



The Crescent

THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 3 Hope Endures for a better Trail east of Rock Creek
- 3 River Road Plaza
- 4 Bethesda Air Rights Building Tunnel Graffiti Update
- 4 Council Member Ervin Walk- Eastern Trail
- 5 Volunteers Count Trail Traffic

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Safety is NO Accident *Courtesy is Contagious*

A "Letter" to Capital Crescent Trail Members

As a result of your hard work and generous contributions our trail is a beautiful and heavily used success. Bikers, bladders, joggers, runners and walkers, commuters and recreational users of ALL SPEEDS and AGES enjoy its 'car-free' park like setting. Unfortunately 'car-free' does not mean 'danger-free' and success has brought congestion and increased danger to the trail. Serious accidents involving hospital convalescence and police investigation have occurred.

Our trail has over 1 million users per year, is quite congested at times, and has users moving as slowly as 1-2 miles an hour up to 20 – 25 miles an hour. We are experiencing an increasing number of serious accidents on the Trail and we urge ALL users to exercise greater caution, courtesy and alertness.

Please follow the safety tips below:

All Users:

- STAY ALERT, TURN OFF YOUR IPOD
- Stay to the right
- Do NOT block the trail when stopping
- Do NOT block the trail by going 3 or 4 abreast
- Look behind you from time to time
- Pass ONLY after looking behind you
- Pass ONLY after a loud warning
- Pass ONLY on the left
- Pass ONLY if you have a 2 foot clearance
- When dark, wear reflective clothes
- When dark, carry a light
- Yield to others when entering the trail
- Yield to others at crosswalks
- STOP at stop signs, they indicate dangerous cross car traffic

Parents:

- PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN, keep them to the right!
- Do not let your children ramble freely across the trail
- Stay immediately behind or to the left of your children

Bikers and Bladders:

In addition to the above:

- Keep safe, reasonable speed
- Adjust speed to trail congestion and surface conditions
- Be predictable
- Wear a Helmet
- Warn with a loud bell, whistle or voice at least 2 seconds BEFORE overtaking someone

Hikers and Walkers:

- TURN OFF YOUR IPOD
- Do NOT READ while on the trail
- If warned before being passed, call out, "Thanks for the warning"
- If NOT warned before being passed, politely call out, "Please warn before passing"

Pet Owners:

- Keep your pet on a very short leash (required by law!)
- Treat your pet as you would a child

Safety is NO Accident

Courtesy is Contagious

THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

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

CONTACT THE CCCT:

contact@cctrail.org

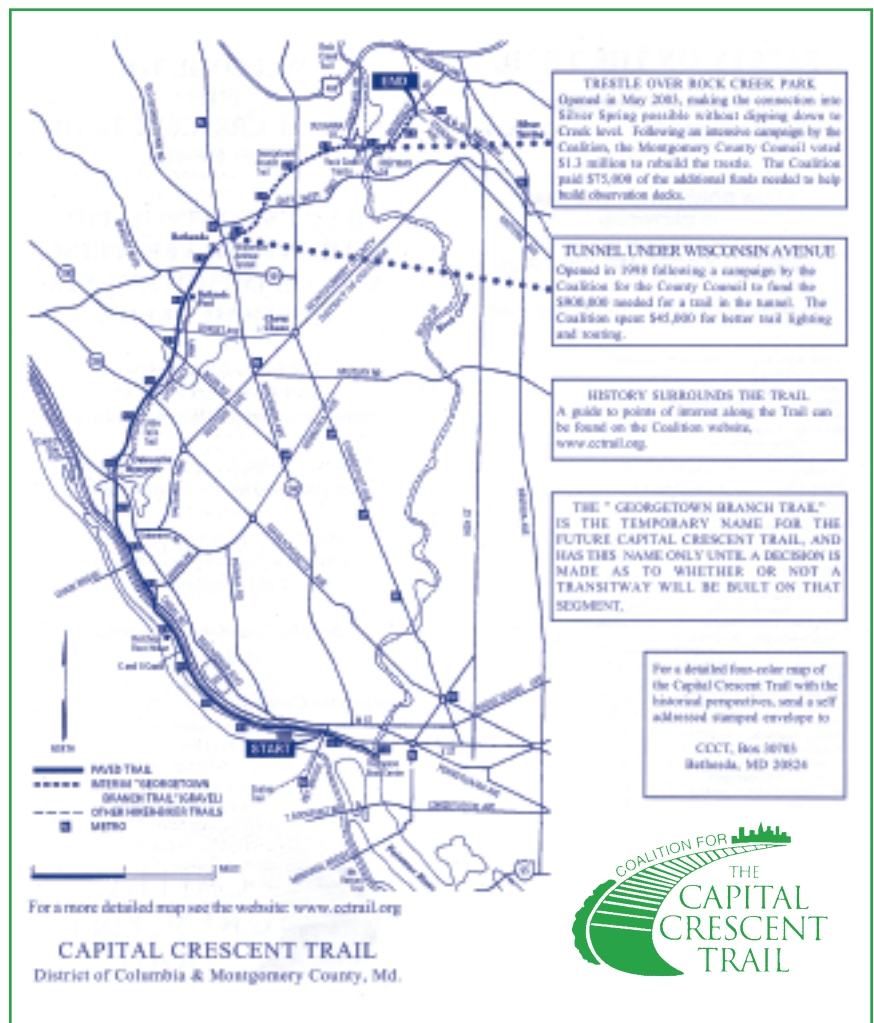
P.O. Box 30703
Bethesda, MD 20824
202-234-4874

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

www.cctrail.org
for trail updates and events!



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



Hope Endures for a better Trail east of Rock Creek

Trail users may soon see lasting repairs come to the Interim CCT east of the Rock Creek trestle for the first time since the Interim CCT was dedicated over 10 years ago.

The section of the trail nearest Silver Spring, between Rock Creek and Stewart Avenue, has been regularly subjected to severe storm water erosion damage. DPWT has made repeated efforts to repair the trail, only to see their work be washed away by the next bad storm. This year has been especially difficult. A trail repair completed at the start of July lasted only a few days until a severe thunderstorm washed deep ruts into the trail. Another storm in November added to the damage, leaving the trail so damaged that DPWT placed barriers across the trail to warn that the trail was hazardous. DPWT has since regraded the trail yet again and the trail is now open (unless there has been another severe storm since this Newsletter went to print).

Last spring CCCT advocated for funds to study and fix the underlying drainage problem on this section of the trail. As a result, the County Council budgeted \$200K to DPWT for this purpose, and DPWT has performed an assessment of the storm drain system along this part of the trail. Findings have been summarized in a draft report. The DPWT study found that several practical actions can significantly improve the storm water drainage to better protect the trail, including adding new trash grates to keep the large drain near milepost 0.5 from clogging and grading to create drain ditches alongside the trail.

DPWT is now deciding which of the corrective measures it will take. DPWT representative Dan Sheridan has indicated that DPWT can complete at least some of the work early this year with the existing funds. We should finally have an improved and longer lasting trail surface on this section of the trail. CCCT will continue to urge DPWT to continue moving this project forward as quickly as possible.



A barrier at Jones Mill Road warns of dangerous trail conditions after the November storm. DPWT has since performed temporary repairs and removed the barrier.

River Road Plaza

For ten years Trail users have looked forward to a small park and rest area on the Bethesda (north) side, just east of the trail bridge over River Road. The park was to have benches, an information kiosk, water; and parking for Trail users. It was to be attractively landscaped and would enhance the appearance of a commercial section of River Road.

Improvements would be funded by the Minkoff Company in exchange for seven parking spaces for its trucks on County property, the Trails right of way. Unfortunately the Minkoff Company reneged on its obligations, and in 2006 the County Executive terminated the agreement permitting the Minkoff firm to park cars there. The Coalition then committed to work with the Parks Department to develop the plaza. In January, Board members met with Mary Bradford, Director of Montgomery County Parks, and her staff. It was originally estimated that about

\$300,000 would be required to develop an attractive park, with kiosk, benches, extensive 'plantings', water, and limited parking. As there is currently no money in Parks capital improvement budget, funding will need to come from elsewhere, and a much more modest plan is now envisaged, which will provide for benches, a kiosk, plantings, and perhaps a water fountain.

The Coalition is now developing such a plan. The first step in creating the plaza may be to arrange for the macadam of the present parking area to be removed to deter illegal parking and to permit grass to grow. To move as soon as possible to develop an attractive and functional plaza, we will call on the County Council for political and financial support. We will probably need also to seek contributions in cash or in kind from the community and from our membership.

Bethesda Air Rights Building Tunnel Graffiti Update

As of early February, the massive graffiti problem we encountered, last summer and fall, especially on the South wall of the Eastern segment of the Air Rights tunnel has abated. Much was accomplished at a community stakeholders conference last December which led to this recent, hopefully permanent, success. The police arrested a major juvenile vandal and his operations have ceased. The police have increased their patrols in the Tunnel and throughout Bethesda. The building owners have responded to a CCCT suggestion that they erase small 'graffitied areas' within a 24 hours if possible, rather than wait months to perform a complete paint over. The County Department of Public Works and Transportation doubled the lighting in the Tunnel with remarkable speed. The Bethesda Urban Coalition and Police are looking into the possible use of surveillance cameras.

Your Coalition has offered a considerable sum toward the erection of a very hard to climb up on, razor wire topped, fence to prevent vandal access to the still unprotected walls at the Eastern segment.

What You Can Do!

REPORT GRAFFITI as soon as you see it:

Always report it to the Bethesda Police (always ASAP):

301-652-9200

wayne.jerman@montgomerycountymd.gov

If it is on COUNTY Property report it to:

Kathy Paunil of Graffiti Abatement

301-989-1638 or 301-989-1570

KPaunil1@verizon.net

If it is on Private Property report it to:

Montgomery County Housing – Linda Bird

240-777-3671 or Linda.Bird@montgomerycountymd.gov

If it is on the Air Rights Building report it to

Jones Lang LaSalle Management –

301-469-3037 or Mary.Seonarain@sm.jll.com

Council Member Ervin Walk – Eastern Trail

On January 10, Board members Peter Gray and Wayne Phylliaer met an aide to County Council member Valerie Ervin, Benjamin Stutz, at the trestle across Rock Creek, to show him first-hand, the degraded condition of the trail, east of Rock Creek. The Board members and Mr. Stutz walked along the trail for about a mile to the off-road terminus of the trail by Stewart Avenue and described the problems facing the trail due to water drainage issues along that section of the trail. (See separate article). The trail walk followed up on a meeting board members had with council member Ervin earlier in January. The Coalition appreciates the support of Ms. Ervin for the trail and for her efforts to insure the eastern portion of the trail is improved in the near future.

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.

Bike to Work Day **Friday, May 18th**

Have you ever taken advantage of the Capital Crescent Trail to get to and from work? No rush hour car or bus traffic, no exhaust in your face – certainly a safer and more pleasant ride than along Mass Avenue. If you want to try it, join Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail Board Member and leader of the Bethesda Convoy, Jennifer Longworth, on May 18. We will leave from the trailhead on Bethesda Ave. across from Barnes & Noble at 7am and arrive at Freedom Plaza at about 8 am. If you arrive at 6:30 am, Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) is sponsoring a pit stop complete with coffee, morning snacks and raffle prizes.

If you already commute along the trail, join us to show your support at Bike to Work Day.



Helmets required.

Volunteers Count Trail Traffic

The CCCT coordinated a trail traffic survey on the Capital Crescent Trail last fall. A call for help to count trail traffic was enthusiastically answered by 92 volunteers who gave over 140 hours of their time in September to take traffic counts. Volunteers counted trail users over one hour long periods at five locations along the trail, following a protocol developed by the Montgomery County Parks Department. This survey will be used by CCCT for many years to come as we advocate to protect and to improve the Trail.



Traffic near the Bethesda Trailhead. This is one of five trail locations where volunteers took detailed traffic data.

A preliminary analysis of the survey data supports our assertion that the CCT is one of the most heavily used trails in the nation. At the Bethesda trailhead alone, there are over 23,000 users of the trail in a week. Traffic counts were almost that high at two other

survey locations on the CCT, at the Brookeway Drive access and at the Georgetown Trailhead. Traffic at the Elm Street Park and at the Grubb Road survey locations on the Interim CCT is lower, but is still very significant. It is difficult to project the weekly use data to a total annual use estimate because of seasonal variations that were not measured, but a reasonable projection suggests that there are about one million uses of the CCT annually at the Bethesda Trailhead alone. Since many of the trail users counted elsewhere along the trail do not pass through the Bethesda Trailhead, it is likely that total annual traffic for the entire trail is several times greater than one million.

The data taken by the volunteers gives us much more information than traffic totals. We also took data on how the traffic varies by time of day and how traffic is distributed among walkers, cyclists, and joggers. This is very useful for gaining a better understanding of trail needs. For example, we know that the Bethesda Trailhead is used in almost equal shares by walkers and cyclists in addition to being the most intensely used part of the trail. This suggests CCCT efforts to improve safety on the trail by improving the level of courtesy and understanding between the different groups of trail users will be especially important, and challenging, at Bethesda. We know that cyclists are a more dominant group of trail users at the Georgetown Trailhead with a strong surge of cyclists during rush hour periods. This suggests that bicycle commuting should be a very strong factor as we work to protect the trail from the impacts of proposed boathouse construction. We know that trail traffic levels drop dramatically for all groups of trail users east of Rock Creek. This suggests that we must address the chronic trail erosion problem there and complete the trail into Silver Spring before the trail will serve Silver Spring neighborhoods as well as it serves neighborhoods elsewhere.

A more complete summary of the trail use survey results is available at our www.cctrail.org website – look for the link under “What’s New” on the homepage.

WANTED: *People to help defeat the invasive plant species choking our trees*

Invasive species are threatening the health of trees along the Trail, particularly between Bethesda and the DC/Montgomery County line. In order to combat this problem the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail needs:

- **Volunteers to train in recognizing and uprooting invasive species. Training consists of one session conducted by Montgomery County Parks.**
- **Two volunteers to coordinate the overall volunteer effort.**

If you are interested in participating, send an email to contact@cctrail.org or call 202-234-4874.



"CCT Needs TLC"

Dear Friend of the Crescent Trail

Your support has led to the overwhelming success of our beautiful, successful Trail. Success has brought problems like litter, graffiti, invasive plants, erosion, dangerous congestion and serious accidents.

Please help keep our Trail safe and beautiful; pick up litter, report graffiti and accidents, weed wack invasive plants, be an alert, considerate, courteous Trail User, report accidents. To learn more how you can help or have a suggestion, question or complaint, visit our website, monthly Board meetings or call 202-234-4874.

www.cctrail.org

"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.



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.



**Now you may donate/renew with your credit card via the CCCT web site!
Visit 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, FOR ACTION ALERTS and TRAIL UPDATES.

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The Trail in springtime near Fletchers Boathouse.
Photo by Wayne Phyllaier