on clearing away debris, picking up trash and collecting recyclables.

The amount of water bottles the conservancy has found in past years has helped the project double as an example of why the group supports updating the state’s bottle bill to include container deposit refunds for drinks such as juice and water.

“That gives you a real visual of how many of these water bottles are just discarded,” Knox said of the cleanup. “They wouldn’t be there in the park if people could cash them in.”

The conservancy has already recruited about 600 volunteers for the event and expects to have about 700 in total. People interested in helping out can go to the conservancy’s website at emeraldnecklace.org or email projectassistant@emeraldnecklace.org.

Knox was particularly complimentary of the help that colleges and universities have given to the cleanup effort. Ellen Faszewski, chair of the math and science department at Wheelock College, said that about 75 students from schools belonging to the group
Colleges of the Fenway volunteer each year. She estimated that about half of them come from Wheelock.

“Students that go to Wheelock are very interested in helping others and just even contributing to the community,” she said. “I think that’s why we get a lot of students volunteering for this particular event.”

Faszewski agreed with Knox that shifting the cleanup areas due to construction would not be problematic. Rather, she said it would be beneficial.

“I think heading upstream will be great,” she said. “There are just so many people anyway, so we’ll be able to cover more ground, which will be nice.”

Knox said she was looking forward to the event.

“It’s just really a wonderful day in the park,” she said.