



East Coast Greenway Alliance

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First Major Public Art Installation on the East Coast Greenway: NASA boosts Maryland linear solar system project

The East Coast Greenway Alliance, developing a 2600-mile trail connecting cities from Maine to Florida for hikers, bicyclists and other nonmotorized users, is pleased to announce the first major public arts project to be installed along the East Coast Greenway. NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center has joined with the Friends of Anne Arundel County Trails (Friends) to installed the 5-mile long "Planet Walk" along the Baltimore & Annapolis (B&A) Trail. It will enable trail users to stroll, bike or skate through our solar system. Planet Walk is being developed as a linear art gallery and unique educational exhibit of our solar system. NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory Project will complete the educational graphics, digitizing and signage for this project. The sculptures are being created by artist Judy Moore Sutton.

"We are thrilled to have NASA on board and in partnership with Friends on this project," said Stan Lebar, manager of the Planet Walk for the Friends. Lebar has spearheaded the Planet Walk project since its inception five years ago. Mr. Lebar, retired from Westinghouse, managed the Apollo 11 lunar TV camera program used by Neil Armstrong to record the first walk on the moon. "With NASA's support," says Lebar, "we can realize a world-class exhibit on the B&A Trail that will bring the wonders of our solar system to young students and residents of every age to enjoy." The Planet Walk will shrink our 3.7 billion mile solar system down to 4.6 miles and place the sun and all the planets on the B&A Trail, keeping the distance between the planets and sun in perspective.

The Sun station has been completed and unveiled. The Friends are completing a station for each of the other planets. The second station to be completed will be Pluto, at the far end of our solar system, which will be located near a ranger station on the B&A Trail. Like the Sun Station, the location allows for parking and restrooms. Saturn is planned to be a small amphitheater with the planet as the stage backdrop. The rings of Saturn will be incorporated into the amphitheater and the area surrounding the structure.

To learn more about the B&A Trail, contact Elizabeth Wyble, President of Friends of Anne Arundel County Trails, at 410-647- 6621. To learn more about the East Coast Greenway, visit www.greenway.org or call 401-789-4625.

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