

APPENDIX: RAILS-TRAILS & SAFE COMMUNITIES

51% posted warnings or rules for trail users. Along the trail, 8% of the trails installed phones, 8% had lights and 45% posted warnings or trail rules. Unfortunately, the data collected in this survey was too limited to explore the correlation between the existence of design features and crime rates.

TRAIL PATROLS

Volunteer or professional trail patrols are also beneficial in improving trail safety. These patrols range from informal monthly clean-up and maintenance crews to daily patrols that provide maps, information and emergency assistance. The primary function of these patrols should be to educate trail users and to provide assistance when necessary. They should also be equipped to alert emergency services quickly if needed. Above all, the presence of a patrol deters crime and improves users' enjoyment of the trail.



Trail patrol members are on hand at an evening event in Gainesville, Florida. (Karen Stewart.)



Bike patrol police on the Capital Crescent Trail, Maryland. (Patrick Kraich)

According to survey results, the majority of trails have some type of trail patrol. The survey found that 69% of the urban rail-trails, 67% of suburban rail-trails and 63% of rural rail-trails are patrolled in some way. Local, county, and state entities, park rangers and volunteers provide these patrol services either alone or in combination. RTC found that 20% of the trails have local law enforcement patrols, 16% of the trails have county patrols, 4% of the trails have state patrols, 9% of the trails have park ranger patrols and 3% of the trails have volunteer patrols. The dominant modes of trail patrol are bike (26%) and car or truck (33%). The study found that 82% of the trails have access for emergency vehicles.

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TRAIL PATROL CASE STUDIES

There are many methods of organizing an effective trail patrol. Depending on a trail's needs and available resources, a daily, weekly or monthly patrol may be appropriate.

Below are several examples of volunteer and professional patrols and contact information for their coordinators. These examples are only a few ways to promote safety and improve users' enjoyment of rail-trails. Trail managers should be creative in using "friends of the trail" groups, local community organizations and law enforcement to maintain and monitor local rail-trails.

MINUTEMAN TRAIL MASSACHUSETTS

Several years ago as part of a public relations effort, the Bedford Police began riding bikes along the Bedford to Lexington portion of the Minuteman Trail. Approximately a year and a half later, they initiated a unique youth patrol, the Bedford Police Explorers to assist them. After completing first aid and CPR certification, the Explorers began conducting daily patrols of the trail wearing police t-shirts and carrying radios and first aid kits. Both the police and Explorer programs have been well received by the community. After seeing an officer and several Explorers clearing debris from the trail, one trail user wrote to the Bedford Police: "I was so taken by this... by clearing the bike path, now even more women, men, children of all ages and people in wheelchairs can enjoy nature in the path." Contact Officer Jeff Wardwell at the Bedford Public Safety Department for more information on the Explorer program, (617) 275-1212, ext. 125.

NORTH AUGUSTA GREENEWAY SOUTH CAROLINA

Approximately twenty professionally trained police officers voluntarily patrol the three-mile North Augusta Greenway in rural South Carolina. The effort began as part of a community policing and physical fitness program of the North Augusta Public Safety Department. Three to four times each week, officers patrol the trail as they perform walking, jogging or biking workouts. Captain Lee Wetherington, coordinator of the patrol effort, explained their objectives, "We try to show a presence, deter illegal activity and provide first aid or other assistance to trail users." The patrol is a creative way of keeping officers in condition for duty while promoting trail safety at the same time. For additional information about the patrol, contact Capt. Wetherington at (803) 441-4254.

PINELLAS TRAIL FLORIDA

The 35-mile Pinellas Trail is patrolled daily by one of the most extensive volunteer patrols, the Pinellas Auxiliary Rangers. The Auxiliary Rangers serve as uniformed ambassadors for the Pinellas Trail, providing trail information, directions and bicycle safety tips. More than 25 volunteers, 18 years and older, comprise the patrol and are required to under-go background checks and extensive training on trail history, public relations, trail-riding, first aid and nutrition. The majority of the volunteers patrol by bike and use cell phones to communicate. Because the trail has not encountered many problems, an Auxiliary Ranger's primary role is one of educator rather than enforcer. For more information, contact Jerry Cumings or Tim Closterman at the Pinellas County Park Department, (813) 393-8909.

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YOUGHIOGHENY RIVER TRAIL-NORTH PENNSYLVANIA

Three local trail councils, headed by the Regional Trail Corporation, coordinate monitoring teams for the 23-mile Youghiogheny River Trail-North in southwestern Pennsylvania. Each of the trail councils oversees a team of approximately twenty monitors patrolling primarily on bikes, but also by foot and by horse. Easily recognizable in their gold and black uniforms, monitors carry first aid kits and, frequently, cellular phones to report trail damage or injuries. Joe Honick, who instituted this model monitoring program, explained their usefulness, "The monitors serve as the eyes and ears of the Regional Trail Corporation. They assist trail users, explain trail rules and relay users' suggestions and comments."

Bob McKinley, Trail Manager of the Regional Trail Corporation reported very few incidents of trail damage or graffiti along the trail. "There is so little vandalism, every piece seems like a major item," he said. The patrol program has been successful in deterring such incidents. McKinley commended the patrol efforts, "The patrols are doing a great job. Their monitoring really does make a difference." For more information on the trail's monitoring program, contact Joe Honick of the Mon/Yough Trail Council at (412) 829-0467.

GREAT RIVER TRAIL ILLINOIS

The Great River Trail Council uses several groups to patrol its 28-mile trail passing through urban, suburban and rural areas. The council coordinates local bicycle and service clubs which have an interest in assisting with trail patrol. Clubs provide trail users with directions and look for maintenance problems. In the summer months, at least one group patrols during daylight hours and police patrol the trail after dusk. For more information, contact Patrick Marsh at the Great River Trail Council, (309) 793-6300.

BALTIMORE AND ANNAPOLIS TRAIL PARK MARYLAND

Approximately thirty volunteer Trailblazers, ranging from age eleven to 78, patrol the 13-mile Baltimore and Annapolis Trail. After receiving three weekends of first aid, CPR, patrol technique and park operations training from park rangers, they take to the trail by in-line skates, bike or foot. Trailblazers supplement park rangers' daily patrols by providing information to trail users, correcting unsafe trail behavior and reporting their findings to the park rangers. Trailblazers are able to quickly identify and repair problem areas of litter or graffiti helping to prevent further incidents from occurring. For more information on the organization or training of the Baltimore and Annapolis Trailblazers, contact David Dionne, Park Superintendent at the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks, (410) 222-6245.

LAFAYETTE/MORAGA TRAIL CALIFORNIA

Several entities monitor the 8-mile Lafayette/Moraga Trail in the San Francisco Bay Area, including a maintenance team, the East Bay Regional Park District Public Safety Department and several volunteer patrols. More than 150 equestrians, bicyclists and hikers comprise volunteer groups who patrol the Lafayette/Moraga Trail and other parks in the area. An officer from the Park District provides each group with training and organizes monthly meetings and speakers. In 1996, volunteers provided over 40,000 hours of service to the East Bay parks. For more information on these patrols, contact Steve Fiala at the East Bay Regional Park District, (510) 635-0135.

APPENDIX: RAILS-TRAILS & SAFE COMMUNITIES

RAIL-TRAILS AS SAFE PLACES

Rail Trails are not crime-free. No place on earth can make that claim. However, when compared to the communities in which they exist, compared to highways and parking lots, and compared to many other public and private places, rail-trails have an excellent public safety record.

Compared to the abandoned and forgotten corridors they recycle and replace, trails are a positive community development and a crime-prevention strategy of proven value. By generating lawful activities such as walking, running, bicycling and in-line-skating, rail-trails are also bringing communities together and reintroducing neighbors to each other.

Trails are actually one of the safest places to be and the incidence rate of crime on trails is

minor in comparison to other locations. Table 3 lists the percentage of rapes, robberies, and assaults that occur in four locations. As these data show, a park is actually one of the safest places to be. Two to three times safer than being in a parking facility or in your own home and many more times safer than walking down the street. These data help to provide some perspective of personal safety in several types of locations in the context of overall crime rates in the U.S. The result being that parks are undeniably one of the safest places to be.

In an attempt to add perspective to crime on trails, John Yoder, President of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. in Indiana has compiled crime and injury statistics for a variety of circumstances to make the point that no human activity is risk free. The entire contents of his list can be found in Appendix B.

TABLE 3
National Crime Statistics by Location

CRIME		LOCATION (% OF TOTAL)			
		PARK/FIELD/ PLAYGROUND	PARKING GARAGE/LOT	INSIDE YOUR HOME	ON STREET
RAPE	(1988)	6.6	7.9	25.0	23.3
	(1990)	0.5	3.4	35.0	30.2
	(1991)	1.1	4.2	26.8	10.4
	(1992)	8.5	6.5	16.3	38.3
ROBBERY	(1988)	3.0	11.6	14.0	48.3
	(1990)	3.0	12.7	9.4	48.6
	(1991)	3.6	11.9	9.5	51.2
	(1992)	6.4	13.6	10.1	20.7
ASSAULT	(1988)	3.6	0.3	15.1	30.5
	(1990)	4.0	7.9	13.4	31.9
	(1991)	4.0	10.7	10.7	29.7
	(1992)	4.4	7.3	7.3	32.3

Note: Percentages do not add to 100 because not all location categories are listed.
Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States, various years

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Yoder concludes by asking “Does this mean we should outlaw, eliminate, or ban any of these places or activities?” Of course not! But as these statistics demonstrate, every form of human activity has some level of risk associated with it. The question in judging any activity is understanding the level of risk associated with that activity and doing everything possible to minimize those risks. Our society accepts approximately 40,000 highway deaths every year because we believe the convenience of highway travel is worth the risk. Similarly, in 1992 there were 30 murders, 1,000 rapes,

and 1,800 robberies on college campuses however, most people believe that the rewards associated with a college education are worth the risks involved.

It is important not to trivialize or deny that bad things can happen on trails, however it is equally important to keep in mind that the amount of crime that occurs on trails as demonstrated by the survey results as well as the data in Table 3 shows that crime on trails is minimal. As with any activity, appropriate safety precautions should be taken to minimize risk.

CONCLUSION

With nearly 27,000 miles of open and project rail-trail, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy recognizes that addressing trail users safety and trail neighbors concerns about crime are critical to the creation of a successful trail. This report has shown that crime on rail-trails is not a common occurrence.

Past studies, our survey results, letters from law enforcement officials, and comparisons to national crime figures all indicate that rail-trails are safe places for local residents and visitors to enjoy. While common sense and preventative measures should be used on rail-trails to ensure the lowest possible levels of crime, rail-trails remain much safer than many other environments. The findings of this report should reassure those with apprehensions about trail projects that converting a former


rail corridor into a trail will have a positive rather than negative effect on their community.

As the data in this report show, crime on rail-trails is minimal. This becomes all-the-more apparent when put in perspective with risks associated with other activities. The way to minimize crime on trails is to ensure that users exercise proper safety precautions, keep the trail well maintained, and boost trail use. Crime generally does not occur in places where there are lots of people and few hiding places. Positive-looking places tend to encourage positive behavior.

Crime occurs on roads, parking lots, in shopping malls, office buildings, airports, and at zoos. However, no one would rationally argue that we shouldn't build any of the above because crime will occur there. The same should be true for trails.

APPENDIX: RAILS-TRAILS & SAFE COMMUNITIES

APPENDIX A: LETTERS FROM LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES



CITY OF NORTH AUGUSTA
P. O. BOX 6400 NORTH AUGUSTA, SC 29841-0400
General Information - 803 / 441-4399 FAX - Administration 441-4323 / Public Safety 441-4322

May 7, 1997

Mr. Hugh Morris, Research Coordinator
Rails to Trails Conservancy
1100 Seventeenth Street, N.W., 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Morris,

In response to your letter of May 1, 1997 I would offer the following information:

The North Augusta Greenway project has been a tremendous success for the City of North Augusta and its citizens. You help instigate other any project such as this which attracts the public to its use will generate activity for the police department.

While we have had a few instances of unauthorized four wheelers and a few bicycle mishaps which caused a police action we have had no crime to speak of occurring on the Greenway or that we could attribute to the Greenway.

The area in which this trail runs through is a compromise of upper middle level neighborhoods, wooded secluded areas, older established neighborhoods and existing city parks.


The police department has had no significant increase or decrease in the amount of crime in any of these areas.

In response to the question, "Was the development of the trail a good idea?" I would, from a police point of view and a citizen's point of view, reply emphatically that it was a great idea. The trail use grows continuously and we have implemented a part-time bike patrol to ride the Greenway as a part of our community policing initiatives.


The only suggestion I could make would be to provide some type of emergency call stations along the trail to summon police or medical help when needed.

I hope this information provides what you need.

Sincerely,
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY



T. Lee Wetherington, Captain
441-4300 441-4277 441-4253
Public Information Public Safety Public Information



ELIZABETH TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT
522 ROCK RUN ROAD • BUENA VISTA, PA 15018
(412) 751-7325 • (412) 751-3399 • FAX (412) 751-7329
CHARLES R. TOMANT, Chief of Police

May 15, 1997

Mr. Hugh Morris
Rails to Trails Conservancy
1100 Seventeenth Street
10th Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Morris,

The Elizabeth Township Police Department is responsible for patrolling and enforcing the laws on the Youghiogheny River Trail, which traverses 13.6 miles through Elizabeth Township.

Since the trail was constructed and opened for use we have found that the trail has not caused any inconvenience to property owners along the trail. The residents seem to enjoy having the trail near their homes.

The trail has not caused any increase in the amount of crimes reported and the few reported incidents are minor in nature. These incidents are attributed to the fact that the trail is a popular area for recreation and these were able to attribute to juveniles that were causing those problems. There were several reports of bicycles being stolen but for the number of people that utilize the trail the numbers are insignificant.

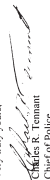
We have found that the trail brings in so many people that it has actually lead to a decrease in problems we face along the Clinch River banks. The increased presence of people on the trail has contributed to this problem being reduced.

The trail has also spawned new businesses along the trail. We now have several bike sales and repair shops, new restaurants, convenience stores, and ice cream stands that have been opened.

The trail brings in thousands of users each year and has lead to several organized rides by various organizations such as the Girl Scouts of America and by the local Council of Governments.


The Elizabeth Township Police have started a patrol plan for the trail that is Community Oriented Policing in nature. This patrol plan has lead to good relations between the police and the trail users and this leads to good community relations. Officers actually look forward to their tour of duty on the trail.

Based on our experience with the trail we see no reason for any municipality to fear having a trail established. The Yough River Trail is a success that can only lead to better things for our community.

Very truly yours,

Charles R. Tomant
Chief of Police

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**OFFICE OF
DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF**



JEROLD L. WHITE
Chief Deputy

STEPHEN G. FITZGERALD
Sheriff

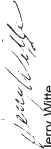
May 19, 1997

Mr. Hugh Morris
Research Coordinator
110 Seventeenth Street, NW
100 Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Morris:

This letter is in response to your request for information on the impact of the Wild Goose State Trail and the crime/complaint rate. Please be advised the Trail has had virtually no impact on the crime rate in Dodge County.

Sincerely,



Jerry White,
Chief Deputy

JW:dd

141 North Main Street • Juneau, WI 53039-1072 • Phone (414)386-3726 • FAX (414)386-3742

**CITY OF
LOUISVILLE**
DIVISION OF PUBLIC SAFETY
DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY
330/825-1607

May 13, 1997

Hugh Morris
Rails to Trails Conservancy
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Morris,

I came to Louisville in August of 1991 as the Chief of Police. Since that time, I have been involved in the planning and implementation of the conversion of the old railway line to a walking path. I was concerned for the safety of citizens due, in part, to the remote area that was traversed by the line. I strongly encouraged the placement of emergency call boxes along the walkway. The call boxes were never installed.

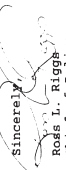
I am very pleased to report that crime incidents along the walkway are almost nonexistent. I attribute this to several factors. Primarily, the high volume of use by families along this walking path has created a community ownership of the path. Police also regularly patrol the path, making it unlikely that anyone would use the path for more than a quarter of a mile without coming into contact with other path users.

The incidents of vandalism over five years has been only two small areas of the asphalt that were spray painted. None were immediately cleaned up by city crews. It should be noted that the path is used by a large number of families that is a frequent loitering area for juveniles that have little supervision. Still, the criminal complaints along the path are almost zero.

Two weeks ago, my family and I took part in a community clean up day. My wife, one daughter, and I started at the beginning of the path and worked our way to the end with a large trash bag and to pick up litter. We started out. By the end of the mile and a half, we had found ONE piece of litter almost too small to have noticed. We did encounter, however, several families walking and a police patrol car. I can only attribute the cleanliness to the ownership that exists along the path. It is a shame where the railway line had been, the trash and graffiti are overwhelming.

I hope that you will find this information useful. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to call upon me.

Sincerely,




Rods L. Riggs
Chief of Police

215 South Mill Street • Louisville, Ohio 44641 • Fax 330/875-1820

APPENDIX: RAILS-TRAILS & SAFE COMMUNITIES

"Service to OUR Communities"



TWIN CITIES
Police Authority

250 Doherty Drive, Larkspur, CA 94939

Phone: (415) 927-5150 Fax: (415) 927-5187

PHILIP D. GREEN
Chief of Police

May 13, 1997

Mr. Hugh Morris
Research Coordinator
1100 Seventeenth Street, NW
10th Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Re: Railroad Corridors

Dear Mr. Morris:

In your letter to Chief Phil Green dated May 1, 1997, you requested information regarding our calls for service, and type of crimes occurring in and around trails and adjacent properties.

I don't have specific numbers for you, however, I can state that a majority of calls we receive about incidents occurring along bike trails are from the general public. The majority of these calls are usually about transient types living and or sleeping in bushes inside makeshift shelters. Occasionally, residents will report youth gatherings or suspicious subjects loitering and or drinking in a certain area.

We had a continual problem and received many complaints about an abandoned train station where transients would seek shelter. They would build fires causing concern from local residents that accidental fires may start and travel onto the hillside. This building would also entice children and other individuals who would be playing nearby. However, since the entrance and windows have been boarded up and secured by a surrounding fence, we have had no problems.

Our crime experience along these trails are isolated. We have not experienced an increase in crime since the trail was developed. The trails are remote, great dense with shrubs and bushes. These trails are remote, great dense with shrubs and bushes, isolated from the general public and not heavily travelled.


MISSION: To protect the communities of Twin Cities and enhance the highest quality of police services that meet present and future community expectations.

Railroad Corridors Continued
May 13, 1997
Page 2

We believe the development of the trail was a good idea. We do not feel that the trail encourages more crime than existed before the trail went in.

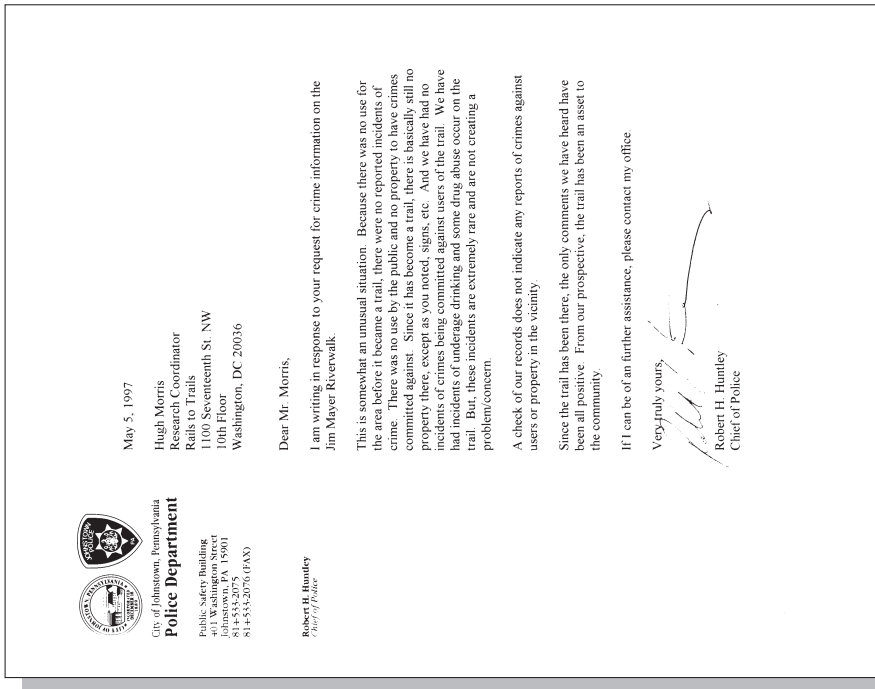
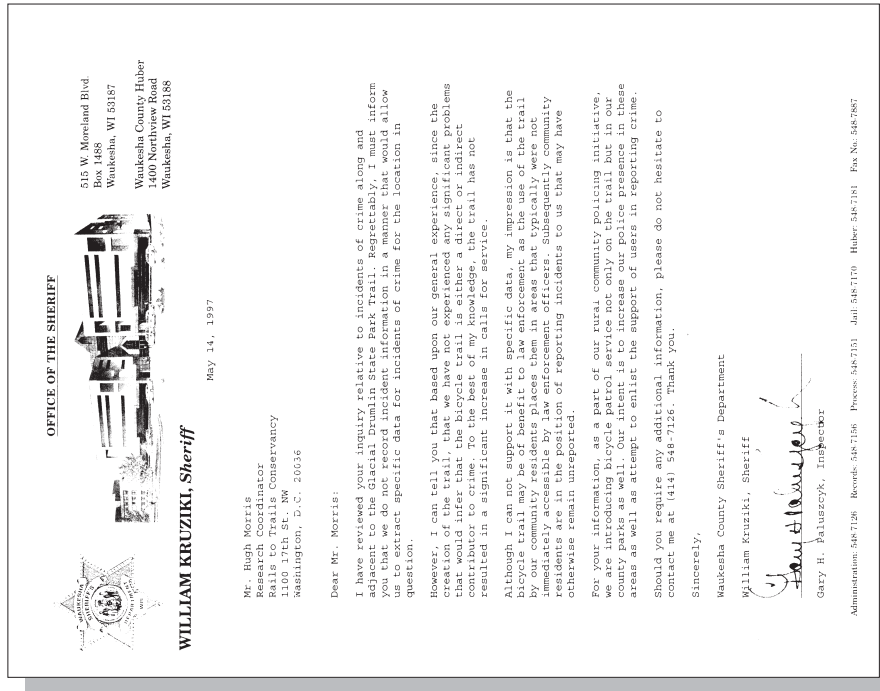
I hope I have addressed all your questions. Please don't hesitate to contact me should you need additional information.

Sincerely yours,



Andre Horn
Captain

APPENDIX: RAILS-TRAILS & SAFE COMMUNITIES



APPENDIX: RAILS-TRAILS & SAFE COMMUNITIES




South Burlington Police Department
 573 Dorset Street
 South Burlington, Vermont 05403
Brian R. Swartz, Chief

Herb Durfee, Staff Planner
 Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
 P. O. Box 108
 Essex Junction, VT 05452


Dear Mr. Durfee:

In preparation for the July 15, 1991 South Burlington City Council meeting, which included a discussion and vote on Phase II of the Recreation Path, I looked at some data and their implications for the police in Burlington and Stowe about their interactions with their bike paths. A summary of what I found is listed below:

Burlington -

- According to official records of the Burlington Police Department there were 71 police messages to the Burlington Bike Path during the 27 months ending June 30, 1991. Adjusting those numbers for winter months (removing the 10 months when there were no complaints) the average for the 17 remaining months is one of over 3,200 per month compared to a citywide mean of 1,000 per month. The most common complaint in Burlington, therefore, is the scene of "00138 of all safest places in Burlington, according to Chief Kevin Scully.
- The 71 complaints themselves need further analysis. Some of these appear not to be related to the bike path. I looked at two specific categories.

First, one title of complaint listed by the computer is "Unlawful Use of Fireworks". One South Burlington Bike Path opponent shortened the category title to




South Burlington Police Department
 573 Dorset Street
 South Burlington, Vermont 05403
Brian R. Swartz, Chief

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H. Durfee
 July 23, 1991
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"Discharging Firearms" for the purposes of a letter to the City Council. The original complaint was a report of a loud noise from a residence on the path and the investigation concluded that kids had set off a firecracker at a nearby beach.

Second, there are fourteen responses to reports of inappropriate conduct, "drunkenness", "Public Complaints", "Noise", etc., and seem to have alcohol or other drugs as a common theme. A cursory look at those cases reveals a strong likelihood that they are at special events (concerts, festivals, etc.) held adjacent to the path on beaches and in parks.

3. I reviewed the patrol strategy of the Burlington Police Department and found that most of the patrol is done on bikes. I reviewed the program which is a summer program that existed before the current program is not an expensive proposition. These patrols are primarily a communication link to regular officers who also occasionally do bike patrol themselves.

The Burlington Police Department is fully supportive of the path and I have attached a letter I received from them attesting to the minor nature of crime problems.

Stowe - *STOWE RECREATION PATH*

1. The Stowe Path has been in operation for more than four years and during that time only 44 complaints, 25 of which have been larcenies from vehicles, have been reported. This is an amazingly low number for such a popular path, but the number of larcenies from a car or van is low. I have also visited the path a couple of days before the Stowe Police Department that the thefts occurred in a couple of fairly remote parking lots just off the path. The police explained that groups of thieves have been victimizing tourists' cars in parking lots for many years. It happens primarily at ski areas and local

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restaurants and motels, but the thefts in the lots near the path are just an extension of that activity. I think that this phenomenon is not important to Chittenden County paths as they will generally be used by residents and not tourists. There is no evidence of a significant problem like this in Burlington.

2. The other numbers are so low that they need not be analyzed but I did look at one entitled "Untimely Death" and learned that a gentleman did suffer a heart attack while using the Stowe path.

3. The Stowe Police do no routine patrolling of the Stowe Bike Path. The police department says that the path has made Stowe safer as pedestrians and cyclists do not have to be on Route 108 with the heavy traffic.

People from South Burlington have called me and expressed concerns and many of them have mentioned the potential for the crime of rape to occur on the proposed bikeway.

I looked specifically for reports of rape or sexual assault on the paths in Stowe and Burlington and was relieved to learn that there have been no reports in either place.

There has been no increase in crime in Burlington or Stowe which is attributable to the bike paths.

My position is that bike paths proposed for Chittenden County communities provide a healthy way of linking neighborhoods and are likely to have a positive affect on the overall safety of the public.

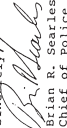
Crime and the fear of crime do not flourish in an environment of high energy and healthy interaction among law abiding community members. Thus, the quality of life is enhanced in several ways including an enhancement of individual physical fitness, a safer mode of transportation

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July 23, 1991

for cyclists and pedestrians and the potential for less crime overall in the communities.

In terms of public safety a system of bike paths for the county is a great idea.

Sincerely,



Brian R. Searles
Chief of Police

BRS:mc4

APPENDIX: RAILS-TRAILS & SAFE COMMUNITIES



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

Timothy M. Linskey
Chief of Police

Richard A. Ryan
Assistant Chief

Deanna O'Brien
Captain

May 8, 1997

Mr. Hugh Morris
Research Coordinator
Rails to Trails Conservancy
1717 Severn Road, Suite 201
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Morris:

I am writing in response to your letter of May 1, 1997 and your questions regarding local law enforcement involvement in vacated rail lines being used for bike, hiking and walking trails.

As you are well aware, Bloomington and its sister city have a well-constructed trail called Constitution Trail. It runs through both business, residential and rural areas. It is highly used by a cross section of the populace of both cities for bike riding, roller blading, running, and walking.

This trail is not visible from city streets for over half of the layout and much of it cannot be patrolled by an officer using conventional methods. However, we do periodically put our Bike Patrol officers on Constitution Trail. This is done primarily as a public relations maneuver, because there is very little crime created on or near the trail due to its construction.

Our citizens use this trail twenty-four hours a day and have met with very little crime on this trail. We have seen some of the neighboring residents have improved the development of their properties adjacent to the trail.

When the trail was first constructed, the administration of this department had a concern the trail would invite crime and would add to the crime rate of this city. However, in fact, it has had no impact on the crime rate of this city.

PROGRESS THROUGH PROFESSIONALISM

BOA 501001 - FEB 04 1997 - BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS 61702-4427 - 309/438-1144 - WWW.BOIA.ORG
POLICE MAIL ADDRESS: 100 N. WASHINGTON ST., BLOOMINGTON, IL 61702-4427

The development of Constitution Trail was an outstanding idea supported by the both the City of Bloomington and Town of Normal. There have been minimal negative remarks regarding the development of this trail. There are plans for future development.

Constitution Trail can be considered a resource which is enjoyed by the populace of both Bloomington and Normal.

Sincerely,

Timothy M. Linskey
Chief of Police

TML:mjm

APPENDIX: RAILS-TRAILS & SAFE COMMUNITIES

MIDLAND COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

2727 700D STREET • MIDLAND, MICHIGAN 48860 • TELEPHONE: (517) 834-6500
FAX: (517) 831-0400

May 8, 1997

Rails to Trails Conservancy
1100 Seventeenth Street, NW
10th Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Morris:

I am responding to your letter of May 1, 1997.

When the Rails to Trails project was first being developed in Midland County, the concerns you described were brought up here also.


Happily, I can report to you that we have no major problems on our Rail Trails. The development of this park has been a very positive experience for the entire community. The park receives a lot of use from the public.

The incidents that we have had are for the most part misuse of the Trail. Items such as a go-cart or motorcycle being driven on the Trail.


In 1995, the Midland Sheriff's Office responded to eight calls on the Rail Trail. None of these responses required a formal report. In 1996, the Sheriff's Office responded to eight calls, five of them were for a ticket for minor possession of tobacco products. In 1997 through the first of May, we have had no calls for service on the Rail Trail.

In conclusion, I would say that crime has NOT been a factor on or near the Rail Trail. The development of this park has been a very positive experience for Midland County and its residents.

I hope this letter meets your needs, and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

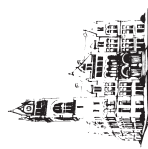
Sincerely,

John S. Reder

JSR/sb



CITY OF BAY CITY
POLICE DEPARTMENT
BAY ENFORCEMENT CENTER
301 THIRD STREET
BAY CITY, MICHIGAN 49708

ARKA CODE 517
TELEPHONE 922 8571
FAX# 924 0577


National Register of Historic Sites
Michigan Historic Registry #129

Gary G. Hect, Deputy Chief
Bay City Police Department
501 Third St.
Bay City, MI 49708

May 12, 1997

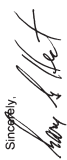
Rails to Trails Conservancy
1100 Seventeenth Street, NW
10th Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Sir/Madam:

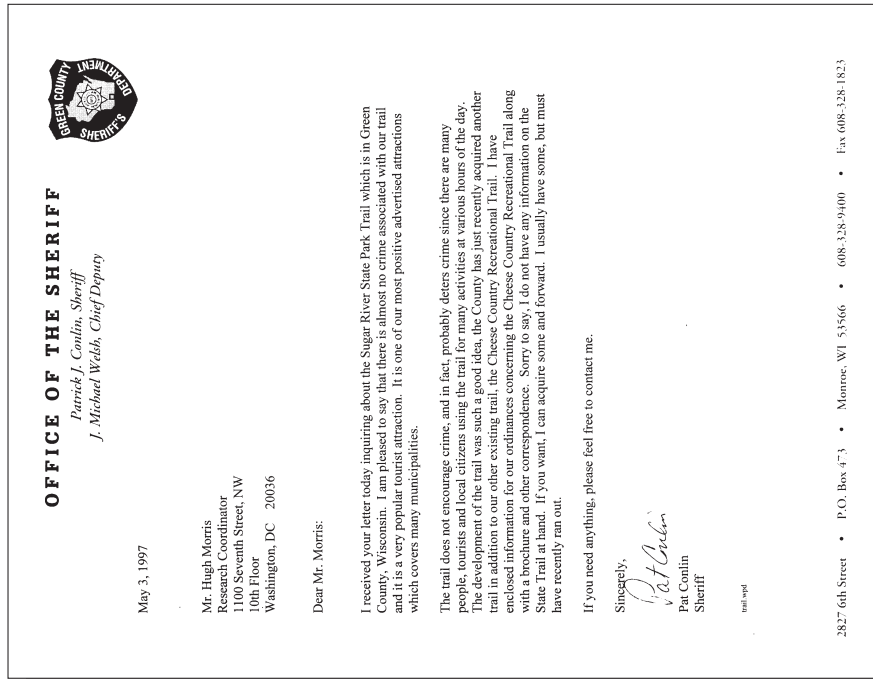
This is in regards to your request for information on our Bay Hampton Rail-Trail. Upon checking our criminal file we could only find one complaint associated with the Rail Trail. The complaint is listed as an "assault and attempted larceny," see attached CR#7-02216.

Due to the limitations on our complaint tracking system any complaints generated refer to the Rail Trail would be extremely difficult to identify. But as a frequent walker of the Rail Trail I can provide some personal observations. I have observed some minor graffiti on the park benches and the Rail Trail walkway. There is the occasional broken bottle on the walkway. I have not observed any peripheral damage to adjacent property. Criminal activity on the Rail Trail is extremely minor and infrequent.

If I can be of any further assistance please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Gary G. Hect, Deputy Chief
Support Services Division

APPENDIX: RAILS-TRAILS & SAFE COMMUNITIES



APPENDIX: RAILS-TRAILS & SAFE COMMUNITIES

APPENDIX B:

A LOOK AT EVERYDAY RISKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PUMPKINVINE NATURE TRAIL.

Many rail-trail opponents claim that these trails are unsafe for the users and the adjacent landowners. As “proof,” they gather anecdotes about crime on trails. Second, they assert that these crimes prove all trails are unsafe. Third, they draw the conclusion that your trail will also be crime ridden and should not be built.

I believe this line of argument employs a double standard of safety and risk. Those who attack the safety of trails would never think of applying the same type of risk analysis to other forms of transportation, recreation or life in general. It's a neat logical trick: by demanding perfect safety (i.e., no risks) in an imperfect and risky world, they create an artificial and impossibly high standard of safety that trail makers can never meet.

Trail opponents don't require promises of perfect safety in other areas of life, or they wouldn't get out of bed in the morning. They ignore all the risks involved in walking, riding in a car or crossing the supermarket parking lot while waving a few anecdotes about crimes on trails.

I've gathered some statistics over the years on risks and safety that might help make the point.

Dogs, sometimes called man's best friend, provide companionship to millions. Yet in 1995, 3.5 million dog bites were reported to American insurance carriers, with the companies spending \$1 billion on the claims (South Bend Tribune, Oct. 6, 1996). Should we, therefore, outlaw dogs?

Escalators carry millions of people safely each year. Yet in Boston, 300 people require emergency room treatment every year from injuries received while riding on escalators (NBC Dateline, Nov. 29, 1995). Should we, therefore, eliminate escalators?

A trip to the grocery store is a usually routine. Yet in one recent year, shopping cart accidents resulted in 25,000 trips to the emergency room (68 per day), including two deaths. Two thousand children were hospitalized (NBC Today Show, March 20, 1996; data from a study by Dr. Gary Smith, Children's Hospital, Columbus, Ohio). Should we, therefore, ban shopping carts?

Regular exercise can significantly reduce the chances of dying prematurely from heart disease and other ailments. Yet in 1992 many forms of recreation resulted the following number of emergency room trips: table tennis-1,455; horseshoes-4,423; billiards-5,835; bowling-24,361; golf-37,556; in-line skates-83,000; volleyball-90,125; swing sets-102,232; football-229,689; baseball-285,593; bicycles-649,536 (Newsweek, June 21, 1994, data from U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission). No question: let's definitely ban that dangerous table tennis game.

Farmers use the latest equipment to produce our food. Yet in Indiana, 28 people die in an average year in farm accidents. Farmers die at more than four times the average rate of all other workers from work-related accidents, according to the National Safety Council. (AP story in the Goshen News. I did not record the date.) Explain that, Farm Bureau.

Government sources estimate that air bags in motor vehicles have saved 2,700 lives. Yet at the same time they have killed 87 people-48 adults and 39 children (NBC Nightly News, Nov. 17, 1997).

Trains are one of the most efficient ways to move freight. Yet a vehicle-train crash occurs about once every 90 minutes in the U.S. Two motorists are killed daily in these crashes. (Goshen News, July 13, 1994; data from Indiana Operation Lifesaver.)

APPENDIX: RAILS-TRAILS & SAFE COMMUNITIES

We send our sons and daughters to college for higher education. Yet colleges are awash in criminal behavior. About 2,400 U.S. colleges reported their statistics on campus crime to the Chronicle of Higher Education in response to the 1990 federal law, the Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act of 1990. The report states that in the reporting academic year (1991-1992) there were 7,500 incidents of violent crime on their campuses. That includes 30 murders, 1,000 rapes and more than 1,800 robberies.

However, they also reported that these violent crimes, thank goodness, were the exception when compared to property crimes, e.g., there were 32,127 burglaries and 8,981 motor vehicle thefts in the same period. (I know I feel better with that qualification.) (From the Chronicle of Higher Education, Jan. 20, 1993, p. A32.)

And, of course, the most glaring source of risky behavior—the highways. In 1993, 53,717 motor vehicles were involved in 35,747 fatal crashes, resulting in 40,115 deaths (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety). Does this statistic mean we should, therefore, ban motor vehicles or highways or both?

Every form of human activity involves risks. The question is whether the risks are acceptable in light of the rewards. Our society, with some bizarre logic, rationalizes away or accepts 40,000 deaths each year from motor vehicles because it believes the rewards are acceptable. Most people believe the rewards of college are worth the risk of occasional criminal behavior, and most people believe the risk of going up the escalator is worth the risk of getting your foot caught in the mechanism. Once established, trails have proven to be as safe as the surrounding community through which they pass. The rewards of recreation and nonmotorized transportation they provide far outweigh the risks.

While it is important not to trivialize or deny that bad things can happen on trails, it is equally important to examine the logic behind the anecdotes. Are trail opponents willing to apply their let's-close-the-trails logic to other activities, e.g., close all highways because 40,000 people are killed each year; close all colleges because there were 1,000 rapes? If not, then they are using a double standard to analyze risks—a selective use of statistics to discredit what is a relatively safe activity.

Two final points. First, we need to educate trail users about elementary safety precautions. We should caution people about jogging alone on an isolated trail, just as we would caution against jogging alone on an isolated country road or the mall parking lot for that matter.

Second, if there are safety problems on trails, we need to fix them. That's what we do with highways. If there's a dangerous highway curve, we straighten it. If a certain highway intersection has frequent accidents, we redesign it or put up stoplights. But, we don't close the road when we discover a problem, and we don't stop building more of them. Instead, we improve them.

Why would it be any different for trails?

John D. Yoder, President
Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc.

APPENDIX: RAILS-TRAILS & SAFE COMMUNITIES

ENDNOTES:

¹ Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. *Living Along Trails: What People Expect and Find*. Saint Paul, MN, 1980.

Moore, Roger L., et al. *The Impacts of Rail-Trails: A Study of Users and Nearby Property Owners from Three Trails*. Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1992.

Seattle Engineering Department and Office for Planning. *Evaluation of the Burke-Gilman Trail's Effects on Property Values and Crime*. Seattle, WA: Seattle Engineering Department, May, 1987.

Schenectady County Department of Planning. *The Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail: Its Impact on Adjoining Residential Properties*. Schenectady, New York, 1997.

²These numbers reflect condensed data. Some survey respondents indicated two or more trail location types or omitted the answer to this question altogether. Thus the original results fell into seven categories: urban, suburban, rural, urban/suburban, suburban/rural, urban/suburban/rural and blank. To facilitate data analysis, we placed crimes from the latter four categories into urban, suburban and rural categories using weighted distributions.

³ All law enforcement agencies for which contact information was provided in primary survey were contacted.

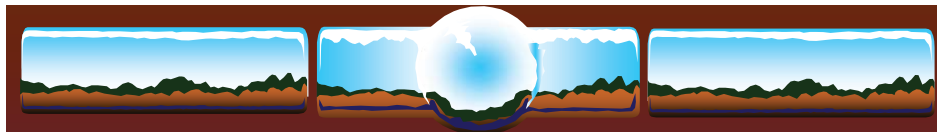
⁴ Estimate of annual users based on extrapolation of trails reporting number of users by areatype on a users per mile basis.

⁵ At the time of the rail-trail crime study, the FBI had only released the preliminary Uniform Crime Report for 1996, therefore the 1995 Uniform Crime Report was used as a comparison for both the 1995 and 1996 rail-trail crime rates.

⁶ The Uniform Crime Report refers to mugging as robbery, "the taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear."

⁷ The Uniform Crime Report measures vandalism by arrest rather than known incidents. Thus only comparisons to burglary were used.


APPENDIX B: CRIME, PROPERTY VALUES, TRAIL OPPOSITION & LIABILITY ISSUES



Crime, Property Values, Trail Opposition & Liability Issues

Tim Eling
Presented at the
Lexington Big Sandy Workshop, 4/1/06


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3 Common Concerns of Trail Opposition

- 1) Crime will go up
- 2) Property values will go down
- 3) Liability and lawsuits

APPENDIX: CRIME, PROPERTY VALUES, TRAIL OPPOSITION & LIABILITY ISSUES



Crime

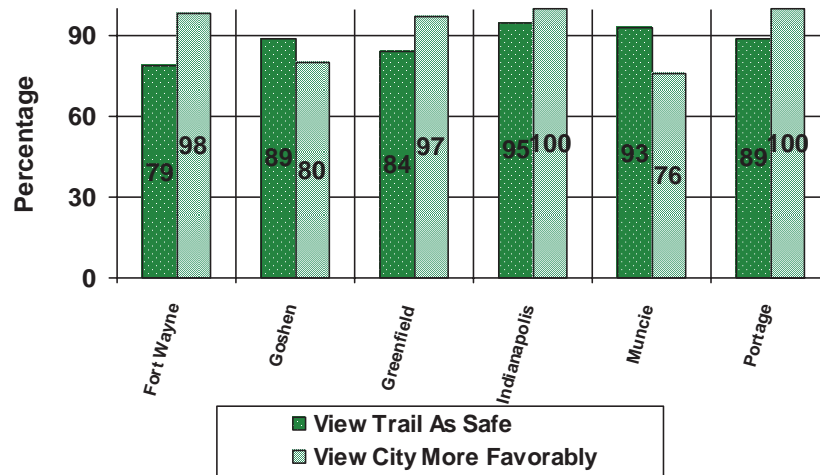
- ❖ Many adjacent landowners assume crime will go up if a rail trail is built
- ❖ In fact, those fears are unfounded

Indiana Trails Study - 2000 Survey of Trail Users along six trails in Indiana



APPENDIX: CRIME, PROPERTY VALUES, TRAIL OPPOSITION & LIABILITY ISSUES

Chart 14: Percentage of Trail Users Viewing Trail As Safe and City As More Favorable Due to Trail



Law Enforcement Patrol can ease fears



- Washington County, VA deputy prepares to patrol VA Creeper Trail