



December 25, 2006

Dear American Tobacco Trail Supporter,

Season's Greetings from the Board of the Triangle Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (TRTC)! This has been a very busy year for the Conservancy. Your TRTC membership, gifts and contributions helped us to buy and maintain tools for work days, purchase trail user counters, send out mailings, maintain our trail work insurance, match grants, participate in festivals, give away trail maps, buy and install signs, and much more. We need your continued gifts and support because 2007 looks to be just as busy.

Thanks to your help, in 2006 we have been able to accomplish the following:

- **American Tobacco Trail Grows Again in Wake County** - A 1.2 mile section north of the White Oak Church Road Access, and connecting to the Chatham County line, officially opened in mid December. Over 800 person/hours were worked by TRTC Volunteers clearing and cleaning this section in advance of construction. This saved Wake County more than \$9,000 in contractor fees and resulted in a better, more thorough job. As a result, trail users can now hike or ride almost nine miles to the still-undecked Panther Creek trestle.
- **New Trailhead in Southern Durham County** - With the help of a state grant and over 1,500 volunteer hours over three years, TRTC has largely completed a new trailhead parking area on Fayetteville Road, south of Southpoint Mall. This will be donated to the City of Durham in the spring of 2007 and will be an important access point for the ATT south of I-40.
- **Successfully Obtained Wider Tree and Vegetative Buffers on ATT** - Working with the Durham Planning Board, the Durham Open Space and Trails Commission and Toll Brothers Homes, TRTC advocated and negotiated wider buffers and additional trail connections on Toll Brothers new Fayetteville Road Assemblage development in southern Durham.
- **TRTC Advocates for Durham to Get Moving on Completing ATT** - This summer, TRTC learned that progress on the final four miles of the ATT and I-40 bridge in Durham was stalled. After pleas for a meeting with city staff were ignored, TRTC offered an online and print petition that asked for the project to move forward. Over 2,700 names signed the electronic and print petitions, which were presented to the Durham City Council. As a result, TRTC volunteers met with Durham staff, our efforts received favorable press, and the ATT appears to be moving forward.
- **Progress on the ATT in Chatham County** - TRTC played a significant role in getting Chatham County, NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, (NCDOT Bike-Ped) and other partners to start talking with each other, formalize funding, start planning and designing this critical middle section of the ATT. Design of the trail by Bike-Ped staff is nearing completion with bidding and construction scheduled to begin in 2007.
- **TRTC Made Sure All Voices were Heard** - When it was announced that NCDOT Bike-Ped wanted to pave the entire trail in Chatham County, TRTC made sure that **all** trail users and user groups had a real voice in the preliminary design. As a result, consensus was reached regarding a dual paved and compacted granite screenings surface.
- **Continued Maintenance and Development of 7.5 miles of the ATT**- Because of sustained TRTC volunteer work, leadership and management, over 7.5 miles of ATT are **NOW OPEN** for walkers, runners and bicyclists in southern Durham and Chatham counties. Partnering with REI, Bronto Software, the National Charity League, the Volunteer Center of Durham and others, TRTC organized and led workdays almost every weekend of 2006 on the Durham and Chatham sections, continued to clear fallen trees and debris from the trail and installed new signage. TRTC also participated in multi-jurisdictional management team meetings with Wake, Chatham and Durham counties, Town of Cary, as well as the NCDOT Bike-Pedestrian and Rail Divisions, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission.
- **Promotion of the ATT and Local Trails**- TRTC gave away hundreds of ATT maps, informational brochures and dispensed lots of information about the ATT and area trails at eight festivals and made presentations to six organizations.

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Whew! It's been one of the most active years I can remember! Thanks to your contributions of time, petition-signing, email and phone calls of support, and money, we've been able to keep completion and development of the ATT 'on track', as well as promote new rail-trails and greenways in our area.

Believe it or not, next year could prove to be even more momentous (and busy) for local rail-trails and the Conservancy. **Listed below are our main goals for 2007:**

- **Completion of the ATT** - TRTC will continue to strongly advocate for the completion of the trail in Durham, Chatham counties, continued improvements of the ATT in Wake County and remain a vital partner in the planning process.
- **Complete the Final Mile 500 feet in Chatham** - TRTC will continue to finish clearing, make safe, open and partner in managing the final mile, with now only 500 feet to go, of the trail in Chatham County south to Wake County. With the newly opened Wake section, this will completely open almost nine miles of continuous trail!
- **Start Construction of the ATT in Chatham** - TRTC will continue to work with Chatham County, NCDOT Bike Ped and the Town of Cary to provide any information and help to keep this project on schedule to start construction in 2007 .
- **Transfer of the Fayetteville Road Trailhead** - TRTC plans to open this trailhead parking area to the public and transfer it to city management by the summer.
- **Finish and Publish the ATT map** - This detailed User map will provide valuable information on the whole trail (and some connecting greenways).
- **Continue Maintenance of the Trail** - We will continue to hold volunteer workdays in Durham and Chatham counties to improve, maintain and manage the trail so everyone can use it now, instead of waiting for years until the municipalities do it.
- **Improve Trail facilities and Trail safety** - We will promote and find funds for more bike racks, information kiosks, trail-use counters, benches and trail connections. As with this year, we will promote more police presence on the trail, dogs on leashes and safe trail use amongst users.
- **Protect, Defend and Enhance the ATT** - TRTC will continue to advocate for maintaining the integrity of the trail and corridor, defend against any encroachment threats and work to enhance the trail and user experience. We'll work with other individuals and organizations who want to do the same.
- **Continue to Advocate for New Rail-Trails in the Triangle** - We haven't given up on the Timberline or Durham Beltline Rail-Trails and neither should you! We'll continue to work for other rail-trail opportunities.

As you can see, we've got quite a bit on our plate, so let's keep the momentum going!

Less than one half of American Tobacco Trail would be open today if it weren't for the continued support of our members and volunteers. Thanks to you, over 90 percent of the planned 22 miles of ATT are **NOW OPEN!** Your gifts, volunteer labor and contributions have opened and maintained significant portions of the trail for thousands to use now – **years ahead of when municipalities could do it** – as well as cleared trailheads, promoted the trail and also matched grants.

Your gifts, memberships, help and labor are needed now because we all need to keep working to open the ATT as soon as possible. If you haven't already renewed your annual membership, or sent in a gift, please do so now. **Donations to TRTC are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.** You can fill out and mail the attached slip, print and mail the form at our website or use the PayPal link found on our website ([www.triangletrails.org](http://www.triangletrails.org)). If you are interested in working on the trail, please check our website for the Volunteering link for a schedule of workdays and to sign up for our email workday reminders. Details about our monthly board meeting – always open to members and the public – and more info than you could possibly want to know about the American Tobacco Trail, are also available on the site.

If you are receiving this, you have played or can play an active part in completing, maintaining and promoting the American Tobacco Trail, which – even before completion – is recognized as one of the best shared-use trails in the country! Please continue to support, use and demand for completion of the ATT, connecting greenways and future rail-trails in the Triangle.

Sincerely,

Bill, Leslie, David, Dan, Frank, Gail, Curt, T.J., Bob,  
Curtis, Moriah, Carolyn and Cotten