



Florida Greenways and Trails Council (FGTC) Unpaved Trail Guidelines Committee February Meeting Minutes



PUBLIC MEETING: March 11, 2025
TIME: 2:00 pm
LOCATION: Virtual, Microsoft Teams

FGTC Members in Attendance:

- Cyndi Stevenson – Speaker of the House-Appointed Trail User
- Morgan Wilbanks – Governor-Appointed Greenway User

Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) Staff in Attendance:

- Steven Carter, Regional Coordinator
- John Groves, Regional Coordinator

Other FDEP Staff in Attendance:

- Katie Slattery, Office of General Council

Members of the Public and Presenters in Attendance:

- Tim Baylie – Volusia County Parks, Recreation & Culture
- Joyce Papp – Southern Trailriders Association
- Nancy Stephens – North Florida Back Country Horsemen, Back Country Horsemen of FL
- Ed O'Connor – Cross Florida Greenway Equestrians
- Douglas "Doug" Crenshaw – Advent Health, Bike/Walk Central Florida

Sunshine Law

Following approval of the agenda and Committee member introductions, *Katie Slattery* reminded the Committee that the Florida Greenways and Trails Council is bound by the Sunshine Law (s. 286.011, F.S.), which states that any gathering of two or more Council/Committee members to discuss Council/Committee business must be scheduled and open to the public with proper notice and minutes/recordings taken.

February Meeting Minutes

Approved by Committee members with notes to correct the attendee list.

Unpaved Trail Guidelines Discussion:

Objectives and introduction

-Committee members first discussed adding a section of Trail Maintenance to the table of contents.

Tim Baylie: Is it going to focus on the level of service, tasks to be included, costs, etc.?

Steven Carter: That will be up to the committee to decide. Keep in mind that these are generalized guidelines so they shouldn't be too specific.

Doug Crenshaw: Because maintenance varies with each type of trail, maybe it should be mentioned within those sections with more specifics. In a broad sense, it is important to understand who is performing the maintenance during planning.

Committee members agreed with these points and decided to recommend including maintenance guidelines under each trail type.

-The Committee then discussed expanding and editing the preexisting verbiage on 'trail diversity' within Objectives and Introduction.

Doug Crenshaw, Cyndi Stevenson and Tim Baylie discussed e-bikes and similar devices as an example of an emerging user group. Their use of trails has raised issues regarding safety and trail damage; however, they are an example of a user type that shouldn't be ignored. They discussed a few solutions, including trail design aspects, trail products and separate trails.

-*Nancy Stephens:* Asked if the Guidelines suggest that trails should only be planned with professional trail builders? She explained that she doesn't want to limit construction of new trails by suggesting that.

Doug Crenshaw, Nancy Stephens, Tim Baylie and Tim Baylie continued this discussion, and the Committee recommended adjusting that verbiage in the final paragraph of the Objectives and Introduction section of the *Unpaved Non-Motorized Trail Guidelines* (2017).

Trail Accessibility

-The Committee continued their discussion on Objectives and Introduction by recommending updates such as mentioning 'accompanying animals' and including references to additional trail guidelines from other agencies/organizations.

-*Tim Baylie:* Suggested including that access to trails should also be accessible through proper driveways, parking lots, signage, etc.

The rest of the Committee members joined the conversation, and they recommended noting that attention should be given to these connecting facilities within the guidelines.

Pre-Construction Considerations

Overview

-In the overview of the Pre-Construction Considerations section, Committee members recommended adding an example to the aesthetics guidelines in addition to expanding the guidelines for bridges.

-Committee members also recommended adding paragraphs for 'Current Trends' in addition to trail 'Education and Consideration for Other Users.'

-*Nancy Stephens* suggested adding guidelines for a user-reporting system to the 'Monitoring' paragraph would be beneficial.

-*Tim Baylie* and *Cyndi Stevenson* continued this discussion and the Committee decided to recommend adding a statement on maintenance/emergency/etc. user-reporting.

-The Committee continued their discussion by suggesting edits and additions to the 'Public Lands Use,' 'Rural/Primitive/Low Volume Trails' and 'Urban/High Volume Trails' paragraphs.

Cost Efficiency

-The Committee added additional examples to the 'Rehabilitation of Existing Trails' paragraph in addition to discussing the addition of a paragraph on 'Return of Investment.'

Tim Baylie: Recommended adding a statement about considering the expected maintenance requirements in terms of cost efficiency.

Environmental and Wildlife Protections

-*Nancy Stephens*: Recommended the addition of 'switchbacks' to the 'Drainage and Topography' paragraph.

-The Committee recommended the addition of 'length' to the 'Location and Route' paragraph.

Tim Baylie: added on by suggesting that 'connectivity' is an important factor to include as well and *Doug Crenshaw* agreed.

-The Committee discussed encouraging interpretive signage within the 'Viewsheds' paragraph with edits to the 'Natural Buffers' paragraph.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Confirm Next Meeting Date

The Committee will meet next, virtually, on April 1, 2025. For virtual meeting link and agenda, visit <https://floridadep.gov/parks/ogt/content/florida-greenways-and-trails-council>.

MEETING ADJOURN

Called to adjourn by Steven Carter.