



### From your outgoing

**Executive Director:** On top of the dizzying changes swirling about us today, the ECGA is itself undergoing a major change -- its first executive leadership transition. I

informed our board over a year ago that I would be resigning at the end of this year. We are fortunate that our search process produced a stellar group of candidates among which Dennis Markatos-Soriano stood out. Dennis took the helm at the Alliance on September 1<sup>st</sup> but I will remain through October to ensure a smooth transition.

I am confident that Dennis has what it takes to bring this project to a new level of success. He brings great experience running two environmental non-profits and a lot of enthusiasm to his new role. We're all supporting him in every way we can to ensure he gets off to a great start.

In taking my leave, I feel fortunate indeed to have had the opportunity to be part of the Alliance team over its first (almost) two decades. I can't think of another job that would have been more rewarding (and more fun) than helping to bring our vision to reality. The Greenway stands today as the pre-eminent long distance shared-use trail in America and has inspired a growing list of similar trails across the country. So many outstanding individuals have contributed to our success, most as volunteers or government partners. But our small staff, which numbered (collectively) more than 35 over the years, have all been instrumental to our success and a great pleasure to work with. They have worked tirelessly and deserve so much credit for our accomplishments. I am proud of every one of them.

Thanks for all you've done to bring the Greenway to fruition. It's been a great ride!

Karen M. Votava



### From your incoming Executive

**Director:** As a cyclist and an East Coaster all my life (NC, NJ and NY), I am very excited to join the ECGA team as its next Executive Director. I can't think of a more perfect and

tangible project that simultaneously addresses many of our national and global challenges: an accessible Greenway lowers carbon dioxide and other polluting emissions, lowers our dependence on foreign oil, decreases the cost of transportation, creates green jobs for economic recovery, and improves the health and livability of our communities.

Karen Votava's brilliant leadership and your dedication as volunteers and supporters have developed a great 2,900-mile corridor these last 18 years. But there are large sections still on-road that are not yet accessible to everyone. Now, it's time for us to roll up our sleeves and accelerate greenway progress!

This fall, we are developing our Strategic Plan for the path forward and would love your input. By early October, we will launch our daily blog to help you stay in touch with exciting East Coast Greenway news. The blog will connect to Twitter and our Facebook page to keep Greenway buzz and membership climbing.

I've had the pleasure of experiencing sections of the Greenway in Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and DC so far. Next are trips to North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. I look forward to meeting you at your local section as we celebrate past successes and plan for many more.

Feel free to contact me anytime at [dennis@greenway.org](mailto:dennis@greenway.org). Onwards to a great collaboration ahead!

Dennis Markatos – Soriano

## **Trail Progress: Our core mission is to make the East Coast Greenway happen!**

The Greenway continues to develop with many gaps newly closed. Our trail staff, positioned in each of our four regions, is working effectively with our partners. Look for more reports on Greenway progress via our e-newsletters, on our website, and on our Facebook page.

### **New England Region: Border to Boston Trail: Newburyport progress**



The City of Newburyport continues to be a leader in development of this 30+ mile trail leading from the NH border to Boston's northern suburbs. August saw a new bike-ped bridge get installed over Low St. Stay tuned for more B2B Trail updates, as other towns move forward as well.

### **Mid Atlantic Region: NYC Department of Parks & Recreation designs new ECG signs**



The East Coast Greenway through parklands in the Bronx is now marked with this combination of the NYC Greenway logo with the ECG logo. These signs guide Greenway users through 9.5 miles of off-road pathways through Van Cortlandt Park, Pelham Bay Park, and parkways in-between. The signs were custom-designed, fabricated, and installed through the courtesy of the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation.

### **Stimulus Funds Build the Greenway in NJ**

The Middlesex Greenway received a \$1 million grant for construction costs! Mike Dannemiller of the NJ ECG Committee says, "This is a major segment of the NJ ECG. This portion of Greenway will get us off the tricky on-road pieces of Woodbridge Ave and Amboy Ave"!

### **South Atlantic Region: Virginia Capital Trail: 7 more miles complete!**

A new segment of the Greenway's Historical Coastal Route has been constructed by the Virginia Department of Transportation. This paved multi-use off-road trail parallels State Route 5 and is part of an ongoing effort to link over 50 miles of trail between Richmond VA and Jamestown Settlement. The newly completed segment runs seven miles east of Charles City and passes historic plantations and other historic and natural attractions. The segment is expected to be formally designated as East Coast Greenway at this fall's ECGA Board Meeting in Savannah.

### **Southeast Region: Greenway Florida advance marked on the ground and in partnerships**

Top and bottom, Florida is advancing the Greenway on the ground and, through new partnerships, promises increased use of the route.

Far northern Nassau County in August was awarded \$2.5 million by the Northeast Florida Transportation Planning Organization. Amelia Island Trails Chairman Phil Scanlan said that the sum would build approximately five miles of Greenway through the affluent retirement and resort area. Construction is expected in 2014 and 2015.

**Trustee Election and Annual Members Meeting.** We are fortunate that Chuck Flink has agreed to serve one more year as chair of our board to ensure a smooth transition and that we have a board so dedicated to our mission. ***Election of trustees will be held at our Annual Members Meeting on November 7<sup>th</sup> in Savannah, GA.*** (visit <http://www.greenway.org/pdf/savannah.pdf> for details). The slate may be viewed on our web at: (<http://www.greenway.org/pdf/2009elections.pdf>). For a mail proxy vote (if you can't be in Savannah) and hard copy of the slate call the office at 401-789-4625.

Please join the **Trail Council meeting** starting at 9 am, followed by the members meeting at 3:30 pm and a celebratory dinner. Our Georgia hosts are anxious to show off their plans for the Greenway in Georgia.

**ECGA Financial Position.** The Alliance remains financially viable, although like everyone else we have had to take some stringent measures. We have postponed replacing our communications coordinator, Jean Frisbee, who left us in June. Other staff are on a 10% furlough; our South Atlantic Coordinator is cut to 50%; and we've reduced our HQ office space and implemented other cost cutting measures.

Dennis and our board will be working hard to increase our funding base to bring these staff back to full time soon and get our communications program back on track. Thankfully, our income is chiefly from donors and members who have remained loyal through the challenging past year. Thank you! And, with no debt nor real estate weighing us down we are nimble, able to bend with the wind until this storm passes, which it will. Our mission could not be better positioned to take off as the economy picks up. And, with your help, our new team will make that happen.

**Newsletters.** The East Coast Greenway is getting greener! We are lowering our print newsletter frequency, but want to stay in touch with you via electronic newsletters and a daily blog that begins in October. Electronic publishing will save trees, cut printing and postage expenses, and provide more timely news. We will save over \$16,000 a year that can go into advancing the trail. Many of you have chosen to shift to electronic newsletters and we encourage those who have not to do so. Go to [www.greenway.org](http://www.greenway.org) and enter your name and email address in the boxes at the lower left or **send your email address to [info@greenway.org](mailto:info@greenway.org) - 1 lucky email will receive an ECG cap and set of our trail maps.** The next issue is due out in early 2010 and back issues are available at <http://www.greenway.org/publications.php>, as well as copies of our Print Newsletters, Annual Report and State of the Trail Report.

**Redesigned Web Site.** A two-year long effort to major redesign of our website is complete, though we will continue to develop it to make it as helpful as possible for our members and the public. We're proud of our new look and the expanded information on the site, but we rely on you to provide feedback so it continues to improve. Please send any suggestions to [info@greenway.org](mailto:info@greenway.org).

East Coast



Greenway.

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## *NEWS FROM THE EAST COAST GREENWAY ALLIANCE FALL 2009*

~ **Support the Greenway** by becoming a member of the ECGA or sponsoring a mile of trail today.

~ **Get Involved!** Volunteer, write a letter, help spread the word...learn about all the ways you can help create the ECG.

~ **Comments? Suggestions? News?** Contact the ECGA at info@greenway.org.

~ **Learn more** about the East Coast Greenway by visiting our website, or call us at (401) 789-4625.

**We look forward to hearing from you!**