

## East Coast Greenway Alliance History

1991



- Eight people meet in New York City in November to establish the East Coast Greenway Alliance, after meeting each other at an earlier bicycle conference at MIT in Cambridge, MA.

1992



*In Pennsylvania during the 1992 summer tour from Boston to Washington, DC.*

- Route redesigned to include Rhode Island and Delaware.
- Ten cyclists undertake a month-long summer exploratory and promotional tour of East Coast Greenway route from Boston to Washington, DC. Their ride generates strong media attention as well as meetings and endorsements from local and state officials.
- [Open Space Institute](#) becomes fiscal umbrella for ECGA. [Neighborhood Open Spaces Coalition](#) in New York City offers office space.
- Preliminary bylaws adopted.

1993



- Early tours along the East Coast Greenway explore route options and promote the Greenway.
- URL “[www.greenway.org](http://www.greenway.org)” secured for website.
- Board members develop first strategic plan at Philadelphia retreat, sponsored by [National Park Service](#).

## 1994

- Portland, Maine, to Washington D.C. tour promotes the East Coast Greenway.
- Pat King becomes the first Life Member, a giving level established to help raise funds for Boston to Washington, DC Relay, July – September.

## 1995

- East Coast Greenway name and logo are trademarked as a recreational trail and for maps and other materials.
- ECGA is incorporated in the state of New York.
- ECGA moves headquarters as volunteer Executive Director Karen Votava retires from her job in New York City and moves to Wakefield, RI.

## 1996

- Karen Votava becomes first paid executive director, part-time.
- Pilot Trail Designation Criteria and Procedure Policy adopted.
- First five greenway segments designated, totaling 56 miles: the Baltimore & Annapolis Trail (MD), the Charter Oak Greenway (CT), Coventry Greenway (RI), the Delaware & Raritan Canal Trail (NJ), and Farmington Canal Greenway (CT).
- First State of the Trail Report issued, covering five states.

## 1997

- Organization achieves 501(c)3 status.
- Three-day Hartford to Providence promotional tour showcases key segment of East Coast Greenway.
- First user map for local trail segment printed: D&R Canal towpath, New Jersey.

1998



Before developing ECG maps electronically, unwieldy print maps were often used to find new routing options.

- Bylaws updated, Board of Trustees forms with Patricia King as chair.
- First Southern regional meeting in Pinopolis, SC, brings five new states into ECG organization.
- ECGA achieves fiscal autonomy.
- First annual members meeting held in Annapolis, MD.
- Refinements to ECG trail vision include list of 23 cities that spine trail must link; six trail segments totaling 51.5 miles designated.

1999

- Seven greenway segments totaling 22.4 miles designated.
- Pilot trail marker design using map logo adopted and placed on some designated segments.
- Regional meetings held in Wilmington, DE, and Boston.
- [Second strategic plan](#) establishing five benchmarks as measures of trail progress adopted
- User maps developed for three more segments: Farmington Greenway, Charter Oak Greenway, and Blackstone Bikeway
- Annual members meeting held in Portland, ME.
- White House names East Coast Greenway one of 16 [National Millennium Trails](#).
- Prestigious Kodak American Greenways Award given to ECGA by the Conservation Fund at event at [National Geographic Society in Washington, DC](#).

2000



- Advocates and officials from all East Coast Greenway states come together for Key West-to-Calais Wave Up the Coast relay event, complete with the passing of bottles of water from Key West to Calais, to celebrate the Greenway's selection as a National Millennium Trail.
- Partnership with Amtrak celebrated at press event at Union Station in Washington, DC.
- 15 greenway segments totaling 72.2 miles designated.
- Annual members meeting held in Washington, DC.



*Celebrating partnership with Amtrak and new Bikes on Board program*

2001

- 10th anniversary edition of State of the Trail Report published.
- Through East Coast Greenway advocacy, Amtrak Bikes on Board program launches with Twilight Shoreliner (Boston to Newport News) providing daily roll-on bike carriage.

- Gateways to the East Coast Greenway event held with simultaneous designations and placing of endpoint-markers in Key West, Florida and Calais, Maine on June 2.
- Travel route with on-road linking completed, trail fully defined in all New England states.
- 14 greenway segments totaling 31.5 miles designated.
- Landscape Architecture publishes feature on Greenway.
- David Dionne follows Pat King to become second chair of Board of Trustees.
- Annual members meeting held in Providence, RI.

## 2002

- Eight greenway segments totaling 92.2 miles designated.
- Grant from [Robert Wood Johnson](#) funds [Pentagram Design](#) to develop ECGA two trees logo and design standards.
- ECGA helps spearhead formation of [Merritt Parkway Trail Alliance](#).
- Annual members meeting held in Philadelphia.
- [NJDOT](#) steps forward to map out completion of East Coast Greenway in New Jersey by hiring [RBA Group](#) to define route.
- Advisory Board established.
- Electronic newsletter launches, reaching more than 2,000 readers.

## 2003



*Inauguration June 5 on National Mall in Washington, DC, includes presentation of a brass “midpoint” plaque to be installed in the city.*

- “Sign-on” letters ask President George W. Bush to expedite completion of Greenway; majority of House and Senate members along our route sign letter.
- Nine greenway segments totaling 37.5 miles designated.

- 62-mile route, 80% off-road, defined through Middlesex, Union, Essex, and Hudson Counties as a result of [NJDOT](#) funded work by [RBA Group](#).
- Robb Kushner develops promotional video focused on NY-NJ segment: "[East Coast Greenway: From Downtown to Your Town.](#)"
- Annual member meeting held in Charleston, SC; membership reaches 700.



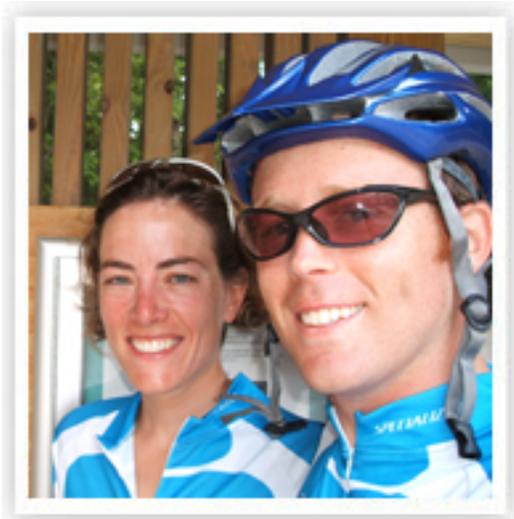
*Cyclists on the Maine-to-Florida tour get a sendoff in Calais, Maine, from members of the Passamaquoddy Tribe.*

## 2004

- Seven cyclists ride entire East Coast Greenway from Calais, ME to Key West, FL in 55 days, becoming our first End-to-Enders. They raise \$75,000 for East Coast Greenway Alliance.
- Annual members meeting held in Jersey City, NJ.
- Membership grows to 1,200.
- Four new greenways totaling 11.8 miles designated.
- Pedestrian bridges open: across Scarborough Marsh along [Eastern Trail](#) in Maine and across Route 1 along [D&R Canal Towpath](#) in New Jersey
- Chuck Flink becomes chair of the Board of Trustees.

## 2005

- 19-member Trail Council forms and meets for first time in November. Section "benchmarks" and state "Blueprints for Action" begin.
- Annual members meeting held in New Haven, CT; membership grows to more than 3,000.
- First year of major donor program exceeds \$100,000.
- Two couples become first to complete East Coast Greenway unsupported.



*End-to-Enders Jenny and Wil Hylton*

2006

- GQ Magazine publishes a [feature article by Wil Hylton](#) on his 2005 end-to-end ride, bringing national attention to the East Coast Greenway.
- 49 miles of new greenway are designated.
- [Google Earth maps](#) made for route from Maine to Virginia.
- Spring Board and Trail Council meetings held in Wakefield, RI; annual members meeting and fall Board and Trail Council meetings held in Baltimore.



2007

- Two cyclists field-check entire route, updating cue sheets; data is converted to [Google Maps](#) for full route.
- Four state-level East Coast Greenway summits held in NJ, NY, NC, and FL.
- Pilot Ambassador Program launches in New England in the fall with a grant from [REI](#).
- Board and Trail Council meets in Jacksonville, FL, in the spring and in Durham, NC, in the fall for annual members meetin.

2008

- [New Jersey East Coast Greenway Multi-use Trail Guide](#) published by New Jersey Department of Transportation.
- Sixteen major donors ride from Wilmington, DE, to New York City as part of a Close the Gaps Club tour.
- East Coast Greenway kiosks are installed throughout the corridor: on the American Tobacco Trail in Durham, NC; along D & R Canal Trail in Millstone, NJ; in Johnson Park in Highland Park, NJ; and in Manchester, CT.
- Alliance Board of Trustees and Trail Council meet in Wilmington, DE, and Boston.
- 28 trail segments designated, adding nearly 100 miles.

## 2009

- Co-founder Karen Votava, East Coast Greenway Alliance's first executive director, retires on September 1, handing the baton to [Dennis Markatos-Soriano](#).
- 16 trail segments are designated.
- [East Coast Greenway – Pennsylvania and Delaware – A Guide to Bicycling and Walking 2009](#) is issued in February with support from William Penn Foundation, Pennsylvania DCNR, Delaware DNREC, and City of Wilmington, DE.
- [New York City Weekend Trip Planner](#) published with support from New York Community Trust, Bike New York and Bike and Roll.
- Alliance hosts Savannah-Northeast Florida Workshop on Wheels in January.
- Alliance hosts bike summits in Westchester County (NY) and in Pennsylvania in partnership with Pennsylvania Environmental Council.
- Board and Trail Council hold meetings in New York City, including a tribute event to honor Karen Votava's 18 years of East Coast Greenway leadership. Board and Trail Council meet in Savannah in the fall.
- Dan McCrady and his yellow Lab, Sadie, cycle from Annapolis, MD, to Portland, ME, to promote awareness and support for the Greenway.
- Donors ride a Close the Gaps Club Tour of St. Johns River-to-Sea Loop in Florida.



*Dan McCrady riding the Greenway with Sadie*

## 2010

- Alliance designates 13 new trail segments representing record length of new off-road greenway (100 miles) during spring and fall meetings in Newark, NJ, and Durham, NC.
- Close the Gaps Club Tour rides North Carolina's Outer Banks.

## 2011

- Alliance designates 19 trails totaling 50 miles during spring and fall meetings in Simsbury, CT, and Stuart & Jupiter, FL. Off-road portion of the East Coast Greenway moves past 25 percent.
- East Coast Greenway Alliance moves its headquarters from Wakefield, RI, to Durham, NC, closer to the midpoint of our route.
- Week-A-Year Tour begins with nearly 25 members cycling from the Canadian border to Portland, ME, in August.

## 2012

- Record 42 new Greenway segments are designated in 12 different states, totaling more than 50 miles.
- Media attention surges to more than 500 news pieces — including a feature article in the Wall Street Journal and a spot on national Fox News.
- 35 cyclists ride the Week-A-Year Tour from Portland, ME, to Hartford, CT, in August; revenues from the tour become a significant source of annual support.
- Alliance partners with Cabot Creamery on the biggest tour in our history, a ride from Miami to Portland, ME, that engages thousands of people including three End-to-Enders: Robert Spiegelman and Cathy and Myron Skott.
- Our network of friends and fans grows by a third to 18,500 people who donate, volunteer, or follow our e-newsletter, Facebook page, and Twitter feed.
- We host Surgeon General Regina Benjamin for a 200-person evening group walk on the Greenway in Durham.

## 2013

- We designate 31 new Greenway segments from 8 states totaling more than 60 miles.
- More than 40 cyclists ride the Week-A-Year Tour from Hartford, CT, to Philadelphia, PA.
- Our network of supporters and followers grows to 23,200 people connected to us via email, Facebook, Twitter, and our print newsletter.

## 2014

- We reach the milestone of 30 percent off-road by designating 36 new Greenway segments totaling 40 miles from Maine to Florida.

- We roll out our first-ever mobile app, synced to an upgraded online Trip Planner. These wayfinding tools make experiencing the Greenway more convenient.
- Our network grows to over 28,000 people following and/or supporting the Greenway.
- East Coast Greenway signs are installed on about 150 miles, bringing our signed total to almost 30 percent of the route.

2015



*Participants in 2015 Week-A-Year tour. Photo by Jim Sharpe*

- We install a record 250 miles of East Coast Greenway signs.
- We designate 28+ new miles on 26 trail segments in 14 of the 15 states the Greenway touches.
- We grow our network of supporters and followers by a third to nearly 40,000 people.
- Tens of millions of dollars in state and federal funds go towards closing key gaps in Connecticut, Florida, Pennsylvania, New York, and beyond.