

The Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail (L O S T)

September 2003 Update

A partnering project brought to you by the...

- Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
 - Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)
 - United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
 - South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD)
 - Florida Trail Association, Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST)
 - and the many other county, city, nonprofit and citizen partners...
- ...who made this world-class trail possible!

Status of FDOT Segment One Trail Development:

Segment One consists of the 28 miles of trail situated between the “St. Lucie Canal in Port Mayaca” (Martin County)... and the “Kissimmee River at Okeetantee Park” (Okeechobee County).

Construction of this 28-mile segment of trail began July 14 and should be complete by the end of September, just in time for cooler weather. Watch for a grand opening this Fall! See you on the trail!

Status of FDOT Segment Two Trail Development:

Segment Two consists of the 36 miles of trail situated between the “Caloosahatchee River at Alvin Ward Park in Moore Haven” (Glades County)... and “City Park in Pahokee” (Palm Beach County).

Groundbreaking activities for this 36-mile segment of trail are expected early in 2004.

Organization Highlight-FDOT Transportation Enhancements

The Florida Department of Transportation District 1, District 4, and Statewide Office have combined funding and provided staff to implement construction of Segment One and Two of the LOST trail. In excess of 12 million dollars have been committed by FDOT. *Why not spend those funds on road projects in the Lake Area...?* Quite simply, the type of funds used for the LOST trail can only be used for “transportation enhancements.” Had they not been used in your community these funds would have been used for similar projects in other communities.

OK. Then what exactly are transportation enhancements? In 1991, the U.S. Department of Transportation turned its sights on developing more modally balanced transportation. The focus of building our transportation system now involves consideration of environmental, cultural, economic, and social conditions which provide people with choices and with a richer experience. An important program at the heart of this thinking about quality of life is transportation enhancements (TE).

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FDOT Transportation Enhancements Continued:

With funding intended to improve communities, the end goal of the TE program is to "leave a place better than we found it." Since Congress introduced TE in 1991, more than \$2.4 billion has been invested around the country in facilities for walking and bicycling, historic preservation, scenic beautification, land acquisition, and environmental mitigation.

TE projects include the following community focused activities: Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities; Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Education Activities; Acquisition of Scenic or Historic Easements and Sites, Scenic or Historic Highway Programs, Including Tourist and Welcome Centers; Landscaping and Scenic Beautification; Rehabilitation and Operation of Historic Transportation Buildings, Structures, or Facilities; Preservation of Abandoned Railway Corridors; Control and Removal of Outdoor Advertising; Archaeological Planning and Research; Mitigation of Highway Runoff and Provision of Wildlife Connectivity; and Establishment of Transportation Museums.

Visit the National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse website: www.enhancements.org to view a listing of all Transportation Enhancement (TE) projects by state since program inception. Click on "Projects" on the left side of the home page; then select "1" to extract basic information on TE projects; then select your "State" and "Project Type."

Cross Section of the new Multi-tread Trail Surface:

Improvements along the top of the dike include an eleven-foot wide asphalt multi-purpose trail surface and a three-foot-plus wide natural hiking surface. The separate hiking tread will be installed on the lake-side of the asphalt tread. The hiking surface will be smooth and sodded, and the paved surface is designed to sun-bleach to a lighter color to reflect heat. This multi-tread, multi-purpose trail will attract citizens and visitors who will venture outdoors for healthy, wholesome recreation while enjoying the natural vistas and the welcome mats at diners, lodging, eco-tours, grocery stores, gas pumps and specialty shops in all the surrounding communities.

Maintaining Foot Traffic During Construction:

When entering construction areas, hikers will be greeted by signs and construction staff directing them to hike on the toe of the dike. If hikers are just starting out they will have the option of using the toe of the dike or hiking in the opposite direction. FDOT continues to maintain close communication with all involved communities and agencies.

...End of September 2003 Update

October is Greenways & Trails Month:

Visit floridagreenwaysandtrails.com for more information!

To receive future updates send an email to rick.halvorsen@dep.state.fl.us or call the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways and Trails: (850) 245-2052