

**PALM BEACH COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

Meeting Date: April 20, 2010 (X) Consent () Regular
() Ordinance () Public Hearing

Department

Submitted By: Environmental Resources Management
Submitted For: Environmental Resources Management and
Parks & Recreation Department and
Tourist Development Council

I. EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Motion and Title: Staff recommends motion to adopt: Resolution supporting promotion of the Gateway Community Program of the Florida Trail Association (FTA) in Palm Beach County (County) through activities, events and programs for residents and visitors.

Summary: The FTA is a non-profit organization whose mission is dedicated to building, maintaining, promoting and protecting over 1,500 miles of hiking trail throughout the state of Florida, referred to as the "Florida National Scenic Trail". Just over 80 miles of the Florida National Scenic Trail exists in Palm Beach County. The FTA has established the "Gateway Community Program" to recognize a mutually beneficial partnership with government agencies, local businesses, convention and visitors bureaus, and tourist development councils that help provide resources, educate, support and promote trail use through activities, events, facilities and programs that attract usage of the trail by both residents and visitors alike. The County desires to promote ecotourism and support the FTA by promoting the "Gateway Community Program" through signage and activities that highlight nature based tourism, trail usage and wellness through various hikes, awareness of Florida Hiking Trails Month, National Trails Day and Florida Greenways and Trails month. Adoption of this Resolution will subsequently result in the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the FTA, the Tourist Development Council, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Department of Environmental Resources Management to integrate the Program objectives, events and activities into the educational and recreational agenda of the County. That MOU will be brought before the Board for its approval at a future Board meeting. Countywide (SF)

Background and Justification: This Resolution is being proposed to show the County's support for the FTA's "Gateway Community Program". County staff from the Tourist Development Council, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Department of Environmental Resources Management will then work with the FTA to develop a MOU to establish responsibilities of the parties to the MOU for implementation of the promotional signage, educational programs, activities and events that will promote the County as a destination for use of the "Florida National Scenic Trail" and other outdoor resources within the County.

Attachments:

- 1. Resolution
- 2. Flyer on The Florida Trail Gateway Community Program

Recommended by: Richard E. Walcutt 3/25/10
Department Director Date

Approved by: [Signature] 4/7/10
County Administrator Date

II. FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

A. Five Year Summary of Fiscal Impact:

Fiscal Years	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Capital Expenditures	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Operating Costs	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
External Revenues	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Program Income (County)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
In-Kind Match (County)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
NET FISCAL IMPACT	* _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
# ADDITIONAL FTE POSITIONS (Cumulative)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Is Item Included in Current Budget? Yes _____ No X
 Budget Account No.: Fund _____ Department _____ Unit _____ Object _____
 Program _____

B. Recommended Sources of Funds/Summary of Fiscal Impact

* There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

C. Department Fiscal Review: *JF*

III. REVIEW COMMENTS

A. OFMB Fiscal and /or Contract Dev. and Control Comments:

<p><i>[Signature]</i> _____ OFMB 3/30/10</p>	<p><i>[Signature]</i> 4/2/2010 _____ Contract Development and Control</p>
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B. Legal Sufficiency:
[Signature]

 Assistant County Attorney

C. Other Department Review:

<p><i>[Signature]</i> _____ Department Director Parks & Recreation Department</p>	<p><i>[Signature]</i> _____ Executive Director Tourist Development Council</p>
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RESOLUTION NO. 2010-_____

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**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS OF PALM BEACH COUNTY,
FLORIDA,**

WHEREAS, the Florida Trail Association is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to build, maintain, promote and protect more than 1,500 miles of hiking trails throughout the state of Florida, referred to as the Florida National Scenic Trail; and

WHEREAS, over 80 miles of the Florida National Scenic Trail exist within Palm Beach County; and

WHEREAS, trails provide a variety of outdoor experiences that promote “natural” Florida as an ecotourism destination for citizens of and visitors to the state to experience the natural wonders of the state of Florida; and

WHEREAS, Palm Beach County residents, visitors, and businesses value those quality of life experiences that enhance wellness, create an appreciation for nature, and create a positive economic impact, and therefore consider trails, natural areas, parks and outdoor pursuits important to their daily lives and activities; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Trail Association has established the Gateway Community Program to recognize mutually beneficial partnerships with government agencies, local businesses, and convention and visitor bureaus that help provide resources, educate citizens and visitors, and support and promote trail use by both residents and visitors through activities, events, facilities and programs; and

WHEREAS, Palm Beach County desires to support the Florida Trail Association by promoting the Gateway Community Program through signage and activities that highlight nature-based tourism, trail use and wellness, such as organized hikes and promotion of public awareness of Florida Hiking Trails Month, National Trails Day and Florida Greenways and Trails Month.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA, THAT:

Section 1: Palm Beach County fully supports the Gateway Community Program

1 and will work to integrate Program events and activities into the educational and recreational
2 agenda for Palm Beach County.

3 Section 2: This resolution shall be presented to the Florida Trail Association to
4 indicate Palm Beach County's support for establishment and maintenance of the Gateway
5 Community Program in Palm Beach County.

6
7 The foregoing Resolution was offered by Commissioner _____, who
8 moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner _____,
9 and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

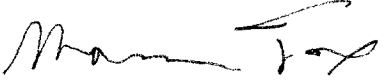
- 10 Commissioner Burt Aaronson, Chair _____
- 11 Commissioner Karen T. Marcus, Vice Chair _____
- 12 Commissioner Jeff Koons _____
- 13 Commissioner Shelley Vana _____
- 14 Commissioner Steven L. Abrams _____
- 15 Commissioner Jess R. Santamaria _____
- 16 Commissioner Priscilla A. Taylor _____

17 The Chairman thereupon declared the Resolution duly passed and adopted this
18 _____ day of _____, 2010.

19
20 APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
21 LEGAL SUFFICIENCY

**PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA BY ITS
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Sharon R. Bock, Clerk & Comptroller

22
23
24
25
26 By  _____
27 Assistant County Attorney

By _____
Deputy Clerk



The Florida Trail Gateway Community Program



Natural Florida. It's a destination for many of today's visitors to the Sunshine State, who increasingly ask for outdoor experiences, especially for places to hike. Is your community near the Florida Trail? Florida's *own* National Scenic Trail is a footpath stretching nearly 1,600 miles from Big Cypress National Preserve to Pensacola Beach. As Florida's official non-motorized

trail and one of only eleven National Scenic Trails in the United States, the Florida Trail offers hundreds of places where you can take a short day hike and dozens of spots ideal for backpacking. Since Florida's hiking season runs October through April, it's a draw for serious hikers from the rest of the country.

If your community offers basic tourism amenities such as lodging and restaurants, then the Florida Trail Association can help you market your resources to outdoor recreation enthusiasts as a nature-based tourism destination, resulting in local economic stimulus and increased public awareness of natural Florida. Casual walkers, day hikers, and weekend backpackers want to enjoy the outdoors, and your community can provide the gateway to their experience, via the Florida Trail.

For a community to apply for Florida Trail Gateway Community status, key criteria include:

- ▶ Proximity to the Florida Trail
- ▶ Availability of accommodations, from hotels to B&Bs to campgrounds
- ▶ Availability of restaurants
- ▶ Additional outdoor recreation opportunities such as other hiking trails, biking trails, paddling, birding, boating, fishing, beaches, etc. or traditional visitor draws such as historic districts, museums, shopping, or major attractions

The process of being designated a Gateway Community begins by bringing together local community leaders, tourism affiliates, business leaders, and members of the Florida Trail Association to discuss the communities' nature-based tourism ideas and needs. A volunteer from your local Florida Trail chapter will become your key contact, assisting your community in providing visitors information about the Florida Trail and in scheduling guided hikes, as well as providing general knowledge about the trail in your area.

By working together on promotional products, educational resources or special events, the Florida Trail Association and the Gateway Community can increase each other's ability to apply for targeted grants to assist in the community's efforts towards nature-based tourism development, economic development, and trail-related infrastructure development. We provide the know-how and volunteer support: you provide the destination and community support.

WHITE SPRINGS

BELLEVIEW

CRESTVIEW

MILTON

PAHOKEE

INVERNESS

CLEWISTON

OKEECHOBEE

MOORE HAVEN

PENSACOLA BEACH

SOPCHOPPY

BLOUNTSTOWN

SEMINOLE COUNTY

How Your Community Becomes a Florida Trail Gateway Community

Community leaders meet with Florida Trail Association representatives and agree to the concept of the designation as a Florida Trail Gateway Community. The proposal is brought before the community's city or town council for approval. A proposed proclamation is provided by the Florida Trail Association. After your community issues the Proclamation, a Memorandum of Understanding is signed which lists the responsibilities of each party, such as:

The Florida Trail Association will:

- ▶ Actively promote the Gateway Community as a destination through its website and other media.
- ▶ Assist in the planning and preparation for a celebration of the designation in or near the Gateway Community.
- ▶ Offer outreach materials to the community such as brochures, newsletters, posters, displays, etc.
- ▶ Provide detailed information on hiking opportunities near the community, which can be reproduced and distributed to visitors to the Gateway Community.
- ▶ Provide periodic guided hikes that depart from the Gateway Community.
- ▶ Provide support at local festivals or other community events to encourage interest in the Florida Trail, when possible.
- ▶ Provide Florida Trail Gateway Community decals to local businesses and civic buildings for display in their windows.
- ▶ Regularly maintain section(s) of the Florida Trail near the Gateway Community so that casual day hikers can easily locate and follow it.
- ▶ Provide two metal signs with the Florida Trail Gateway Community logo for posting at entrances to the Gateway Community.

The Gateway Community will:

- ▶ Include the Florida Trail and the Florida Trail Association in their promotional materials.
- ▶ Make Florida Trail information available to the public at local visitor centers and/or Chamber of Commerce and provide space for a Florida Trail Association display or wall-mounted poster.
- ▶ Work with the local Florida Trail contact to promote periodic guided hikes or events.
- ▶ Assist in promoting special designations such as Florida Hiking Trails Month in February and National Trails Day the first Saturday in June.
- ▶ Monitor the number of visitors who are seeking the Gateway Community as a destination for hiking.
- ▶ Attract businesses that support nature-based tourism, such as outfitters, hostels and shuttling services and assure that Florida Trail Association maps and guides will be available from a business in town for visitors to purchase.
- ▶ Encourage local businesses to provide discounts on accommodations or special weekend packages for visitors who show their Florida Trail Association membership card.
- ▶ Install the two Gateway Community roadway signs at entrances to the town as soon as possible after issuance of the proclamation.



This program receives financial assistance from the USDA Forest Service