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Contact: Jim Barry
Judith Drucker
(609) 963-1975

New Jersey's expanding trail network to be explored at Inaugural Trails and Greenways Summit

Panel discussions to guide trail development and expansion in the state

TRENTON, NJ – The New Jersey Department of Transportation, in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, announced the **2021 New Jersey Trails & Greenways Summit**. New Jersey's first-ever Trails Summit is an opportunity to highlight the robust trail and greenway networks that have been created throughout the state and feature exemplary projects as they have become an increasingly important piece of New Jersey's transportation and recreation network.

The free, two-day online event will be held on **September 22nd and September 23rd** and feature speakers and panel discussions on both days, with opportunities for virtual Q&A.

Session topics will include:

- trail and greenway funding
- planning and design
- construction and maintenance
- multi-use paths
- trail crossings and transit connections
- Complete Streets and inclusivity

The Summit will be an opportunity to envision more interconnected networks across the state.

"Our two state agencies have worked hand-in-hand for many years to provide resources and funding for the implementation of world-class trails and greenways across the state," said **NJDOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti**. "This Summit is not only the latest result of that long-standing collaboration, but also a testament to our ongoing partnerships with state, county, and local organizations and advocates dedicated to expanding and improving our trail and greenway network."

"New Jersey is a diverse and inclusive place rich in history, wildlife, and open space," said **NJDEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette**, "Trails are an excellent way to explore the natural places within our beautiful state while also providing important ecosystem services and opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through active transportation. We are thrilled to be partnering with the New Jersey Department of Transportation to share information about resources and have a conversation about creating trails in our state."

"We are absolutely thrilled to see the New Jersey Department of Transportation and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection host an event on such an important

and timely topic," said **Sonia Szczesna, Director of Active Transportation for Tri-State Transportation Campaign**. "It's crucial for us all to be thinking about how we ensure our trails are equitable and accessible to all. Trails have become a lifeline for many throughout the pandemic, whether for socially distanced commutes or for New Jerseyans' health and well-being."

"Trails are not just for recreation," said **John Boyle of the Circuit Trails Coalition and Research Director at the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia**. "They can get us to work, to the grocery store, to school, and to nature. 40% of trips people regularly take are shorter than two miles. Trails allow us to cross paths with our neighbors as we walk our dogs, build exercise into our daily routes, and take us to places we've never been."

"Trails are essential parts of our active transportation network and, when paired with Complete Streets, can make walking and bicycling for shorter trips a norm," said **Bill Foelsch, Chair of the New Jersey Trails Council**. "Choosing to invest in trails creates lasting positive impacts to the economic development, health, and well-being of local communities and the environment."

The planning committee includes members from the NJ Trails Council, the NJ Bike & Walk Coalition, the NJ Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Council, the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, Lawrence Hopewell Trail, Monmouth County Park System, the Circuit Trails Coalition, and the East Coast Greenway Alliance, and is organized by the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University.

Register for the 2021 New Jersey Trails & Greenways Summit by visiting the NJ Trails & Greenways Summit [website](#). Additional information is available on the New Jersey Trails & Greenways Summit [Facebook page](#) where you can register separately for in-person trail walks and rides coordinated by partner organizations.

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