

Coastal Georgia Greenway

Camden County Meeting

St. Marys Town Hall

Tuesday, June 19, 2007 10am-12pm

Meeting summary

Herb Hiller provided an overview of the trails movement including the development of the rails to trails movement and the subsequent development of the East Coast Greenway Alliance, organized with the goal of connecting over 3000 miles of off road paved trails from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida, now almost 25% complete.

Status of Coastal Georgia Greenway Trails in Camden County

- Terry Landreth of Camden Bicycle Center provided an overview of the trail on abandoned North-South railroad corridor adjacent to US 17
- Jo Hickson presented slides of the Coastal Georgia Greenway including images of the East-West abandoned railroad corridor
- Kevin McCarthy of Amelia River Cruises described his plans for a water taxi to begin service between St. Marys and Fernandina Beach. Obstacles still exist including the acquisition of a vessel to provide the service. Mr. McCarthy said the water taxi would be similar to a tour boat he operates now, which can carry 49 passengers and accomodate bicycles. Service would likely be weekends at least to start, possibly Thursday through Saturday, and would be adjusted based on demand.
- Coleman Langshaw, Fernandina Beach Marina Director also spoke in favor of the proposal, noting its possible connection with the Cumberland Island National Seashore by providing access for people in Fernandina Beach to the Parks Service Ferry in St. Marys. Mike Pikula of Fernandina Beach provided an overview of the proposed trails in Fernandina Beach and praised the efforts to connect the two towns.
- The Fernandina Beach representatives at the meeting cruised over by boat with their bikes to the meeting. [Photos of their trip](http://picasaweb.google.com/quidageshodie/GreenwayMeeting061907?authkey=peo5xdhQ30Q) are available at <http://picasaweb.google.com/quidageshodie/GreenwayMeeting061907?authkey=peo5xdhQ30Q>.

Jo Hickson briefly summarized potential funding sources including the Georgia Land Conservation Program, Safe Routes to School (particularly for the East-West RR corridor), the Recreational Trails Program administered by Georgia DNR, the private industry Bikes Belong grant which can be used for matching funds, and the Coastal Incentive Grant.

Drew Wade summarized work on general Greenway projects in the state including retooling the

website and the effort to get trails coverage for GPB's Georgia Outdoors. He suggested further expansion of the list of interested parties in the project, and the possibility of a capital campaign in the coming year.

Jo Hickson and Herb Hiller then led a facilitated discussion including small group sessions.

- Top reasons for attending the meeting:
 1. Connect cities of St. Marys and Fernandina Beach by a water taxi
 2. Improve quality of life with trails
 3. Promote heritage and ecotourism in Camden and Nassau Counties
- Achievable goals for the next 2 years
 1. Organize a local group to promote the project, possibly to include Camden and Nassau Counties, the National Parks Service, city governments, etc.
 2. Identify additional existing trails or potential sites for trails
 3. East-West Railroad Corridor Trail
 4. North-South Railroad Corridor Trail
 5. Water taxi between St. Marys and Fernandina Beach
 6. Designation trails and water taxi to East Coast Greenway/Coastal Georgia Greenway
- Short term tasks suggested
 1. Identify leadership to approach local government
 2. Get involved in government planning efforts, Greenprint
 3. Organize as a formal non-profit
 4. Hold joint meeting of chambers of commerce

Next meeting date was set for July 19, though conflicts may require rescheduling for July 17. We will provide full details when plans have been set.

Drew Wade
Co-Chair, Coastal Georgia Greenway
drewwade (a t) coastalgeorgiagreenway (d o t) org

Jo Hickson
Co-Chair, Coastal Georgia Greenway
johickson (a t) comcast (d o t) net

Herb Hiller
Southeast Regional Program Coordinator
East Coast Greenway Alliance
hiller (a t) funport (d o t) net