

**A RESOLUTION OF
THE FLORIDA GREENWAYS AND TRAILS COUNCIL
RECOGNIZING
THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF TRAILS AND GREENWAYS TO FLORIDA**

WHEREAS, Florida residents and visitors have access to over 8,000 miles of land-based trails and nearly 4,000 miles of water trails; and

WHEREAS, Florida is home to popular long distance, destination trails including the congressionally designated Florida National Scenic Trail, the Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail, the Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail, the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway, the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail, and the longest segment of the East Coast Greenway, a national trail that connects Calais, Maine to Key West; and

WHEREAS, Florida was recognized in 2008 by American Trails, a national non-profit organization, as Best Trails State in America for its commitment to an outstanding statewide system of greenways and trails; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, Florida's official state trails and the Cross Florida Greenway experienced the highest annual visitation ever with over 4 million visits, generating an estimated \$95 million of economic impact; and

WHEREAS, 65% of Florida visitors include nature-based activities in their travel, and 80% of Florida residents suggest nearby natural, cultural and historical sites to out-of-state friends or family when they visit; and

WHEREAS, due to the high demand for trail information by visitors, VISIT FLORIDA has partnered with the Office of Greenways & Trails and other organizations to create four highly popular trail guides, and is currently developing a major presence for trails on VISITFLORIDA.com to be launched in Fall, 2010; and

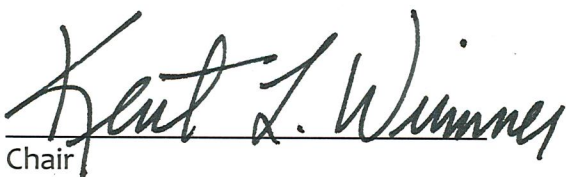
WHEREAS, according to the National Association of Homebuilders, trails are the most sought after community amenity that Americans seek when buying a home, as reflected by Florida's Lakewood Ranch development, a recipient of the 2008 American Trails Developer Award, where 80% of residents use the community's 150 mile network of trails and sidewalks; and

WHEREAS, trails economically benefit the towns that they pass through, as evidenced by the increase in downtown occupancy rates from 30% to 95% in Dunedin following the establishment of the Pinellas Trail, which has been described as an "economic engine" for the community; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the particular value of long distance, loop trails in Florida's economy, the chairs of the St. Johns, Flagler, Volusia, Brevard, and Putnam county commissions and Florida Congressman John Mica signed a Memorandum of Agreement committing to the development of the 260-mile St. Johns River to the Sea Loop Trail; and Wakulla, Leon and Franklin counties, are partnering with agencies and local communities to create the 120-mile Capital City to the Sea Loop Trail;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Florida Greenways and Trails Council does hereby recognize the economic value of trails and greenways to Florida, and particularly the emerging value of long distance, destination trails and greenways and the extension and linkage of trails and greenways into longer systems.

Approved by the Florida Greenways and Trails Council on February 11, 2010.


Chair


Vice Chair