

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AMTRAK AND EAST COAST GREENWAY ALLIANCE ANNOUNCE UNPRECEDENTED LINK BETWEEN BIKES AND TRAINS IN 15 STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Amtrak to Expand Bikes on Board

Washington, D.C. - Amtrak and the East Coast Greenway Alliance today announced their partnership to forge an unprecedented intermodal network, connecting Amtrak's passenger trains to 2,600 miles of bikeways and trails in 15 states and the District of Columbia.

Amtrak Board of Directors Vice Chair and former Governor Michael S. Dukakis announced Amtrak's bikes on board effort during a press conference in Union Station. Dukakis was joined by E.S. Bagley, Jr., President of Amtrak's Northeast Corridor, East Coast Greenway Alliance Chairman Pat King, U.S. Department of Transportation Assistant Secretary Gene Conti and Environmental Protection Agency Chief of Staff Reid Wilson.

The East Coast Greenway, which links east coast cities from Maine to Florida through a continuous network of trails, bikeways and recreational paths, has been designated a "National Millennium Trail" by the White House.

As part of today's announcement, a commemorative sign was unveiled in Union Station, identifying the train station as the geographic center of the Greenway network.

The press conference included a demonstration of bicycles being loaded onto a baggage car, without requiring the removal of front wheels, making travel easier for avid cyclists.

"This is an exciting opportunity to get Americans out of their cars and onto trails and trains when they are vacationing," said Dukakis. "It makes good sense for our environment and it makes good sense for Amtrak to respond to a growing market for eco-tourism and adventure travel."

King explained that the 2,600-mile-long Greenway is an urban Appalachian Trail for non-motorized users and that the partnership with Amtrak means that cyclists traveling the east coast will soon be able to use Amtrak's easy-on easy-off bicycle accommodations as they travel from city to city. "We see this as an innovative model that can be replicated in other regions across the country," King added.

The East Coast Greenway Alliance expects to complete the Greenway network by 2010. During the next 10 years, Amtrak will work closely with the Greenway Alliance to plan for and phase in more accommodations for travelers with bicycles on regional trains that serve the Northeast Corridor and parts of the Southeast.

Bagley said that Amtrak plans to begin with a pilot program of limited service between Richmond, VA and Boston by Spring 2001 on the Twilight Shoreliner. Current plans call for equipping baggage cars with bike racks on selected trains that serve cities in the South and the Northeast. Amtrak is also considering incorporating bicycle facilities into new or overhauled equipment used in non-express and regional service. By the year 2010, Amtrak expects to replace much of the equipment used for regional service, providing an opportunity to plan for bicycles.

"Amtrak already accommodates bicycles on three train routes, the Adirondack, the Ethan Allen and the Vermonter. Our specially designed baggage cars give cyclists easy-on and easy-off access. We will be looking closely at ways in which we can apply that approach on more trains," said Bagley.

Today's announcement came just one day after Amtrak's Northeast Corridor reported its best summer on record with \$53 million in ticket revenues for the month of August, capping three consecutive months of record-breaking sales. The August revenues reflected an increase of nearly 22 percent over August 1999 while ridership increased nearly 11 percent, surging to 1.14 million passengers.

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