

The Capital Crescent Trail

Rail Removal Kicks Off Work on D.C. Part of Capital Crescent

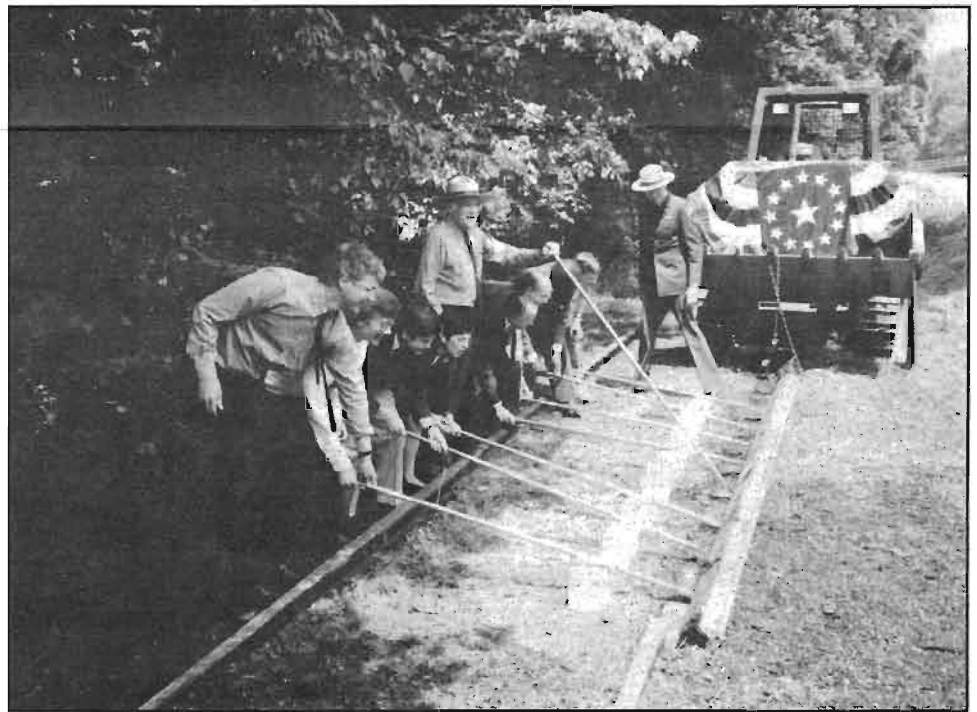
By Chris Brown

As a kickoff to National Trails Day, new director of the National Park Service Roger Kennedy — in his first official act — helped remove the first rail from the proposed Capital Crescent Trail.

The June 3 ceremony marked the official beginning of construction on three miles of the trail within the District of Columbia.

Kennedy spoke about the strong partnership that had brought the trail to this point and praised the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail.

Assisting Kennedy at the ceremonial rail-lifting near Fletcher's Boat House were state and local officials as well as numerous Coalition volunteers.



Flanked by CCCT leaders Chris Brown (far left) and Tom Barrett (far right), National Park Service Director Roger Kennedy uses a golden crow bar to lift the first rail from the proposed Capital Crescent Trail. (Photo: Maria Stenzel.)

A Message From the Chair

Progress, Progress, Progress!!!

All Capital Crescent Trail supporters have reason to celebrate this spring! After years of effort, we can now view tangible evidence that there will be a trail in our lifetime. The rails and ties have finally been removed on a section of the trail in Bethesda, with final development of this section expected for this summer. Give yourselves a collective "pat on the back."

Over the years, we really have made a difference in getting the trail on the ground. Initially, some fast work and one generous man gave the people of metropolitan Washington an opportunity to improve our community.

After the railroad company abandoned the corridor, there was a threat that the land would be parceled into several choice sites for

development, and the remainder would have continued to be an unofficial garbage dump for a few irresponsible homeowners and businesses adjacent to the trail. The immediate challenge was to find funding to buy the property. The purchase was in jeopardy because of Congress failed to appropriate money in time to pay for the D.C.

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HIGHLIGHTS AND HELP

By Clay Tunis

Rail Lifting Ceremony

As part of the National Rail-Trail Celebration last October, CCCT held a ceremonial rail lifting. With trail supporters and representatives from the National Park Service and Montgomery County watching from above, several volunteers removed the rail from its place. Lifting it was no mean task!

Earlier, from the red, white and blue bannered stage, a federal official presented the county with a check for \$867,000 to complete the portion of the trail from the D.C. line to Little Falls Parkway.

In addition, several guest speakers talked about the endless opportunities the Capital Crescent Trail offered the surrounding communities.

Governmental Action

The National Park Service issued a request for proposal for the removal of the 4-mile stretch of rail in its jurisdiction, as well as development of the trail.

A bidder's conference took place March 9th, at Fletcher's Boat House, and the contract was awarded in May.

PEPCO Clears Trail

By the end of April all of the rails and ties between Bethesda Avenue (next to Ourisman Honda) and Little Falls Parkway (adjacent to the Bethesda Pool) were removed.

PEPCO was responsible for clearing this section. They provided this service free to offset community disruptions their work had

caused elsewhere in Bethesda.

The clearing has left a path that is challenging for bicyclists but comfortable for hikers.

Volunteers Needed

After the asphalt is poured and the dust settles, the main responsibility will be maintaining the trail.

Montgomery County Parks does not have an operating budget for maintenance, therefore, the Coalition has offered to find volunteers for the completed sections.

For each portion that opens we will need a Trail Steward to work alone or with a group maintaining the trail. Any steward or group will be supplemented with additional volunteers several times a year. If you wish to volunteer, or would like more details, call Tom Barrett at 202-234-4874, ext. 6.

The work to be done includes litter pickup, landscaping and tree-planting, graffiti removal, etc. The County has said they will provide some of the trees, and we may have an "adopt-a-tree" program later, which will give people the opportunity to apply their own touches of green to the trail.

In addition, the coalition is looking for volunteers with legal backgrounds who are capable of doing title searches for areas of the CCT corridor where there may be encroachments.

Finally, CCCT needs people with pickup trucks or trailers to move mowing equipment to clean-up sites.

Needless to say, volunteers will be the lifeblood of the trail once it has been built.

CCCT Elects New Board

On June 21, the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail elected its new board members. They are:

Chris Brown - Chair

Margaret Marchak - Vice-chair

Ursula Lemanski - Secretary

Tom Barrett - Treasurer

Charlie Wellander - Assistant

Treasurer

Henri Bartholomot

John Dugger

Doug Engle

Scott Hall

Dena Yver

COALITION MEMBERS

American Forestry Association

American Hiking Society

American Youth Hostels — Potomac Area Council

Appalachian Mountain Club

Arlington County Bike Club

Audubon Naturalist Society

Auto-Free D.C.

Blue Ridge Voyageurs

Canoe Cruisers Association

Capital Hiking Club

Citizens Association of Georgetown

Committee of 100 on the Federal City

C&O Canal Association

Conservation Federation of Maryland

D.C. Roadrunners Club

Greater Bethesda Chevy Chase Coalition

League of American Wheelman

Montgomery Co. Outdoor Education Assn

Montgomery County Road Runners

N.I.H. Bicycle Commuting Club

National Parks and Conservation Assn.

National Recreation and Park Association

Northern Virginia Volksmarchers

Oxon Hill Bicycle and Trail Club

Potomac Appalachian Trail Club

Potomac Boat Club

Potomac Pedalers Touring Club

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Sierra Club (Rock Creek Group)

Virginia Volkssport Association

Wanderbirds Hiking Club

Washington Area Bicyclist Association

Washington Canoe Club

Washington Running Club

Washington Women Outdoors

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portion from Georgetown to the Montgomery County line.

That's when local business leader Kingdon Gould stepped in. He generously bought the land, and held it in trust until Congress made the necessary appropriation the next year.

Since then, our main work has centered on getting government officials to recognize the value of the land as public open space, and begin development on at least some sections. Now, it appears the trail will be in place, from Bethesda Avenue in Montgomery County to the C&O Canal in the district, by the end of the summer.

Here is the schedule of work, according to my last update on specific trail developments:

— The National Park Service already has begun work on the D.C. portion.

— The trail from Bethesda Avenue to Little Falls Parkway should be open by the end of June.

— From Little Falls Parkway to the D.C. line will be open by the end of the summer at earliest.

With establishment of these sections of trail the role of CCT supporters changes. Our efforts in brush clearing and litter pick-up will stop where trail construction is taking place, due to safety concerns.

But these cleanup efforts will

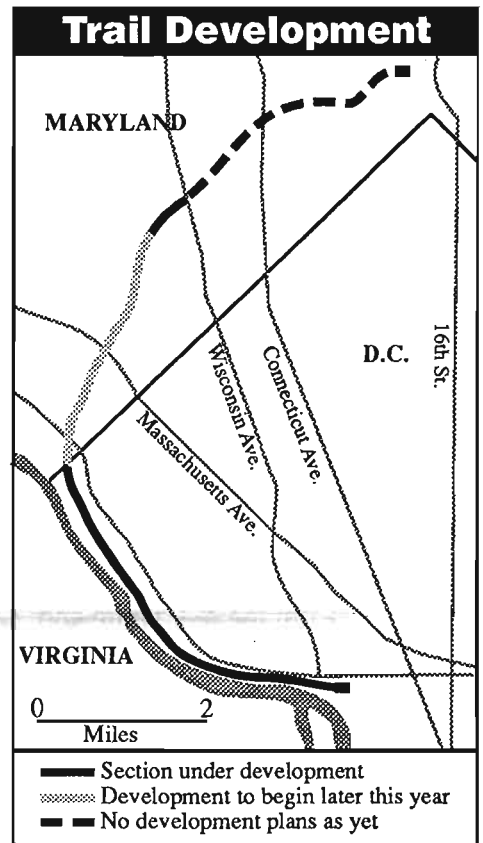
continue in other areas. Montgomery County officials have worked with the CCCT to agree upon guidelines for volunteer maintenance crews. If you are part of a CCCT Trail Crew, a group leader will have a copy of the guidelines. As sections of the Capital Crescent Trail open, however, we will need more volunteers.

If litter and brush clean-up is not your "cup of tea," or you don't have the time for this, you can still show your support for the Capital Crescent Trail. Montgomery County has established a foundation to accept donations that will go solely to support the parks.

There are indications that donors will be able to specify how they wish their gifts be used, to a point. For example, a donor may specify the Capital Crescent Trail, but might not be allowed to dictate a park bench at point X. For more information contact Montgomery County at (301) 495-2500.

Even as we start to see the trail become a reality in some areas, challenges remain.

Most importantly is getting an interim trail from Bethesda to Silver Spring. The problem here continues to be the uncertainty about a proposed the light rail system between the two cities (the Bethesda and Silver Spring Trolley, BEASST). There is doubt about the need for



the BEASST, but the County may keep trail development on hold until they make a decision on light rail. Thus, we need to continue prodding the County to examine the issues. Stay tuned.

Already, it has been reported that some board members have used a portion of the cleared trail for cross-country skiing! On a related note, a member of the Volksmarchers of Northern Virginia expressed an interest in volksmarching the CCT at our last meeting.

Let's get to it!
Tom Barrett, Chairman

Summer Fashion Tee

Enjoy the great summer weather wearing a new CCCT T-shirt!

This attractive 50/50 poly/cotton white T-shirt features a scene along the Capital Crescent Trail in black ink with a yellow sun rising over the tracks.

It is available in adult sizes small, medium, large and extra large; great low price: \$10.95.

Buy it today.

Quantity _____ Size(s) _____ Total Price _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send check to CCCT, 1400 16th St., NW, #300, Washington, DC 20036

**YES! I WANT TO HELP CREATE
THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL**

Please add me to your membership list. Enclosed is a donation for \$ _____ to help make the Capital Crescent Trail a reality. (Make checks payable to CCCT.)

I want to help the Coalition with the following activities:

- Fundraising Committee
- Community Outreach Committee
- Raffle Committee
- Press and Publicity
- Trail Cleaning and Maintenance
- Mailing Parties
- Data Entry

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY STATE ZIP

TELEPHONE (day) (eve)

I know of an organization that might join CCCT. The group is: _____

Return to Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail, P.O. Box 30703,
Bethesda, MD 20824

Slide Show Available

Do you know of an organization or citizen's group that would like to learn more about the Capital Crescent Trail?

CCCT offers a 20-minute slide show that portrays the trail's potential as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for an urban greenway in Washington, D.C. The slide show, presented by a CCCT volunteer, also describes the Coalition's activities to secure the trail.

Please call the CCCT information line at 234-4874 for additional details.

**Call the CCCT
Information Line:
202-234-4874**

For information on membership and upcoming events, as well as trail preparations and volunteer opportunities. Or, leave a message and a CCCT supporter will get in touch with you.

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