

NORTH CAROLINA RAIL-TRAILS

Little Toot

Vol 5 No 2

Summer 1993

NCRT Will Serve ISTEA Seminar

NCRT will be conducting a seminar on state and community transportation planning Oct. 30 at the Biotechnology Center in Research Triangle Park. The emphasis will be on using the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) to involve citizens and planners in transportation and related decisions.

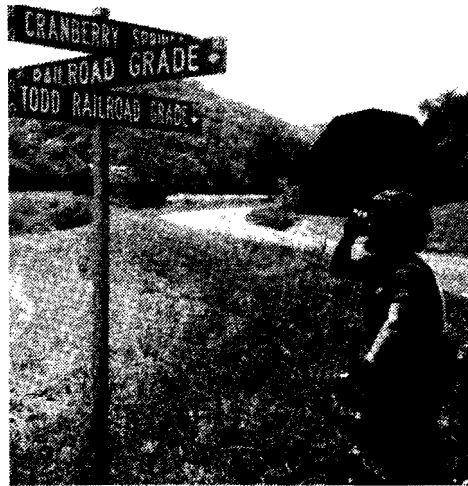
NCRT is one of the co-sponsors of "Quality Growth: Planning the Development of North Carolina and Communities," which has been organized by the North Carolina Sierra Club chapter. Former Charlotte mayor and architect Harvey Gantt will be the keynote speaker.

The conference objectives are to promote planned growth, citizen involvement, action coalitions and to seek directions on major development issues.

Under ISTEA, the state DOT is responsible for assuring adequate citizen input on local and state Transportation Improvement Programs. The omnibus federal transportation act passes part of this responsibility on to the state's 17 Metropolitan Planning Organizations. The act impacts upon land use, water quality, clean air, traffic reduction and transportation options.

NCRT is urging local transportation planners, MPO committee members and interested citizens to attend this session. The one-day conference begins at 9 a.m. There is a \$25 registration fee.

For an agenda and registration form, contact Phyliss Woody, UNC School of Public Health, CB 8165, Miller Hall, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-8165. Call 919-966-4032 or fax 919-966-5692.



"I am their leader. Which way did they go?" Gary Cornwell checks the route in Ashe County during NCRT's National Trails Day ride.

BOT Member Encourages Lincolnton Rail Greenway

The embattled Lincolnton Railroad Greenway Coalition got a big boost last month when district Board of Transportation member, Ann Gaither, endorsed the project and asked the NCDOT to obtain a "realistic appraisal" for the 1.8 miles from Norfolk Southern.

"We're pursuing it to see what options are open," Gaither told the local newspaper. "It looks like a great way to revitalize the downtown."

The corridor property is owned by the railroad inside Lincolnton. As a greenway trail, it would provide an off-road connection between the city recreation center, schools, churches, downtown and a city park.

The UNC-Charlotte Architecture Department drew up a development plan more than two years ago that provided multiple community use areas on the corridor.

June 5 A Very Big Day On The Trails

By any measure, the first National Trails Day was a success that overran all projections, according to the American Hiking Society's preliminary assessment. With press clippings and other feedback still coming in, the numbers indicate the impact of the June 5 event.

Over 2,000 local events attracted 750,000 participants in all 50 states, plus

NCRT used National Trails Day to promote extending the Virginia Creeper into North Carolina. On the following Monday, the Ashe County Commission voted unanimously to adopt the proposed project. A local volunteer committee is working to obtain public easements for the first five miles and NCRT is seeking financial support for trail development. Donations to the project can be sent to NCRT.

Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands and Canada. More than 2,000 articles reached a combined circulation of 100 million readers in commercial print media. Much additional exposure was given through club magazines, newsletters and special brochures. National and local television aired both prepared features and local events.

AHS, which does not have chapters, was especially impressed with the grassroots initiatives throughout the country.

AHS also was impressed with how many diverse outdoor interests "Seized the Day" to attract public attention to trails and conservation issues. So impressed that, next year, there will be Trail Days, June 4 and 5.

"To Preserve Rail Corridors and Promote Rail - Trails"

NRTF Head Says States Free To Determine 'Diversified Use'

The National Recreational Trails Fund Act has had state trails administrators scrambling for clear answers during this year's short-fused funding cycle, the first for the act. Christopher Douwes, Recreational Trails Program Manager for the Federal Highway Administration, prepared these comments on June 1 for questions submitted for the International Snowmobile Congress. Douwes stressed that his comments are not guidelines, but rather another attempt to clarify the act and the official administrative guidelines.

QUESTION: Does FHWA guidance says states do not need to expend the exact percentages within any given fiscal year on the 30% motorized, 30% non-motorized, 40% diversified use trail project formula?

DOUWES: The NRTFA states that funds are available for four



National Trails Day wasn't all wheeling down the Virginia Creeper. A large contingent of trail riders saddled up to enjoy the trail in perfect weather conditions.

Reserve Saturday, Oct. 9 for NCRT's annual fall color ride on the Virginia Creeper Trail. Meet at 10 a.m. by the caboose in the Damascus, VA, city park. The Creeper offers 35 magnificently scenic miles between White Top Station and Abingdon, VA.



years. The 30-30-40 provision is required for each fiscal year's funds, but not for the actual obligations or spending in each year. Here is an example: A state received \$100,000 in its FY 1993 allocation, but had no motorized projects ready. The state can spend up to \$70,000 of the FY 1993 funds on non-motorized projects, right away. The state has until the end of FY 1996 to spend the remaining \$30,000 on motorized projects.

QUESTION: A state must spend at least 40% of its funds on diversified trail use. Will "diversified trail use" be defined at the federal level or will each state develop its own definition?

DOUWES: The NRTFA does not give the FHWA a role in defining "diversified trail use." According to Section 1302(e)(5)(B), a state must receive guidance for determining compliance with the diversified trail use requirement from the state recreational trails advisory board. . . The state agency may define diversified trail use until Dec. 18, 1994, at which time the state advisory board must be in place.

QUESTION: Can a state recreational trail advisory board exempt the state from the 30% provisions?

DOUWES: The NRTFA gives the state recreational trail advisory board the role of providing guidance for selecting projects and for determining diversified trail use. The report of the Committee on Environmental and Public Works for Senate Bill 1204 (June 4, 1991) states: A "minimum reservation" for each form of recreation affords all trail users an opportunity to advance sound proposals. In the absence of acceptable proposals, however, this reservation of funds may be dropped with the approval of the trail-user advisory committee in that state.

ENLIST TODAY IN THE NORTH CAROLINA RAIL-TRAILS MOVEMENT!

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone: Home _____ Work _____ Best Time _____

Reason for interest in rail-trails _____

Member of other conservation/recreation/historical organization? _____

NCRT annual memberships: Individual - \$15, Family - \$20, Corporate - \$100

Mail to North Carolina Rail Trails, Suite 124, 703 9th St., Durham, NC 27705

THANK YOU FOR JOINING NCRT

Summer - 93



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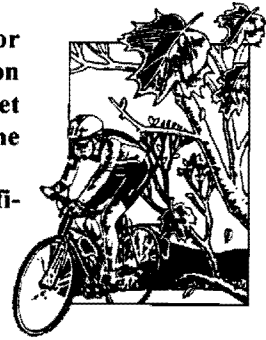
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Annual Meeting Sept. 11 At Apex

NCRT's fourth annual meeting will be held at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 11, at the Apex Town Hall. A \$25 registration fee includes lunch and annual membership dues. Triangle Rails-to-Trails Conservancy will be jointly holding its annual meeting at the site.

Apex Town Planner David Rowland will report on the Bright Leaf Trail project between Apex and Holly Springs. A project support group will be organized at the meeting.

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Wake County	Leslie Kennedy	919-362-4011

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NC Govt. Trail Spec.	Tom Potter	919-778-9488
Rails-to-Trails Cons.	Mariane Fowler	202-797-5400
National Park Service	Tom Iuriono	202-343-3709

Federal Railbanking Increases

Railbanking activity under the National Trails System Act is picking up, both nationally and in North Carolina.

Cleveland County is petitioning the Interstate Commerce Commission to use 1.5 miles west of the Shelby depot as a public recreation trail. The county would like to use an additional 13 miles of previously abandoned sections of the same Norfolk Southern line that would extend the proposed trail to the Rutherford County line.

NCRT also is working with local government and other interested parties to initiate the railbanking of five miles between Camp Lejeune and Kellum in Onslow County. The City of Jacksonville has the Norfolk Southern corridor in its greenways plan.

The City of Apex is working with CSX to finalize the railbanking of approximately six miles between that city and Holly Springs in Wake County.

NCRT is providing assistance to the New Hanover County Common Grounds greenway trail proponents, who are scrambling to save 2.5 miles from downtown Wilmington to a park in the northeast quadrant of the city. Railbanking hit a major snag when the county commission, under pressure from adjoining property owners who want pieces of the corridor, suddenly voted, without prior public notice, not to accept the line as a public trail. CSX has obtained an extension of the public use condition while efforts are underway to have the city or an area land trust assume the corridor.

NCRT Wish List

NCRT's expanding communications mission is in dire need of a computer laser printer. If you are upgrading your printer or have an old IBM/DOS or MAC computer gathering dust in your office, they can become tax deductions by donating them to NCRT. We also need small copy and fax machines. Please call 704-495-4472 or drop a note to NCRT.

Final dates for newsletter materials are: Winter - Feb. 10, Spring - May 10, Summer - Aug. 10, Fall - Nov. 10.

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Durham, NC 27705

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