

Identification and Prioritization of the FGTS

The Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS) is made up of existing, planned and conceptual trails and ecological greenways that form a connected, integrated statewide network. The FGTS serves as a green infrastructure plan for Florida, tying together the greenways and trails plans and planning activities of communities, agencies and non-profits throughout Florida.

GOAL 1: Identify and prioritize trails and greenways to facilitate completion of the FGTS.

1. **The Vision:** The Opportunity Maps contain the comprehensive vision for the FGTS:
 - Land Trails Opportunity Map – Represents the existing, planned and conceptual non-motorized trails that form a land-based trail network of state and regional importance. This map is a synthesis of trail planning efforts being conducted by cities, counties, transportation planning organizations, and other agencies and non-profits throughout Florida. This map does not include all existing, proposed and conceptual trails in Florida, but focuses on linear trails of state and regional significance to form a comprehensive connected system. The Land Trails Opportunity Map is the state companion to community greenways and trails and and bicycle and pedestrian master plans, and encompasses a combination of multiple and single use trails to accommodate uses such as: walking, hiking, biking, mountain biking, horseback riding, skating, and wildlife viewing.
 - Paddling Trails Opportunity Map – Represents the vision for a comprehensive water based trails system, this map includes waterways that are designated as part of the FGTS or are appropriate for future designation. Because water trails are not consistently captured in local and regional planning efforts like land trails typically are, it is important to establish basic criteria for inclusion. Therefore, to be included in the Paddling Trails Opportunity Map, a waterway shall:
 - Represent an existing or potential destination trail that reaches beyond the local area due to its scenic qualities and diversity of experiences
 - Be at least three miles in length, preferably longer
 - Be navigable during the majority of months in an average year
 - Ecological Greenways Opportunity Map – Represents the areas necessary to protect a statewide network of conservation land and connecting wildlife corridors designed to maintain large landscape-scale ecological functions. The

Ecological Greenways Opportunity Map consists of various data combined to identify the network of landscape linkages and corridors necessary to functionally connect large conservation land areas into a statewide ecological greenways system. A direct outcome of this map is the publicly promoted Florida Wildlife Corridor.

Strategy 1.1: Develop and maintain Opportunity Maps to identify and define an accurate, current, and comprehensive statewide vision for the Florida Greenways and Trails System.

Objective 1.1.1: OGT will maintain the Land Trails Opportunity Map as Florida's non-motorized land-based trails vision, and conduct a review and update of this map no less than every three years in coordination with partners.

Objective 1.1.2: OGT will maintain the Paddling Trails Opportunity Map as Florida's water trails vision, and conduct a review and update of this map no less than every three years in coordination with partners.

Objective 1.1.3: OGT will maintain the Ecological Greenways Opportunity Map as Florida's comprehensive ecological greenways vision, and conduct a review and update of the map no less than every five years in coordination with partners to include the University of Florida and the Florida Ecological Greenway Technical Advisory Group.

2. **The Priorities:** The Priority Trails Map and Critical Linkage Map are the focused priorities within the vision established in the FGTS Opportunity Maps.

- The Priority Trails Map encompasses the most important corridors and connections within the FGTS Land Trails Opportunity Map and Paddling Trails Opportunity Map. The corridors and connections within the Priority Trails Map will, to the greatest extent possible:
 - 1) Support and further national, state or regional trail projects, plans and initiatives that encompass multiple counties.
 - 2) Include existing and planned long-distance trails and trail loops that serve as destinations to support nature-based tourism and economic development
 - 3) Include the State Trails, the Cross Florida Greenway and other major connecting trails of greatest length (five miles or longer)
 - 4) Connect major population centers to provide access to the FGTS by the greatest number of Floridians

- 5) Build on past and programmed state and federal investment in trails, particularly when matched by funding from local and private sources
 - 6) Coincide with transportation, utility and canal corridors that facilitate major connections
 - 7) Coincide with the Florida Ecological Greenways Network
 - 8) Connect natural, recreational, cultural and historical sites that provide a range of experiences
 - 9) Provide a safe, accessible and high quality experience for users
- Critical Linkages are the most important components within the Ecological Greenways Opportunity Map for completing a statewide ecological network of conservation lands, including the most critical large intact landscapes and best connection opportunities.

Strategy 1.2: Maintain the Priority Trails Map and Critical Linkages Map to delineate FGTS priorities.

Objective 1.2.1: OGT will maintain the Priority Trails Map and conduct a review and update of the map in coordination with each Opportunity Map update.

Objective 1.2.2: OGT will maintain the Critical Linkages Map and conduct a review and update of the map in coordination with each Opportunity Map update.

3. **The Gaps:** The Priority Trails Gap Map delineates the unacquired and undeveloped segments within the Priority Trails Map. These gaps serve as the guide for directing resources to complete the state's highest priority trail projects.

The Strategic Protection Areas Map delineates the gaps, or unprotected components, within the Ecological Greenways Critical Linkages.

Strategy 1.3: Evaluate and determine gaps within the Priority Trails Map to identify where to best target resources and funding.

Objective 1.3.1: OGT will, by December 2013, analyze the Priority Trails Map in coordination with partners to identify all gaps.

Objective 1.3.2: OGT will, by December 2013, prioritize the Priority Trails gaps, in coordination with partners, to determine the relative importance of each gap.

Objective 1.3.3: OGT will, in coordination with UF and the Ecological Greenways Technical Advisory Group, identify Strategic Protection Areas by 2015.

Objective 1.3.4: OGT will maintain the Priority Trails Gap Map and conduct a review and update in coordination with each Priority Trails Map update.

4. **The Maps**: The FGTS maps consist of the following:

- Level 1 - The Vision: Land Trails, Paddling Trails and Ecological Greenways Opportunity Maps
- Level 2 - The Priorities: Priority Trails Map and Critical Linkage Map
- Level 3 - The Gaps: Priority Trails Gap Map and Strategic Protection Area Map

Strategy 1.4: Facilitate statewide planning by making FGTS maps and supporting data accessible to all.

Objective 1.4.1: OGT will provide all FGTS maps through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) website and other means, as appropriate.

Objective 1.4.2: OGT will maintain, in coordination with communities, agencies and non-profits, the Existing Trails data layer and make it available through the FDEP website.

Establishing and Connecting the FGTS

Establishing and connecting the FGTS relies on the collective effort of many programs and partners. A single trail project alone can require significant effort to complete. Combining multiple trail projects into an integrated statewide system requires advanced coordination and a concerted effort to achieve the greater whole.

GOAL 2: Direct resources and programs to establish and connect the FGTS.

1. **Assistance and Resources:** It is critical to provide the technical and planning assistance and resources needed to establish and connect the FGTS. Individual projects and plans require accurate information and guidance to get off the ground. This is important for the consistency and success of projects.

Strategy 2.1: Coordinate and provide technical and planning assistance and resources to facilitate establishment of the FGTS.

Objective 2.1.1: OGT will provide greenways and trails assistance and resources to communities, organizations and individuals, with emphasis on assisting projects and plans that advance and complete FGTS priorities.

Objective 2.1.2: OGT will maintain current technical assistance information and resources on FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com to support all FGTS projects and plans.

Objective 2.1.3: OGT will coordinate with the Florida Greenways and Trails Council to compile updated paved and unpaved trail standards and guidelines as a resource for communities, agencies and organizations establishing the FGTS.

Objective 2.1.4: OGT will administer the electronic Florida Greenways and Trails Community Network (webinars, e-communications, web pages), in partnership with the Rails to Trails Conservancy and other organizations, to provide training, share best practices, and showcase cutting-edge projects.

2. **Funding:** No issue is more critical to the success of greenways and trails projects than having adequate funds for their acquisition, development, management and promotion. It is important to identify and direct available funding sources to advance FGTS opportunities and complete priorities. Further, with increasingly strained public budgets, it is critical to identify private sources of funding.

Strategy 2.2: Coordinate and direct funding to facilitate implementation of the FGTS vision with emphasis on priorities.

Objective 2.2.1: Encourage local, state and federal programs that provide funding for greenways and trails to advance the FGTS with emphasis on completing priorities.

Objective 2.2.2: Identify and maintain, on FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com, a database of funding sources that facilitate the acquisition, development, management and promotion of the FGTS.

Objective 2.2.3: OGT will compile and provide on FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com case examples of project costs, including the sources of funding for those projects, to assist in the identification and estimation of funding needs and sources.

Objective 2.2.4: Pursue public/private partnerships to take advantage of public and private sources of funding and in-kind contributions to support implementation of the FGTS.

- 3. Acquisition:** It is important to advance and align acquisition efforts that support completion of FGTS priorities. Beyond fee simple acquisition, it is now critical more than ever to encourage less than fee options and partner with linear infrastructure and other private landowners that can assist with completion of the FGTS.

Strategy 2.3: Acquire properties that facilitate closing the gaps and completing corridors in the FGTS, with emphasis on priorities.

Objective 2.3.1: By December 2013, OGT will coordinate and complete the revision of Chapter 62S-1, FAC, to focus the Greenways and Trails Acquisition Program to closing gaps and completing corridors on the FGTS Priority Trails Map.

Objective 2.3.2: Ensure that state conservation and recreation land acquisition programs, such as Florida Forever, consider FGTS priorities during project analysis and selection.

Objective 2.3.3: Encourage all public conservation and recreation land acquisition programs to consider FGTS priorities and opportunities during project analysis and selection.

Objective 2.3.4: Encourage the use of transportation and other linear infrastructure rights of way that coincide with FGTS priorities and opportunities to include trails.

Objective 2.3.5: Promote public access in less than fee acquisitions that have the potential to close gaps and complete connections within the FGTS Priority Trails Map.

Objective 2.3.6: Encourage less than fee or conservation easements for working landscapes that coincide with FGTS Critical Linkages.

- 4. Development:** It is important to encourage trail development efforts from local to federal level to advance the FGTS and complete priorities.

Strategy 2.4: Coordinate and direct trail development programs to facilitate implementation of the FGTS vision with emphasis on priorities.

Objective 2.4.1: Encourage programs that support development of trails, such as Transportation Alternatives, to emphasize FGTS priorities to close gaps.

Objective 2.4.2: Encourage communities, agencies and organizations that develop trails to advance completion of the FGTS by directing funding and resources to priorities and gaps.

Objective 2.4.3: Encourage private developers to incorporate and establish trails and greenways that fulfill FGTS priorities and opportunities in developments of regional impact, planned unit developments, sector plans and other development plans.

- 5. Designation:** The Florida Greenways and Trails Designation Program was established to identify and promote trails and greenways within the FGTS. To date, nearly 1 million acres have been designated in the statewide system including state trails, state parks, national forest lands and trails, locally managed greenways and trails, blueways and many other areas.

Strategy 2.5: Designate projects to consistently identify, advance and promote the FGTS.

Objective 2.5.1: Encourage communities and public land managers to pursue designation of trails and greenways that are within the FGTS vision, emphasizing those on the Priority Trails Map and Critical Linkage Map.

Objective 2.5.2: Pursue private landowner designations that facilitate the FGTS vision, emphasizing connections and corridors on the Priority Trails Map and Critical Linkages Map.

Objective 2.5.3: Update and establish a new signage and branding standard for FGTS designated trails and greenways no later than December 2013.

Promoting and Providing Information about the FGTS

A key component to advancing the FGTS is ensuring that its purpose, benefits and value are effectively communicated to Floridians, visitors and target partners that use the system, play a role in its establishment, benefit from its presence, and affect its future.

GOAL 3: Promote and communicate information about greenways and trails to advance the FGTS.

- 1. Reaching the Public:** Promoting greenways and trails as opportunities for recreation, transportation and health, and providing information about where these opportunities can be accessed is critical to bringing the FGTS to people's everyday lives. It is also important to provide information about the purpose and benefits of the FGTS so that Floridians understand why the Sunshine State is making the investment to coordinate, establish and expand this comprehensive system.

Strategy 3.1: Communicate the purpose and benefits of greenways and trails to advance public support for the FGTS.

Objective 3.1.1: Promote the economic, health, transportation and environmental benefits of greenways and trails through newsletters, news releases, presentations, webinars and other appropriate communication channels.

Objective 3.1.2: Compile by July 2013 and maintain on FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com a current, comprehensive benefits document that can be used by communities, citizens and organizations to promote the value of the FGTS.

Objective 3.1.3: Partner with agencies and organizations to conduct economic impact evaluations for Florida-based projects to improve knowledge of the value of greenways and trails.

Strategy 3.2: Promote and provide information about greenways and trails to encourage their use for recreation, transportation and health.

Objective 3.2.1: Work with trail managers to provide current information about existing greenways and trails opportunities through information portals such as Trails.VISITFLORIDA.com (see sidebar), FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com, and TrailLink.com.

Objective 3.2.2: Work with media, tourism organizations, and others to promote existing greenways and trails opportunities through articles, partner publications, news releases, events and Florida Greenways and Trails Month.

- 2. Reaching Target Partners:** It is not only important to communicate the general purpose, benefits and value of the FGTS to the public at large, but also to target partners. Target partners include communities that have the potential to more fully participate in the FGTS. Some partners have the potential to help implement the FGTS, such as linear corridor owners who can provide right of way for a trail, while others derive direct economic benefit, such as trailside businesses. Developers can help to both implement the FGTS while also benefitting from the system. By providing a regional trail connection, for example, a developer can reduce the need for public funding while simultaneously accruing the benefits of increased property values that are associated with homeowner access to trails and greenways.

Target partners also include emerging supporters of the FGTS. Corporations and private foundations with compatible and related missions (e.g. health care, outdoor suppliers, environment) have the capability of providing funding support to promote and implement the overall system. It is important that communication strategies address outreach to target partners because they are so vital to making the FGTS a reality. Trails and greenways, because of their linear nature, are partnership projects.

Strategy 3.3: Communicate the purpose and benefits of greenways and trails to target partners to advance their understanding of and participation in the FGTS.

Objective 3.3.1: As part of a public/private partnership campaign, conduct targeted outreach to developers, linear corridor owners, small businesses, corporations, foundations and other potential private sector partners.

Objective 3.3.2: Conduct coordinated outreach to communities that have potential for increased participation in the FGTS, with emphasis on economically challenged areas that would benefit from trails and greenways.

Objective 3.3.3: Conduct outreach to elected officials and organizations that affect policy and funding decision-making related to the FGTS.

Coordinating the FGTS

Advancing the Florida Greenways and Trails System vision and priorities requires the coordination of allied programs, planning efforts and partnerships from the community to federal level.

GOAL 4: Link and support complementary programs, planning and partnership efforts to coordinate the FGTS.

- 1. Economic Development and Tourism:** Trails and greenways are increasingly an economic engine for communities and Florida. To fully comprehend the dynamic established in a small downtown centered on a trail, one only need visit the City of Dunedin along the Pinellas Trail. The presence of this trail is noted for having driven downtown business occupancy rates from 35% to nearly 100%. Just as individual trails can be an integral component of a community's economic development strategy, the FGTS, by combining trails together into larger systems, has great potential as a component of the state's economic development strategy.

The FGTS supports at least 8 of the 29 strategies that make up the Florida Five Year Strategic Plan for Economic Development (www.floridajobs.org/FL5yrPlan). The FGTS particularly advances the plan's *Quality of Life & Quality Places* and *Infrastructure & Growth Leadership* strategies. Notable among these is the creation of "vibrant, safe and healthy communities that attract workers, businesses, residents and visitors." It is important to establish the FGTS to support the economic development efforts of Florida and its communities.

The economic impact of trails is not only fueled by residents, but Florida visitors as well. In the wake of the high visitor demand for bicycling and outdoor experiences, VISIT FLORIDA partnered with OGT and others to launch Trails.VISITFLORIDA.com in 2010. This site brings together descriptions and maps of trails from around Florida with information about lodging, camping, restaurants, outfitters and other travel related services. Trails are now featured traveler destinations alongside beaches, resorts, golf courses and themed attractions. It is critical to maintain and build on this portal to enhance the value of FGTS destination trails to Florida tourism.

Strategy 4.1: Coordinate the FGTS to advance Florida's economic development and tourism.

Objective 4.1.1: Advance the Florida Five Year Strategic Plan for Economic Development by coordinating implementation of the FGTS with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and local and regional economic development organizations.

Objective 4.1.2: Advance VISIT FLORIDA's Destination Marketing Plan by expanding and supporting Trails.VISITFLORIDA.com and related initiatives that promote destination trails within the FGTS.

- 2. Health:** The FGTS provides tremendous opportunity to improve the health of Floridians by providing outdoor recreation and alternative transportation that support active lifestyles. A critical factor in improving community health is through increased access to opportunities for physical activity. A well planned, designed and managed system of trails and greenways connecting to and through cities and towns is an important means to do that. The physical and mental health benefits of walking, bicycling, horseback riding, and paddling, including the experience of nature and community, are well documented. The FGTS provides a return on investment by helping to reduce the public health costs of diseases and physical ailments stemming from inactivity and obesity, and increasing the ability of Floridians to live healthy lives.

The FGTS supports the Florida State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) with particular emphasis on advancing the Community Redevelopment and Partnerships Strategic Issue Area, and Goal CR2 to "Build and revitalize communities so people can live healthy lives." The objectives below are in support of the SHIP, and in specific fulfillment of SHIP Objective CR1.1.4 to incorporate health related objectives as part of this plan.

Strategy 4.2: Coordinate the FGTS as a means to strengthen Florida's health by providing greater access to active outdoor recreation and human-powered transportation opportunities.

Objective 4.2.1: Advance the Florida State Health Improvement Plan, in coordination with the Florida Department of Health, by increasing access to and awareness of the FGTS.

Objective 4.2.2: Coordinate with local health agencies and organizations to encourage implementation of the FGTS as a strategy to improve community health.

- 3. Transportation:** Trails and greenways have become increasingly important in transportation planning and development. One of the most obvious Florida examples of this integration is the Suncoast Trail which was developed in tandem with the limited

access Suncoast Parkway. Other trails are being retrofitted into existing transportation rights of way such as the Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail and the Palatka to St. Augustine State Trail. On a broader scale, trails are a significant component of local and regional bicycle and pedestrian plans, which in turn support state transportation planning.

The 2060 Florida Transportation Plan (2060 FTP) defines Florida's future transportation vision and identifies goals, objectives, and strategies to guide transportation decisions for the next 50 years. Among its long range goals are to "Make transportation decisions to support and enhance livable communities" and "Improve mobility and connectivity for people and freight." The FGTS supports these goals by providing safe, clean transportation opportunities, and by connecting to and becoming an integral part of multimodal transportation systems. The 2060 FTP mutually supports the FGTS by providing for coordination of "transportation investments with other public and private decisions to foster livable communities."

Another important long term goal of the 2060 FTP is to "Make transportation decisions to promote environmental stewardship." Critically, this supports the FGTS by minimizing the impact of transportation infrastructure on ecological greenways that connect conservation hubs and serve as wildlife corridors.

Strategy 4.3: Strengthen the linkage between the planning and development of trails and transportation to mutually advance priorities of the FGTS Plan and transportation plans at state, regional and local levels.

Objective 4.3.1: Advance the 2060 Florida Transportation Plan and the Future Corridors Initiative by coordinating the FGTS with the Florida Department of Transportation to provide multimodal transportation that is safe and accessible for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objective 4.3.2: Support the implementation of transportation alternatives, including safe routes to schools, through coordination of FGTS priorities with the Florida Department of Transportation and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).

Objective 4.3.3: Support the implementation of scenic highways and byways that coincide with the FGTS in coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation, the Florida Scenic Highways Advisory Committee and Scenic Highway Corridor Management Entities.

Objective 4.3.4: Coordinate the FGTS to support the recommendations of the Florida Bicycle and Pedestrian Partnership Council.

Objective 4.3.5: Coordinate with the Florida Department of Transportation, MPOs and other appropriate agencies to minimize transportation impacts on ecological greenway connectivity.

4. **Recreation:** With its temperate climate and subtropical beauty, Florida offers an incredible array of recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. To maximize the value of individually planned and managed public lands that provide outdoor recreation, it is critical to integrate them into a larger recreation and conservation framework. The FGTS provides that framework as it connects and provides access to hubs that offer recreational opportunities, ranging from expansive national forests to small community parks.

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) serves as the centerpiece of Florida's outdoor recreation planning efforts. Among SCORP's intended goals are to increase public access to and coordinate connections between recreational opportunities. Since the FGTS plan plays an instrumental role in both of these regards, it serves as an integral state-level companion to SCORP.

Strategy 4.4: Coordinate the FGTS to enhance public access to and provide connections between Florida's diverse recreational opportunities.

Objective 4.4.1: Advance the SCORP by coordinating the FGTS plan to connect and increase access to public recreational opportunities.

Objective 4.4.2: Promote the FGTS Plan and SCORP as companion efforts for state level outdoor recreation planning.

Objective 4.4.3: Coordinate with the Florida Outdoor Recreation Coalition, the Florida Recreation and Parks Association and other related non-profits regarding recreational efforts and initiatives that advance and are supported by the FGTS.

5. **Conservation:** The Ecological Greenways component of the FGTS is critical to protecting wildlife, conserving natural systems and establishing connectivity between natural areas. Just as trails require tremendous coordination because of their linear nature and the jurisdictions they cross, so too ecological greenways necessitate a collective effort to adequately plan and coordinate. A protected Ecological Greenways system is integral to providing for a comprehensive conservation network.

Leading the effort to define a statewide conservation network of wildlife and natural areas are Florida's Cooperative Conservation Blueprint (CCB) and State Wildlife Action Plan. A leading purpose of the CCB is to:

Create a compelling natural systems vision of what Florida could look like if steps are taken to conserve the critical environmental resources and working agricultural lands that the state's wildlife depend upon and that provide ecosystem services and quality of life for the benefit of all Floridians. (FWC 2010)

The FGTS is important to advancing and implementing the CCB's natural systems vision for Florida. The CCB builds on the Critical Lands and Waters Identification Project (CLIP) which incorporates the FGTS Ecological Greenways. The update of FGTS Ecological Greenways data is now funded through a State Wildlife Grant to help implement the State Wildlife Action Plan.

Strategy 4.5: Coordinate the FGTS to protect, connect and conserve Florida's wildlife and natural systems.

Objective 4.5.1: Advance Florida's Cooperative Conservation Blueprint by coordinating implementation of FGTS Ecological Greenways with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and other partners to protect wildlife and conserve natural systems.

Objective 4.5.2: Support implementation of the Florida State Wildlife Action Plan through coordination of data updates to and establishment of FGTS Ecological Greenways.

6. **Community and Regional Planning:** Local government and regional plans are critical tools for establishing connected systems of greenways and trails. Many of Florida's communities and all of the state's regional planning councils have incorporated greenways and trails strategies and policies in their plans. Several communities have also developed specific greenways and trails master plans. Much of the success of projects in the state are a result of the seeds that are planted at the local and regional planning level.

From local to state level, the FGTS plan can tie together local and regional greenways and trails plans, encourage them where they don't exist, and support them where they do. The FGTS Plan ties these efforts together into a comprehensive statewide vision.

There is great opportunity to advance greenways and trails by more fully linking local and regional plans to the FGTS.

Strategy 4.6: Strengthen the linkages among greenways and trails planning activities at all levels to support and advance the FGTS.

Objective 4.6.1: Work with local governments, regional planning councils, metropolitan planning organizations, and the Department of Economic Opportunity to encourage adoption of greenways and trails master plans and comprehensive plan policies that recognize, support and advance the FGTS.

Objective 4.6.2: Maintain and provide, on FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com, examples of local greenways and trails master plans and comprehensive plan policies that serve as models for Florida communities.

Objective 4.6.3: Pursue new opportunities for integrating the FGTS in planning efforts at all levels.

7. **Partnerships:** The establishment, management and promotion of the FGTS are conducted by many agency and organizational partners from the local to federal level. Though these entities may all manage sections of the FGTS, they often have very distinct missions. For example, the FGTS runs through areas as varied as remote wilderness in expansive national forests to abandoned rail corridors in highly urban communities. The managers of such places have markedly different purposes and goals. It is important to promote guidelines for safe, accessible trails and greenways that are balanced with the need of individual partners to protect and further their own missions.

The Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) is a major component of the FGTS that serves as a model for working to balance these issues. A coalition of agencies, led by the United States Forest Service, the Florida Trail Association, and the Office of Greenways and Trails, partnered to develop the 2012 FNST 5-Year Strategic Plan. That document includes goals and strategies that are instructive to promoting coordinated management among diverse partners. The plan's partnerships goal is for each of the FNST land managers to "proactively contribute to Trail development, maintenance and promotion of their segment as part of a larger whole." This is likewise a worthy approach for the FGTS.

Volunteers are another critical partner in establishing and maintaining the FGTS. Many volunteers and volunteer organizations have supported tremendous progress in the

advancement and stewardship of FGTS trails. The Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway (CFG), a major corridor in the FGTS, is emblematic of the contribution and cooperation of volunteer user groups. Hikers, mountain bikers, paddlers and equestrians work side by side to establish and maintain trails in support of the CFG's overall recreational mission. It is important to coordinate with volunteers like these, support their work, and recognize their effort.

Strategy 4.7: Coordinate and assist partnerships that advance and promote safe, accessible, well managed greenways and trails and the FGTS as a whole.

Objective 4.7.1: By December 31, 2013, develop, through the Florida Greenways and Trails Council, Guiding Principles for consistent establishment, management and promotion of the FGTS by partners.

Objective 4.7.2: Implement Guiding Principles in coordination with partners to support consistent development, management and promotion of the FGTS, including assistance with access to funding, guidance and equipment for maintenance.

Objective 4.7.3: Encourage partners to support efforts to close gaps and complete FGTS priorities, to fund the development and management of greenways and trails, and to restore and manage public lands and waters to implement the FGTS.

Objective 4.7.4: Encourage agencies and organizations that develop and manage components of the FGTS to incorporate reference to the FGTS in management and operational plans.

Objective 4.7.5: Promote the Florida National Scenic Trail 5-Year Strategic Plan as a representative model for coordinating FGTS project partnerships.

Objective 4.7.6: Coordinate with volunteer organizations to support and recognize volunteers, and increase volunteer capacity for FGTS development and maintenance.