



# The Crescent

THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

Fall 2006  
Vol. XII No. 2

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**DESIGN:**  
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**PRINTING:**  
Ecoprint  
printed using 100% wind power  
on 100% postconsumer recycled  
paper, process chlorine free



## 20<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary Annual Meeting

The CCCT marked its 20th year anniversary on June 12 by hosting a celebration for members and trail supporters at the Chevy Chase Town Hall. Over 100 members and guests came to express their thanks to the Coalition for its 20 years of hard work to establish, protect, and enhance the Capital Crescent Trail. Numerous elected officials and Park staff came, as well as "old timers" who had helped found the Coalition. Outgoing Chair Ernie Brooks gave special recognition to individuals who have made particularly significant contributions to the CCT (see detailed list below). Incoming Chair Peter Gray presented Ernie an engraved plaque with gavel to mark Ernie's four years of service as CCCT Chair.

The CCCT is proud of its achievements over the past 20 years, but much remains to be done to complete the trail and to improve it. We appreciate the strong support we have received from our members over the years. We will continue to need your support in coming years as we continue to face some especially challenging issues.

## 20 Key Individuals For The First 20 Years

**Peter Harnik**  
Founder CCCT; Co-founder Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC)

**David Burwell**  
Co-founder RTC; early supporter of CCCT

**Chris Brown**  
"Pre-Coalition" organizer; 4-term Chair

**Henri Bartholomot**  
Founding Board member; 2-term Chair; chaired Montgomery County Interim Trail Task Force which led to the opening of the Interim Trail (aka, Georgetown Branch Trail)

**Kingdon Gould**  
Developer/philanthropist; paid CSX \$10,000,000 for DC section of CCT, securing it for later transfer to NPS

**Bruce Adams**  
Montgomery County Council (MCC), early supporter for County acquisition of the CSX Right-of-Way Ike

**Ike Legget & Betty Ann Kranke**  
Early supporters on MCC; led MCC endorsement of Interim Trail development & Rock Creek trestle funding

**John Dugger**  
Member, Joint Trail Safety Task Force; originator of "Bells & Whistles" events; 3-term Chair

**Pat Baptiste, Bill Gries, Scott Hall**  
Individuals most responsible for the River Road bridge; Pat as a member of the Planning Board, Bill as a Key staff member in the Parks Department, and Scott as 2-term Chair

**Pam Browning**  
Led grassroots petition drive that was key to opening the Bethesda tunnel

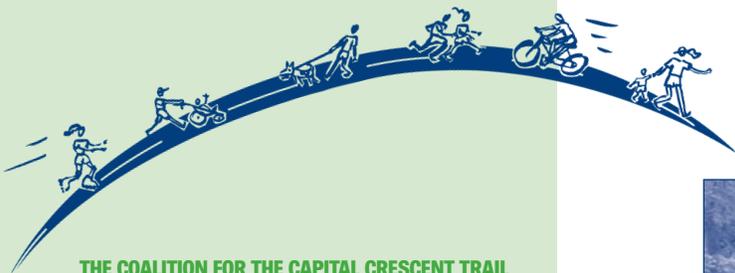
**Kindy French**  
Extreme generosity in support of the CCT

**Charlie Wellander**  
19 years of collecting, cataloging, and depositing thousands of individual contributions to the Coalition

**Wayne Phyllaier, Doug Duncan, Ira Shesser**  
Key individuals in the opening of the Rock Creek Trestle: Wayne as 3-term CCCT Chair; Doug as County Executive; and Ira as a community activist, and longtime CCT supporter

**Nancy Floreen**  
Leading MCC in securing funding for long overdue Interim Trail repairs

**Ernie Brooks**  
Major fundraising efforts as 7-term Treasurer; led Coalition involvement in the Georgetown University Boathouse issue; 4-term Chair



**THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL**

Board Members 2006

Officers At-Large

Peter Gray, Chair

Ernie Brooks, Vice-Chair

Wayne Phyllaier, Treasurer

Jennifer Longworth, Secretary

Charlie Wellander, Asst. to the Treasurer

Pat Baptiste

John Dugger

Jenny Sue Dunner

Isaac Hantman

Andy O'Hare



**The Dalecarlia Tunnel carries the Trail under MacArthur Blvd. One of the many historical special features of the Trail.**

The Crescent is published three times a board year (June-June) by the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail (CCCT), P.O. Box 30703, Bethesda, MD 20824, phone (202) 234-4874.

CCCT is a non-profit citizens' group promoting a first class development of the 11.2 mile rail-to-trail conversion from Georgetown, D.C. to Silver Spring, MD for multi-purpose, recreational use.

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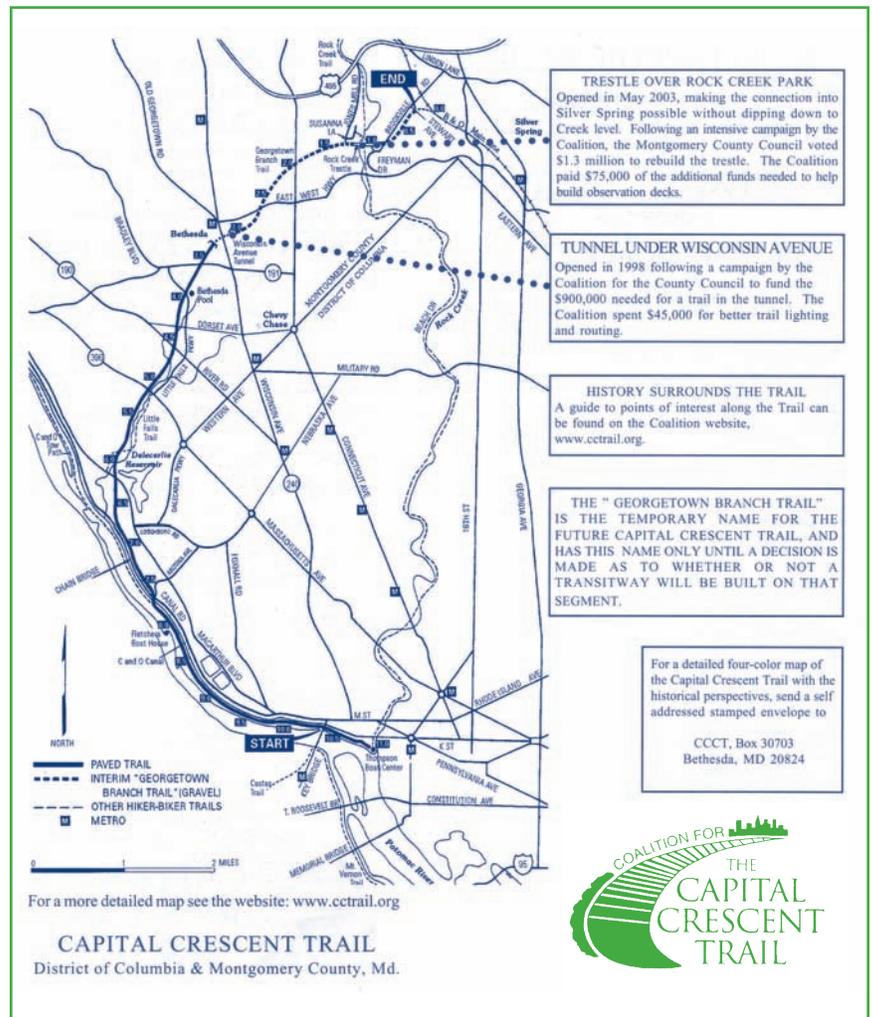
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We request that all submissions for *The Crescent* be sent to the post office box or e-mail noted below.

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**Bethesda, MD 20824**  
**202-234-4874**

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE:**  
[www.cctrail.org](http://www.cctrail.org)  
**for trail updates and events!**



# National Park Service Issues Environmental Assessment On Georgetown University Boathouse; CCCT Issues Critical Response

The National Park Service (NPS) finally issued its Environmental Assessment (EA) on the impacts of constructing an enormous, private, university (GU) boathouse inside the C&O Canal National Historic Park. The proposed boathouse site is immediately upstream of the Washington Canoe Club (WCC), and borders the CCT for 490 feet. This article addresses a few highlights of this multi-issue, complex subject. More details can be found at [http://www.cctrail.org/CCT\\_News\\_and\\_Events.htm#npsea](http://www.cctrail.org/CCT_News_and_Events.htm#npsea)

At 530 pages, the EA rivaled the enormity of the proposed boathouse. The CCCT finds the EA so biased towards a pre-ordained conclusion to build the boathouse that it is totally without merit. The EA references certain documents when they support the desired conclusion, but ignores them when they do not. The EA conclusions are contradicted by the very data presented in its findings. It includes documents with false assumptions to help bolster the desired result. Rather than making an objective evaluation of what can be done without causing significant damage to the C&O Canal Park, it takes at face value what the University specifies as its "minimum" needs, and justifies the sacrifices of the public based on those requirements.

While CCCT believes there are some public benefits if NPS acquires GU's upriver property that borders the trail for 1070 feet (located approximately a mile up the CCT from the Georgetown trailhead) and extinguishing the access easement to it, the rationale for a land swap to accomplish this must be to protect the park. Given that the EA only implies, and in no way demonstrates any damage to the Park from Option-D (no build), while clearly demonstrating that Alternatives A, B, and C would each cause significant adverse impacts on the C&O Park and the CCT, we must conclude that the only option presented in the EA that doesn't present a net environmental loss to the public is the no-build option. We do feel that there may be designs for this site using a significantly smaller building(s), which could alleviate many of the adverse effects identified in this EA, such as impacts on parkland views, dangerously high increases in river flow velocities during flooding, and crowding on the very busy gateway section of the CCT.

We currently await a decision by NPS on the EA. We understand the NPS options to be: the No Build option if it feels the EA

revealed significant environmental risks associated with construction; or construction alternatives A, B, or C if the EA leads to a Finding of No Significant Impact.

If this project is to go forward, we believe a comprehensive and unbiased Environmental Impact Statement must be generated for the entire Georgetown Waterfront Park and Boathouse Zone, so a proper evaluation of impacts to the C&O Park and future Waterfront Park can be studied to assure the public's use and enjoyment of both of these federally protected parks.

*Examples of things we took issue with in the EA include:*

- 1) Nowhere in the EA are the impacts of the construction process on the CCT or the towpath addressed.
- 2) The proposed structure's 280 foot long monolithic wall between the CCT and the river/woods, placing the trail in a canyon between the canal embankment and boathouse, is never addressed. Due to this omission, alternative designs are not examined.
- 3) The EA conclusion states hydraulic impact analysis showed only a "very slightly" increased river velocity during flood events at the canal embankment, while the data presented in the accompanying table showed an increase in those velocities between 40%-100%. The embankment has failed at a number of locations in recent years, and the noted increases of already high velocities against the base of this structure in this area certainly puts the canal, and the trail, at risk.
- 4) In addressing the alternative site east of 34th Street, the EA states, "this would require modifying the Georgetown Waterfront Park Plan", which was approved in 1987. What it doesn't mention is the 1987 plan called for a small boathouse with a footprint of 4,000 square feet on the proposed site, as opposed to the nearly 19,000 square foot footprint in the current proposal; and that the boathouse site should extend no more than 1000' upriver from Key Bridge, while the proposed site extends some 350' beyond that limit. It appears the 1987 plan can be arbitrarily changed to suit the whims of the NPS, but it must be absolutely adhered to if that helps defend their position.

***For our complete response to the EA, see [www.cctrail.org](http://www.cctrail.org).***

## County Council funds Interim CCT repairs. DPWT trying to get the erosion problem under control.

This spring the Montgomery County Council funded \$200K in its Operating Budget to repair the badly eroded section of the Interim CCT east of Rock Creek, and to study how to correct the storm water drainage in that area. This came after an intense advocacy effort from the CCCT, with strong support from the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) and Montgomery County Bicycle Advocates (MOBIKE). **We owe Councilmember Floreen special thanks for her strong leadership on the T&E Committee to support this badly needed repair.**

But early efforts by the County's Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) to repair the trail did not last. DPWT graded and resurfaced the trail east of the trestle in late June, only to see most of the work washed away by the heavy rains on the week of July 4. At the time this newsletter went to print this section of the Interim CCT remained hazardous for cycling, with pockets of deep loose gravel, areas of exposed sub base, and large stones and ruts.

DPWT is now trying to find a plan for a repair that will last. CCCT would like to see DPWT learn from the National Park Service experience with crushed stone trails. The National Park Service mixes some clay with the crushed stone for a more erosion resistant trail surface. Clay acts as a binder to hold crushed stone in place. This material is used for the C&O Canal towpath and for trails on the National Mall.

We also expect the DPWT study of the storm water drain system in the area to result in better storm drains. Storm drains on adjacent properties are failing, and this is the source of much of the storm water runoff that regularly damages the trail.

CCCT will continue to work this issue with Montgomery County until a lasting repair is completed and the trail east of Rock Creek is safe and inviting to all. Conditions may have changed since this Newsletter went to print. Check our [www.cctrail.org](http://www.cctrail.org) website "News and Events" for current conditions on the Interim CCT.

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"Let no one say, and say to your shame –  
All was beauty here, until you came."

**The Capital Crescent Trail is beautiful and has been nearly litter-free.** The National Park Service and the Montgomery County Departments of Parks and of Transportation have no regularly scheduled clean-ups of the Trail, due to personnel limitations, and there are no trash receptacles along the CCT.

Therefore, it bears repeating: **Litter begets litter.**

**There are a number of unsung heroes who pick up litter on a regular basis, and they do a great service to the beauty and maintenance of the Trail. Those efforts are very much appreciated.**

Carrying a plastic grocery bag with you when you're out on the Trail and taking your trash with you makes their efforts easier.

**Please make the Trail a better place. Consider picking up someone else's litter.**



## CCCT Volunteers conduct a trail traffic survey.



The CCCT is performing a trail traffic survey in cooperation with the Montgomery County Parks Department. Documenting the heavy use of the CCT is an effective way to convince public officials to protect and enhance the trail. Trail use data will also encourage decision makers to give the CCT a high priority for repair and maintenance. The last trail use survey was taken in 2000.

CCCT volunteers began to count trail traffic after Labor Day. The survey will continue through September. Traffic counts are being taken at five locations – at the Georgetown trailhead, at the Brookway Drive access at milepost 5.5, at the Bethesda trailhead, at the Elm Street Park access near mile 3.0, and near Grubb Road at approx. mile 0.8. Volunteers are taking one-hour long traffic counts during weekday, evening, and weekend time periods.

CCCT added the Georgetown Branch Trailhead to the list of locations being surveyed. The Montgomery County Parks Department did not include this location in its survey request because it is under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. But we have a strong interest in having a good trail traffic count in D.C., especially now as important decisions are being made about a Georgetown University Boathouse and the Georgetown Waterfront Park that will have a big impact on the CCT. Trail traffic has not been measured in D.C. before now.

CCCT volunteers are giving a total of 100 hours to complete the systematic group of traffic counts needed for the survey protocol. The protocol was developed by the Montgomery County Department of Parks in 1996 for the first survey, and was used again in the year 2000 survey. CCCT recruited volunteers, assigned their locations and time periods, and provided trail traffic survey forms and instructions. CCCT is collecting the data from volunteers and will share preliminary results on its website and in the next Crescent Newsletter. All data will be given to the Mont. Co. Park Department for detailed processing and formal reporting.

We may need a few new volunteers in early October to replace traffic counts canceled on rain days in September. If you would like to participate in this project, email us at [survey@cctrail.org](mailto:survey@cctrail.org).

Please designate  
**THE COALITION FOR THE  
CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL**  
In the United Way/Combined  
Federal Campaign (CFC)  
of the National Capital Area.  
CCCT's CFC NUMBER IS 7221.

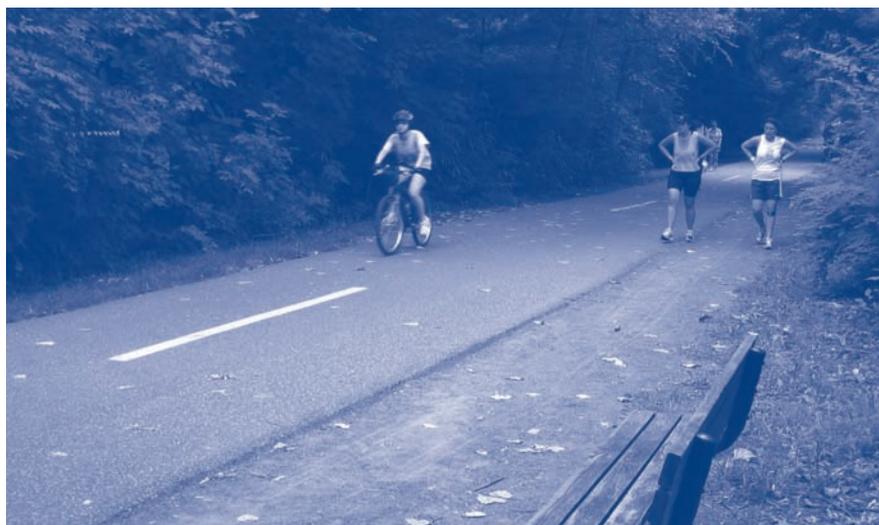
### *Are you thinking of becoming a CCT commuter?*

**Hundreds of cyclists use the CCT  
every day to get to work.**

**It is a great way to lose some  
weight and lighten your gasoline  
bill. The Washington Area Bicyclist**

**Association has a commuter  
assistance program to help new  
cycling commuters get started.**

**See "Getting There By Bike" at  
their website, [www.waba.org](http://www.waba.org).**



## Longtime Board Member Departs

**After 10 years on the Board**, 4 of them as Vice-Chair, and the last 8 as Editor-in-Chief of our newsletter, *The Crescent*, John Campanile is hanging up his hiking shoes. Well, not really – he's just ending his service to the Board, but will continue his almost daily use of the trail, and we're sure he'll continue to keep us apprised of what's going on along the CCT. We thank John for his great service to the Board, and the CCT community at large. Under his direction *The Crescent* has developed into a first class newsletter, and his personal reporting from the trail has been most helpful to the Board. We will miss his dry wit (and all the snacks) he brought to our monthly meetings, and wish John the best in his "retirement".

## Outgoing Chair's Comments

I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their tremendous support over these past four years. It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve as Chair of such a dedicated and motivated group, including the Board and the general membership. I thank the Board for their tolerance of my numerous "overruns" at our monthly meetings, and extend special thanks to our Vice-Chair, Peter Gray, for stepping in as acting-Chair, on extremely short notice, earlier this year. Peter did a great job then, and that bodes well for the Coalition as his Chairmanship begins. I am so pleased to have Peter follow me as Chair, and know he will also benefit from a Board with more than 80 years of combined experience representing the 2200 members of the Coalition, as well as the many thousands of users of our beloved Capital Crescent Trail.

*Best wishes to all, and Happy Trails,*  
**Ernie Brooks**

## Lot 31 Development

The surface parking lot at the Bethesda/Woodmont Avenue trailhead in Bethesda will soon see major redevelopment. The County has selected PNHoffman/Stonebridge Development to construct an underground public parking garage and a multi-story condominium apartment complex with first floor retail space. The redevelopment will also reconfigure this intersection to improve the ability of trail users to cross this busy intersection.

CCCT Representatives have met with the developers several times to press the needs of trail users as the details of the project are finalized. Among other amenities for trail users there will be a dedicated bike drop-off, direct trail access from Woodmont Avenue and the garage, and oversize elevators to carry bikes directly to the trail near the Kiosk area. The location and design of bike lockers are currently under discussion as is a possible "Bike Depot" within the retail complex.

The redevelopment is complicated and requires, rezoning and other approvals. The Coalition testified in writing at the Planning Board hearing in June, and continues to follow and monitor the development as it proceeds.. At this point, while we mourn the loss of the surface parking, we are optimistic that the project will be well designed for trail users.

## River Road Plaza

As the Minkoff Company has not seen fit to implement long standing plans to build this Plaza for trail users, Montgomery County has terminated its agreement with Minkoff.

The County ordered Minkoff to cease parking private vehicles on the County property adjacent to the trail and will post no parking signs shortly and may place physical barriers to parking if necessary.

The County Parks Department has met with CCCT and Local Civic Associations representatives to begin planning a public/private partnership to improve this trailhead . Others are pressing the County to remove the macadam so that efforts can begin to turn this area into a grassy park with trail amenities. The progress is painfully slow, but we are confident that we are headed in the right direction, and that Trail users will eventually have the access point and rest stop promised to us over ten years ago.

**For Slowpokes:**

- Stay **ALERT** and to the right
- Go **SINGLE FILE** if trail is crowded
- **LOOK BEHIND** you from time to time
- **THANK** 'passers' for their warning
- **Shout to non-warning passers,**  
"Please call when passing"

**For Fastpokes:**

- Be responsible for "slowpokes"
- **Adjust your speed to Trail conditions**
- **WARN BEFORE PASSING**
- **Pass on the left; give 2 feet clearance**

**Trail safety and courtesy means:**

- **ALL USERS** should stay to the right side of the trail except when passing.
- **Protect your children and pets; keep them to your right!**
- **Passing other trail users to their left, allowing at least two feet clearance.**
- **Always look ahead and behind before passing.**
- **Give an audible voice or bell warning at least two seconds before passing.**
- **Travel at a safe speed in a consistent and predictable manner.**
- **Keep all pets on a short leash (required by law).**
- **Move off the trail when stopped to allow others to pass.**
- **Yield to others when entering or crossing the trail.**
- **Use lights and reflectors after dusk or before dawn.**
- **Watch trail signs and your speed**

Now you may donate/renew with your credit card via the CCCT web site!  
Visit [www.cctrail.org](http://www.cctrail.org) to use our secured method.

**Yes! I want to help complete the Capital Crescent Trail and make it safer and more pleasant to use!**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

NEW MEMBER     RENEWING MEMBER

**INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS:**

- \$10 Basic Individual
- \$30 Contributor
- \$60 Path Finder
- \$100 Patron
- \$200 Trail Blazer
- \$500 Benefactor

A DETAILED FOUR-COLOR MAP OF THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL WITH HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES IS AVAILABLE AS A FOLDING POCKET MAP.

**Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:**  
**Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail**  
**P.O. Box 30703**  
**Bethesda, MD 20824**

THIS MAP IS FREE TO ALL NEW MEMBERS.

Make your tax-deductible contribution checks payable to: The Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail.

Mail to the address above. Or, visit our web site to donate/renew with a credit card.

**Thanks for your efforts on behalf of the Trail! Here's an additional contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.**

Membership is good for one year from the 15th day of the month that you join.

We are an all-volunteer organization.

I am interested in volunteering, contact me for:     Advocacy     Events     Trail Maintenance

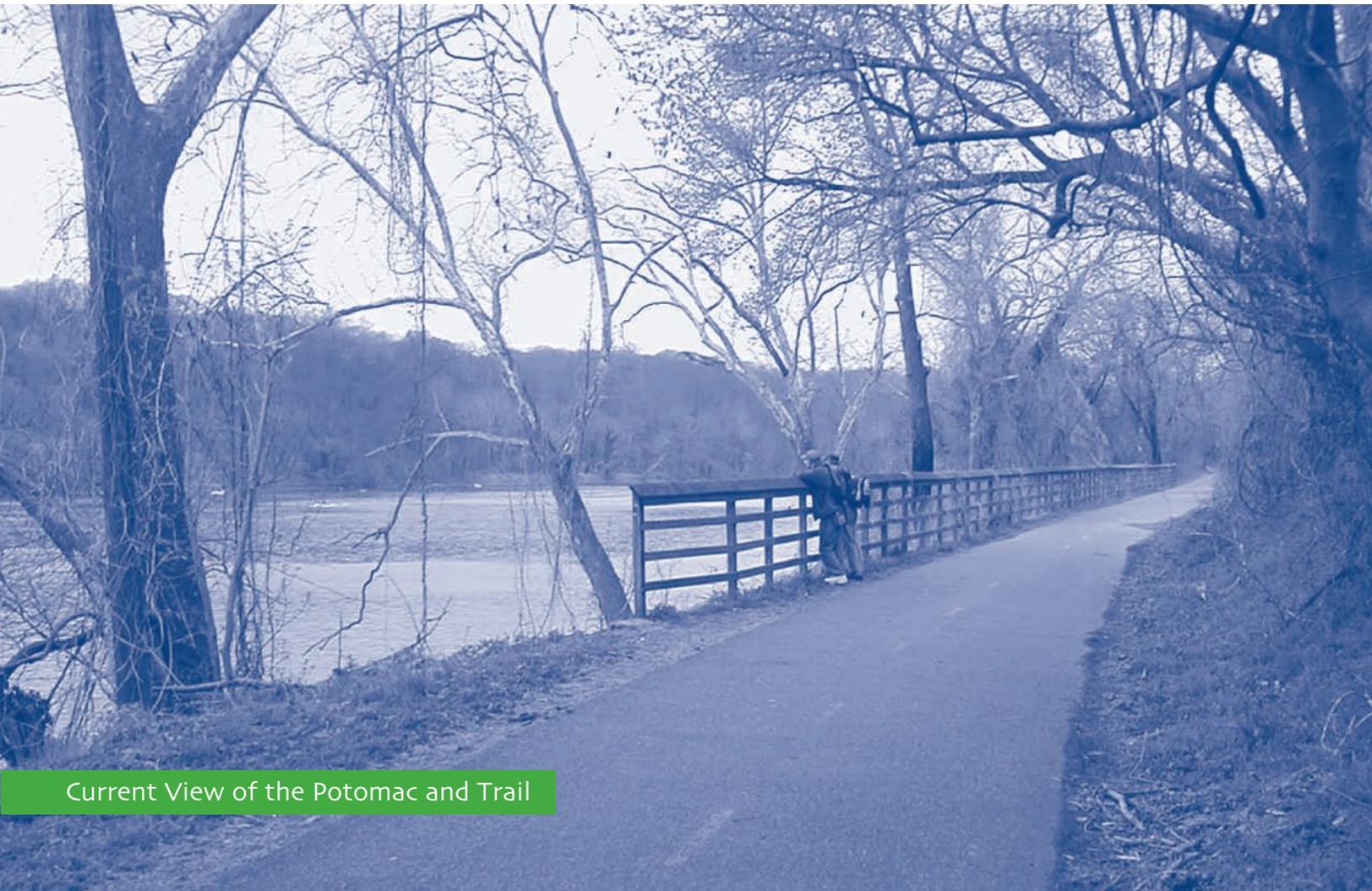
We do not share our membership list with any organization except our affiliate organization, the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. CCCT is exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code and is qualified to receive tax-deductible contributions.

**VISIT OUR WEB SITE, [www.cctrail.org](http://www.cctrail.org), FOR ACTION ALERTS and TRAIL UPDATES.**



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Current View of the Potomac and Trail