



# Coast to Coast Connector

The Coast to Coast Connector (Connector) is a significant effort to provide a safe and continuous multi-use trail from the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic through Central Florida. The Connector is an estimated total distance of 275 miles with approximately 75 percent (over 200 miles) of the corridor already developed and open to the public or funded for completion. The estimated cost to close the remaining gaps is approximately \$42 million.

The Connector will link communities between St. Petersburg and Titusville along its entire length into a major destination route that will allow residents and visitors to explore Central Florida by bicycle or foot. The Connector includes two of the state's most popular trails, the Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail and the West Orange Trail, both of which have fueled the economic transformation of communities, particularly Dunedin and Winter Garden. This corridor also includes significant portions of the developing 51 mile East Central Regional Rail Trail, the longest single rail-trail corridor ever acquired by the state. The Connector will link all or part of the following existing multi-use trails, developed and managed by a broad range of communities and agencies:

- *Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail*
- *Starkey Trail*
- *Suncoast Trail*
- *Good Neighbor Trail*
- *Withlacoochee State Trail*
- *Gen. James A. Van Fleet State Trail*
- *South Lake Trail*
- *West Orange Trail*
- *Clarcona-Ocoee Trail*
- *Pine Hills Trail*
- *Seminole-Wekiva Trail*
- *Rinehart Trail*
- *Spring to Spring Trail*
- *East Central Regional Rail Trail*

The Connector is a major priority within the Florida Greenways and Trails System Plan which is being implemented by the Office of Greenways and Trails, and is the keystone project within the Florida Greenways and Trails Foundation's "Close the Gaps" Campaign.

## **Why Invest in the Coast to Coast Connector and the Florida Greenways and Trails System?**

The economic impact of and public demand for trails are significant, as demonstrated by the following:

- In downtown Dunedin, private business occupancy rates increased from 30% to nearly 100% following the establishment of the Pinellas Trail (Dunedin Economic Development Director).
- Three Central Florida trails, including the West Orange Trail, were estimated to support \$42 million of economic impact and 516 jobs in 2010 (East Central Florida RPC, 2010).
- Nearly 75 percent of Florida's 87 million visitors participate in nature-based activities during their visit (VISIT FLORIDA, 2012).
- Trails are the number one community amenity sought by American homebuyers (National Association of Homebuilders, 2008).
- Every \$1 million spent on the construction of multi-use trails yields 9.6 jobs (University of Massachusetts, 2011).
- 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).



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