



East Coast
Greenway
ALLIANCE

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Contact: Tanja Wiant

401-789-4625

tanja@greenway.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EAST COAST GREENWAY IN NEW HAMPSHIRE WINS SUPPORT FROM NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The National Park Service recently announced that planning assistance for the New Hampshire segment of the East Coast Greenway is among the NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program grant winners for 2007.

The East Coast Greenway, often referred to as an ‘urban Appalachian Trail’, is an off-road, multi-use trail that extends 2,950 miles through 25 cities along the East Coast from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida. Today the trail is approximately 21% complete as off-road path, and is open to walkers, cyclists, skaters, and other non-motorized uses. The balance of the trail follows on-road routing until new off-road trails are built.

While an informal planning effort in 2001 identified a potential route along the New Hampshire seacoast, this current project will include more extensive community involvement, which hopefully will lay the groundwork for trail implementation in coming years.

“We are incredibly pleased to select the East Coast Greenway as one of our key projects in New Hampshire for the coming year,” said Lelia Mellen of NPS. “The East Coast Greenway will knit together important natural resources and allow families in the Seacoast area to enjoy the beauty of nature and have fun while getting fit.” NPS assistance to the regional effort will include help with strategic planning, technical design issues, and funding identification.

The Rivers & Trails Program will bring the East Coast Greenway Alliance together with several regional partners, including the Rockingham Planning Commission, Seacoast Area Bicycle Routes (SABR), the Eastern Trail Management District (ETMD), and a Project Advisory Committee composed of representatives from potential corridor communities, the NH Departments of Transportation (DOT) and Resources and Economic Development (DRED), and other organizations. The project is also being supported by a planning grant from NHDOT matched with resources from SABR and the ETMD. “One of our first priorities is to gather feedback from community residents and likely trail users to develop a vision for what they would like the East Coast Greenway to be along New Hampshire’s Seacoast,” said Scott Bogle of the Rockingham Planning Commission.

Through the Rivers & Trails program, the National Park Service helps communities preserve their important natural resources, protect river corridors, develop new trails and greenways and create new open space. These projects are locally-led with RTCA staff supporting local

recreation and conservation leaders. This year, 64 projects were selected as RTCA grant recipients in the Northeast Region, spanning 13 states across New England and the Mid-Atlantic. In 2005, RTCA in the Northeast helped build nearly 220 new miles of bike and walking trails, created or restored more than 400 miles of river trails, and leveraged nearly \$100 million in funds for targeted projects.

For more information on the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance program, please visit www.nps.gov/rtca.

For more information on the East Coast Greenway, please visit www.greenway.org.

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