

**Florida Greenways and Trails Council**  
**Unpaved Trail Guidelines Subcommittee Conference Call Summary**  
**January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

On January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the Florida Greenways and Trails Council Subcommittee (the committee) on Unpaved Trail Guidelines held a conference call to discuss the body's draft working documents. No items were formally recommended by the committee to the full Council, and discussion held during the call emphasized the need to continue drafting documents.

The headings and major points below indicate sections of the document and related committee members who volunteered to contribute to the development of documents. More noticed meetings will need to be held to discuss the development of recommendations to the full Council. For more information on this call, please contact Brian Ruscher, OGT Staff assigned to this committee by calling (850) 245-2078 or emailing [Brian.Ruscher@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:Brian.Ruscher@dep.state.fl.us).

**General Notes:** Within the document, a number of different sections contained reference, typos and other grammatical errors. OGT Staff will consider revisions to this document related to the correction of these errors. Other considerations were given to specific sections of the document, detailed below.

Additional comments were made regarding the separation of paddling trail guidelines. OGT Staff will develop a recommendation regarding this comment and present a recommendation to the full council after discussion with the committee. Committee members also expressed reservations regarding the use of definitive versus optional language and suggested in future drafts utilizing "may" instead of "shall", for example.

**Section 1:** Within section one of the document, the committee discussed the following topics trailheads, updating the goals, adding a mission statement that could include direction for trail sustainability, and categorizing trailheads and trail systems.

- **Trailheads:** Move this bullet and unrelated components of Section 1 to Section 4. Primary, secondary, and remote should be clearly stated in this document as a matter of planning out trailheads. Organizations responsible for the development of trailheads should clearly identify the type of trailhead that is being developed, while not necessarily needing to place this information on the locations informational kiosks once constructed. Additional discussion ensued on the out of date nature of trailhead amenities, such as phone booths and other amenities. OGT Staff will conduct fact-finding discussions with Shawn Thomas to develop recommendations for the next council meeting.
- **Mission statement:** The document lacks a mission statement which states the intent of the guidelines. OGT Staff will work collect information and conduct further fact finding with Colleen Kruk to develop a mission statement.
- **Trail Sustainability:** While information related to sustainability and environmental preservation are found throughout the document, there is no specific reference in the goal on creating sustainable trails. Committee member Jerrie Lindsay indicated interest in this topic and suggested a statement be included in the next draft. This includes information on consistent, safe and environmentally compatible trails developed with a long-term vision. Further, trail' should be designed and maintained with a long-term aim to prevent environmental degradation.

- **Trail System Categorization and Wayfinding:** The committee discussed the need to update information related to categorization and wayfinding within the document. Before recommendations are created, committee members will share relevant information and documents related to this update.

**Section 2:** The committee discussed the second section of the document in a similar nature to the first section, suggesting comments on specific existing and new items. Major points related in this discussion were potentially merging sections one and two of the document.

- **Wildlife Considerations:** The committee noted that the document lacked a discussion of planning trails with wildlife in mind. Members noted that trails should *expose* users to the natural environment, but not overly expose wildlife to humans because this can adversely impact ecosystems. Councilmember Lindsay discussed this item and proposed information gathering on the committee's behalf before the development of a recommendation. This consideration includes utilization of wildlife safe receptacles and other facilities at trail and trailhead locations.
- **Environmental Impact:** The committee discussed environmental impacts of trails and how the document lacked general content related to conducting an environmental impact. OGT Staff indicated willingness to develop draft language for this section.
- **Self Direction:** This section of the document was found by the council to be somewhat redundant and in need of examples and updated language for reference points, emergency markings and other best practices.
  - The agencies on the conference call recommended holding a non-FGTC call to discuss emergency signage on trails in Florida in hopes of utilizing a common standard across jurisdictional lands.

**Sections 3, 4 & 5:** The committee gave only minor comments to these sections which related to the referencing of appendixes, paddling trail guidelines discussed previously, and information related to paved trails. OGT Staff indicated they would develop a draft for these sections since most of this information needed generalized changes not requiring in depth information gathering. Additionally, language related to paddling would be removed from these sections and a single section dedicated to paddling trails would be created.

**Section 6:** OGT Staff presented updated language related to accessible facilities on trails, which spurred discussion on the use of definitive versus optional language for trail managers and developers. Staff received comments on the draft and will submit an additional draft during the next conference call.

**Appendices:** Discussion was held on the information contained within the Appendices. This discussion largely related to the potential to utilize graphics, correcting syntax issues, and updating the bibliography.

**Next Meeting:** The committee decided the next meeting should be held in approximately mid-April.