



## *ECG Talking Points*

### *and talking points about Greenways in general*

#### **What is the East Coast Greenway?**

- A continuous route connecting 25 major cities along the East Coast in 15 states and DC.
- The goal is for it to be 100% off-road
- 3000 miles from the Canadian border in Calais, ME to Key West, FL
- Currently about 20% off-road with interim on-road connections
- The ECG is one of America's most ambitious trails projects
- The ECG showcases a new way to explore the East Coast's rich history, culture, and natural resources
- An "urban Appalachian Trail"
- One of the United States' 16 National Millennium Trails
- All paths will have a firm surface, either paved or stone dust
- The ECG will provide connections between town centers, transit stations, parks, open spaces, and visitor attractions.

#### **What is the East Coast Greenway Alliance?**

- Non-profit based in Wakefield, RI, spearheading establishment of the East Coast Greenway
- Mission: To partner with local, state, and national agencies and organizations to promote the establishment, stewardship, and public enjoyment of a traffic-free, multi-user trail linking cities from Maine to Florida.
- Sets the vision for the ECG trail system, defines clear criteria, and provides the coordination to see that it happens
- Advocates for the development of local trails to help make trail connections along the route
- Works with 16 volunteer state committees with scores of local citizen advocates to promote the ECG at the state and local level
- Creates maps, cue sheets, user guides and signage to facilitate and promote public use of the Greenway

#### **Who can benefit from the East Coast Greenway**

##### People

- The vision is for a trail accessible to all non-motorized users: walkers, cyclists, skaters, skiers, wheelchair users, and equestrians. The phase 1 route will be accessible to walkers and cyclists.
- The route is flat, firm, and smooth and thus appropriate for wheelchairs and the elderly.
- Provides a safe place for children to learn to ride a bike and to travel to school and other locations, or to join family outings.
- Provides a means of transportation for those who don't drive, thereby increasing their independence
- Provides something for every type of traveler: nature lovers will enjoy scores of nearby natural wonders, including wetlands, forests and coastal regions; heritage tourists can visit the six National Heritage Areas and many historic sites, museums, botanic gardens, and other sites along the Greenway

- The Greenway is easily accessible by over 30 million people living in the counties it passes through – plus millions of visitors to the region.
- Improves physical and mental health through recreation and exercise
- Increases safety for non-motorized travelers by giving them a traffic-free travel option

#### Communities

- Enhances communities and areas, improves quality of life, increases property values
- Increases tourism dollars to towns and cities along the route; local economic development
- Attracts eco-tourists and adventure travelers
- Increases transportation options
- Reduces roadway congestion
- Connects people and communities - provides opportunities to socialize and meet people
- Creates new public space.
- Makes communities more livable and enjoyable for residents and tourists

#### Environment

- Reduced dependence on fossil fuels
- Cleaner air
- Preserved open space
- Makes use of abandoned lands (e.g. rail corridors)

### **The East Coast Greenway Vision**

- "In essence, the Appalachian Trail is about getting away from it all. We see the East Coast Greenway as a way for people to get back into it all." – Eric Weis, ECGA
- Millennium Trails will be very tangible gifts to the future. We will walk on them and hike on them and bike on them. They will be accessible to people of all ages and abilities. But in a very important way they represent more than the tangible effect of the trail. They represent a commitment and an investment in what kind of country we want in the next century. – First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton at launch of the National Millennium Trails Program, 1999
- The ECG provides the rationale to extend and connect our local trails.
- The ECG provides an added argument to support new infrastructure such as a pedestrian bridge.
- The ECG vision provides a catalyst for developing safe routes for kids to get to school
- Local business leaders sense tourist money from the ECG, and get more excited than if only local residents would benefit.
- The ECG provides more clout for advocacy/lobbying with politicians than just a local or regional trail.
- The ECG provides the vision of off-road travel to Florida, a powerful image that intrigues many people.
- The ECG provides events and news stories, like the WAVE, to raise awareness about local trails.
- "Like the ECG itself, the ECGA is built on the work of individuals working on behalf of the Alliance" – Bill Bussey
- "Advocates and planners around NC frequently mention the ECG among their top 10 reasons to fund any local trail project." – Dave Connelly
- "Folks in smaller communities are the most eager to feel part of a larger concept." – Dave Connelly
- Answer to question, does using the ECGA name make it easier to convince communities to develop trails: "Oh, yes! Communities have their own reasons, which invariably tend to be local.

But ECG conjures up the benefits of tourism, of connecting to a national urge to get out of cars, to be fit. Ironically, as visionary as Greenway on the ground and off-road remains, locals find it empowering. They like the connectivity that the Greenway promises.” – Herb Hiller

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## Talking Points, Quotes, and Messages about Greenways in General

### General Quotes

- A whole greenway system, such as the East Coast Greenway (ECG), is better than the sum of its parts – additional recreational, environmental, and transportation benefits are achieved by linking green spaces together to form an extended and inter-connected linear system.
  - We need to bring open space to the people, instead of expecting them to journey to find it. That's where greenways are contributing. – Gilbert Grosvenor, Vice Chairman, President's Commission on Americans Outdoors, 1987
  - A connected system of parks and parkways is manifestly far more complete and useful than a series of isolated parks. - Frederick Law Olmsted, American landscape architect, 1822-1903
  - And, if greenways truly capture the imagination and boldness of the American spirit, they could eventually form the corridors that connect open spaces, parks, forests, and deserts-and Americans-from sea to shining sea. – President’s Commission On Americans Outdoors, Report and Recommendations to the President of the United States, 1986
  - Concern for the environment and access to parks and open space is not frivolous or peripheral, rather, it is central to the welfare of people body, mind, and spirit. – Laurance Rockefeller, American capitalist & philanthropist, 1910
  - Nothing compares with the simple pleasure of a bike ride. – John F. Kennedy
  - I thought of that [the theory of relativity] while riding my bike. – Albert Einstein
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### Environmental Benefits of Greenways

Greenways:

- Encourage redevelopment of abandoned areas, thereby directing development away from natural areas
  - Address some ecological impacts of sprawl by linking fragmented habitats, sustaining wildlife migration, enabling wildlife to access water and food
  - Provide easy access to natural resources, encouraging public support for resource preservation and linking people with the natural world
  - Serve as “lungs” to ventilate congested urban areas
  - Reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and thereby decrease air and water pollution
  - Provide buffer zones protecting streams, rivers and lakes from polluted run-off caused by fertilizers and pesticides on lawns and farms, and road and parking lot run-off that threatens drinking water quality and health of aquatic species
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### Greenways contribute to Livable Communities

Quotes:

- “Greenways are about connections: connections between people and the land, between public parks, natural areas, historic sites, and other open spaces, between conservation and economic development, and between environmental protection and our quality of life.” – Chuck Flink & Robert Searns, *Greenways*, 1993
- “Greenways are long, skinny community centers” – Tom Farrell, Director of Recreation, Town of Brunswick, ME
- “People are different on a path. On a town sidewalk strangers may make eye contact, but that's all. On a path...they smile, say hello, and pet one another's dogs. I think every community in American should have a greenway.” - Anne Lusk, Greenway advocate, 1990
- “It may not be crowding per se that degrades us, but a lack of relief from crowding-a lack of open space, a lack of green, of nature going its own way.” – Charles Little and John Mitchell

#### Greenways:

- Provide connections and consolidation within and among communities, contributing to the quality of life and character of communities under pressure from suburban sprawl and unplanned development.
- Get us out of our cars, encouraging us to socialize within our community.
- Are an important land use strategy that can increase quality of life by preserving open space in urban, suburban and developing rural areas
- Provide buffers between industrial areas and residential neighborhoods.
- Create community amenities that attract families and help build community pride.
- Become linear community meeting places providing opportunities for people from varying backgrounds to interact.
- Can serve as foundation to develop municipal zoning and sub-division ordinances that promote the use of greenways for conservation and sound land use practices

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### **Public Health & Recreation Benefits of Greenways**

#### Quotes:

- Those who do not find time for exercise will have to find time for illness. – Proverb
- Without health there is no happiness. An attention to health, then, should take the place of every other object. – Thomas Jefferson
- Walking makes for a long life. – Hindu Proverb
- Most people are pantywaists. Exercise is good for you. – Emma “Grandma” Gatewood, at age 67, the first woman to thru-hike the Appalachian Trail (1955)
- Walk and be happy, walk and be healthy. The best way to lengthen out our days is to walk steadily and with a purpose. – Charles Dickens
- Walking is man's best medicine. – Hippocrates
- Adding traffic lanes to deal with highway congestion is like loosening your belt to cure obesity. – Lewis Mumford, *The Highway and the City*, 1953

#### Research:

- According to the World Health Organization, physical inactivity is one of the 4 major risk factors for coronary heart disease.
- Physical inactivity is also a contributing factor for development of type II diabetes, colon cancer, back pain, hypertension, obesity, osteoporosis, anxiety and stress.
- The percentage of young people who are overweight has doubled in the past 30 years.
- The US Surgeon General has stated: “Being inactive is as risky to one’s health as smoking.”

- Study after study has shown that suburban residents walk less, bike less and are less physically fit than city dwellers.
- The majority of Americans, especially given the projected age profile, will be pursuing low impact walking and bicycling as their primary outdoor activity.

Greenways combat the negative impacts of sedentary lifestyles and reduce physical and mental health risks by providing:

- Convenient, easy-access opportunities for regular exercise and physical recreation, such as walking, bicycling, in-line skating, close to home and work
- Convenient, attractive and safe routes to school. Only one third of children who live less than a mile from school currently walk to school.
- Diverse forms of recreational opportunities to meet the needs of people of all ages and abilities, including families, seniors, wheelchair users
- Escape from noise, bustle and stress typical of life in urban areas
- Opportunities for families to have fun together...recreation together has been found to be a contributing factor in creating strong, supportive families, creating bonds essential to mental and social health
- An enjoyable and safe place for bicycling, walking, and jogging, removed from the hazards of motor vehicles.

Increasing community availability and accessibility of physical activities produce savings in public health expenditures:

- Opportunities for wellness and fitness activities reduce health costs, including sick leave, absenteeism, health insurance costs
- Physical activity helps maintain seniors' mental and physical vitality and independence, reducing economic burdens on communities by reducing need for long term, assisted care and other elder services
- According to the PA Department of Conservation of Natural Resources, the link between close to home facilities for increasing physical activity within communities and health improvement is becoming increasingly clear
- Walking, bicycling, hiking are simple pleasures within economic reach of most people

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## **Greenways create sustainable transportation options**

Quotes:

- There is more to life than increasing its speed. – Mohandas K. Gandhi, Indian nationalist leader, 1869-1948
- The more I think about our US domestic transportation problem from this vantage point [China] the more I see an increased role for the bicycle in American life. I am convinced after riding bikes an enormous amount here in China, that it is a sensible, economical, clean form of transportation and makes enormous good sense. – George Bush, US Liaison Office, Beijing, China, 1975
- A highway takes your car to the country, a greenway your mind. – Charles Little, Greenways for America, 1990

Greenways serve as transportation alternatives that:

- Improve air and water quality
- Save energy and money

- Reduce reliance on cars and fossil fuels
- Reduce congestion
- Provide alternative routes for transportation for utilitarian or recreational purposes, such as tourism, commuting to work or school, and running errands, decreasing the number of cars on the road and pollution from their exhaust
- Often link to public transportation hubs, making leaving cars at home easier
- Reduce maintenance and investment costs for roadways
- Help revitalize downtowns and urban centers through convenient, auto-free access
- Reduce the amount of time spent in traffic – time that could be better spent with family and friends

Statistics:

- Percentage of commuters who cycle is three times higher where greenways exist
- According to NYCDOT, vehicles on the road create more than 25% of air pollution nationwide
- 46% of respondents to 1991 Harris Poll said they would bike to work if designated trails were built

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## **Economic Impacts of Greenways**

- Greenways increase nearby property values and thereby, increase tax revenues – 70% of real estate agents use presence of greenways as selling feature
- Corporations choose to locate in communities employees like; quality of life is emerging as a key factor affecting retention of the best and brightest and in ability of communities to attract new companies
- Small companies say opportunities for recreation, parks and open space are the highest priority in choosing a new location for their business
- Recreation related businesses that benefit from greenways include restaurants and lodging, sporting goods retailers, charter services, and clothing and gift stores
- By interweaving green space within more developed areas, a greenway can provide views and vistas that enhance the enjoyment of surrounding residential and commercial properties and buffer potentially conflicting land uses
- Cities integrate greenways into mixed use developments, including residential and commercial districts, to revitalize abandoned industrialized areas
- Greenways help revitalize downtowns by providing convenient, car-free access, and integrating recreation with commercial areas
- Greenways put abandoned lands, such as former railways, to productive use
- In urban areas greenways help to “green” brownfields and increase open space
- Planning and development of greenways naturally lead to formation of broad based partnerships, bringing together civic groups, regional planners, community leaders, educators, business owners and others
- Opportunities for physical activity, wellness and fitness provided by greenways result in reduced health care costs for local businesses and communities
- Greenways preserve natural resources while providing communities with an economic asset
- Greenways provide the health, fitness and other recreational features that stimulate tourism and recreation related spending.

Quotes:

- In the not-too-distant future, Americans will look back on those who created rail-trail parks with

the same gratitude that we today feel for those visionary men and women who created our first national parks. But this 'second wave' of park creation must take place now, within the next decade or so, if we are not to lose the opportunity of using the abandoned rail corridors which are rapidly disappearing from the landscape. – Peter Harnick, *Converting Rails to Trails*, 1989

- Saving old railroad corridors as trails is not only good recreation policy, it is good railroad policy. They [abandoned rail corridors] may be appropriate for rail use in the future. If they are destroyed now, we will never be able to reassemble them again. – Drew Lewis, former Secretary of Transportation and a former Chief Executive Officer for Union Pacific Railroad, 1990
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## **Greenways and Tourism**

Thanks to the Interstate Highway System, it is now possible to travel across the country from coast to coast without seeing anything. – Charles Kuralt, *A Life On the Road*, 1990

- Tourists are increasingly interested in the outdoors and nature-based activities and they travel to pursue special interests and fulfilling experiences. The ECG offers an ideal means of satisfying those interests.
  - Greenways benefit communities by turning them into an eco-tourism destination.
  - Greenways help preserve an area's unique character, which helps build local tourism industries
  - Historic, cultural and natural sites along the ECG experience increased visitation resulting in increased support
  - Sine the ECG is a multi-use trail connecting cities, towns and natural areas, it is ideal for long-distance tourism
  - A study by the Univ. of Wisconsin Extension Service found tourism-related spending by out of state visitors was twice as high as in-state visitors
  - Guides being produced for each state along the ECG include information about tourism related services and amenities, as well as sites of historic, natural and cultural interest
  - A large trail network, such as the ECG, disperses users, relieving overuse and making tourism more enjoyable
  - Rather than taking travelers deep into the woods, the trail will show the breadth of human activity and American history, running through urban areas, by fishing ports, museums and lighthouses. The Greenway will be the urban equivalent of the Appalachian Trail.
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## **Educational Benefits of Greenways**

Greenways provide educational opportunities about:

- Historic and cultural sites
- Protection of natural resources
- Environmental and scientific topics
- Health benefits
- The importance of exercise

The East Coast Greenway provides important linkages between local and regional trails, providing car-free access to nature and recreation, which is especially important for children.

- Many children today are suffering from Nature Deficit Disorder – they are growing up without exposure to nature and natural wonders
  - The ECG can serve as a natural learning laboratory
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## Trails As Safe Facilities

- Crime and the fear of crime do not flourish in an environment of high energy and healthy interaction among law-abiding community members-the trail may be one of the safest places in the city. – Chief of Police in South Burlington, Vermont, 1997
  - "More than twice as many people have died since 1900 in U.S. car collisions as have been killed in all the wars in U.S. history." Katie Alvord, *Divorce Your Car*, 2000
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## Trail Advocacy

- When you work in a bureaucracy, trying to make program changes sometimes seems like trying to slow dance with a cow: it's not much fun, it annoys the cow and you step in a lot of manure. – Beth Timson, *From Waterbars to Polygons: The Evolution of a State Trails Program*, *Trends*, 33(2), 1996
- When we first heard about the plans for the Cedar Valley Nature Trail from Waterloo to Cedar Rapids [Iowa], we were less than enthusiastic. We attended the meetings and tried to get laws passed and lawsuits initiated to stop what we felt was a real menace to our well-being. We headed up a group of farmers and took the issue to court. We fought it for a year and finally decided that it wasn't worth it and that we should negotiate.  
In retrospect, it's funny, 'cause the trail is the greatest thing going.' None of the fears have come to pass. There are perhaps 15,000 people using the trail every year. Many of them access the trail through our farm. We have formed many friendships with the trail users, and hear from them throughout the year and at Christmas. – Rick Spence, Farmer, *Farmland News*, February 1993
- If there's one essential ingredient to creating trails and trail systems, it's people. All the land and financing in the world won't blaze a trail if there aren't people championing the project. – Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, *In Support of Trails: A Guide to Successful Trail Advocacy*, 1993
- Every important change in our society, for the good, at least, has taken place because of popular pressure-pressure from below, from the great mass of people. – Edward Abbey, *One Life at a Time, Please*, 1988