

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Office of Greenways & Trails

Working to establish a statewide system of greenways and trails for recreation, conservation and alternative transportation purposes.



The Office of Greenways & Trails (OGT), within the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), provides statewide leadership and coordination to establish, expand and promote Florida's Statewide System of Greenways and Trails. To fulfill its mission, OGT does the following:

Florida's State Greenways and Trails

OGT is responsible for managing the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway, eight state trails and other lands as key components of the Florida greenways and trails system. OGT partners with nearly 30 communities that manage state acquired greenways and trails through sublease agreements. OGT manages a multi-million dollar capital budget consisting of federal Transportation Enhancement grants and fixed capital funds for the development of trails and facilities on state managed properties.

Regional Coordination and Community Assistance

OGT coordinates with and provides assistance to local governments, developers, state and federal agencies, private landowners and other interested citizens/advocates regarding the acquisition, designation, establishment and management of greenways and trails projects. OGT works to expand the statewide network through a 1.5% annual allocation of Florida Forever funding for acquisition of trails.

Trail Development Funding for Communities

OGT administers the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), a federally funded competitive grant program providing financial assistance to local communities for the development of trails. Since inception, RTP has assisted communities in 42 Florida counties to establish and expand trails.

Trail and Greenway Information Technology

In close collaboration with public and private partners, OGT oversees the vision maps that comprise the Statewide System of Greenways and Trails, encompassing multi-use trails, hiking trails, paddling trails and ecological greenways. In partnership with the University of Florida's GeoPlan Center, OGT maintains the Florida Trails Network database website which serves as the central clearinghouse for state trail and greenway data (floridatrailnetwork.com).

Trails and Greenways Fuel Florida's Future By...

Attracting Tourists Improving Quality of Life
Drawing Homebuyers Stimulating Business Development
Increasing Property Values Providing Alternative Transportation

- Florida's state trails and the Cross Florida Greenway had the highest annual visitation ever in 2009 with over 4 million visitors, generating an estimated economic impact of \$95 million.
- In downtown Dunedin, private business occupancy rates increased from 30% to 95% following the establishment of the Pinellas Trail, which is described as an "economic engine" by the community's economic development director, Bob Ironsmith.
- Trails consistently remain the number one community amenity sought by prospective homeowners (National Association of Homebuilders, 2008).
- *Builder Magazine* listed trails as one of the "lifestyle anchors" common to the ten best selling master planned communities in the nation (August 2010).
- The repeated annual economic impact of cyclists has been estimated to be nine times the one-time cost to build bicycle facilities (North Carolina DOT, 2004).
- Business owners along the Great Allegheny Passage Trail attribute 25% of revenues to their proximity to the Trail (Trail Town Economic Impact Study, 2008).
- Homes along a rail-trail sell closer to list price and in a shorter period of time than other homes, according to a 2006 study (Craig Della Penna, Realtor).



VISIT FLORIDA, the official tourism marketing corporation for one of the largest tourism economies in the world, embraced the value of trails by launching America's first comprehensive state trail-tourism website, Trails.VISITFLORIDA.com, in October 2010.

The Office of Greenways & Trails is VISIT FLORIDA's major partner in this new venture that advances Florida tourism by providing visitors and residents the information they need to plan their trail related travel.

