



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

FLORIDA GREENWAYS AND TRAILS MONTH

WHEREAS, greenways and trails conserve native landscapes and ecosystems, link natural areas with communities, and provide Florida residents and visitors of all ages and abilities with year-round opportunities for free health and fitness activities and a connection with the state's natural, historical, and cultural heritage; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Greenways & Trails in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Recreation and Parks completed the new vision for the Florida Greenways and Trails System, and the plan defines the role of the system in advancing Florida's economy, tourism, health, transportation, recreation, conservation, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Greenways & Trails is working with partners throughout Florida to complete a connected Statewide Greenways and Trails System for recreation, conservation, and alternative transportation purposes and in recognition of this vision and commitment, Florida received the inaugural award by American Trails as Best Trails State in America in 2008; and

WHEREAS, due to the high demand for trail information by visitors, VISIT FLORIDA has partnered with the Office of Greenways & Trails and other organizations to create four highly popular trail guides and has developed a dedicated and full-featured trails website as a component of VISITFLORIDA.com; and

WHEREAS, Florida has formally designated approximately 1 million acres of greenways and trails for recreation, conservation, and alternative transportation routes, and Florida residents and visitors have access to over 8,000 miles of land-based trails and nearly 4,000 miles of water trails, including the congressionally designated Florida National Scenic Trail and 32 National Recreation Trails; and

WHEREAS, two barrier-free Boundless Playgrounds have been constructed on state trails to encourage intergenerational family recreation and fitness activities, foster community spirit, and offer children of all means and abilities the opportunity to experience independent, self-directed play; and

WHEREAS, community-based partnerships are essential to the success of the Florida Greenways and Trails System, and many public and private organizations are actively involved with projects that connect Florida's communities with greenways and trails; and

WHEREAS, Florida is home to the Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail, the Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail, the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail, and the longest segment of the East Coast Greenway, an ambitious national trail project extending from Calais, Maine, to Key West; and

WHEREAS, Florida's, Orange County trails were estimated to support \$42 million of economic impact and 516 jobs, and downtown Dunedin business occupancy rates increased from 30 percent to 95 percent following the establishment of the Pinellas Trail, and in 2012-2013, more than 3.9 million people utilized Florida's greenways and designated trails for health, transportation, and recreation, boosting tourism in those communities and supporting more than 45,882 jobs;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rick Scott, Governor of the State of Florida, do hereby extend greetings and best wishes to all observing October 2013 as *Florida Greenways and Trails Month* and encourage all citizens to enjoy and value the health benefits and the natural resources of Florida's greenways and trails for present, as well as future, generations.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed at Tallahassee, the Capital, this 2nd day of October, in the year two thousand thirteen.

A blue ink signature of Rick Scott, Governor of Florida, written over a horizontal line.

Governor