



February 16, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: Support Letter for Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) and Eastern Trail Management District Application to the USDOT FY2023 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program.

Dear U.S. Secretary Buttigieg:

Casco Bay Trail Alliance is writing in support of MaineDOT and Eastern Trail Management District's funding request to the RAISE grant program for the development of approximately 2.7 miles of off-road trail in two segments in North Berwick, Wells, and Kennebunk, Maine. As components of the regional Eastern Trail, these trails will provide bicyclists and pedestrians with safe access to jobs, schools, housing, and other services in these communities.

The 0.7-mile northern trail will link West Kennebunk village center to the current terminus of the Eastern Trail, which connects to an elementary school and continues to the regional service center of Biddeford. The 2-mile southern trail will address the lack of multimodal connectivity from the village of North Berwick to residential areas in Wells. Both trail segments will connect residential areas with major regional employers (Kennebunk Savings Bank and Pratt & Whitney), enabling workers to commute by biking or walking rather than automobile. Together, these ready to develop trails will begin to fill in gaps in the Eastern Trail that have been identified by the Eastern Trail Alliance, which advocates for the trail system and has a long-term vision for an off-road trail that will connect many of Southern Maine's cities and towns.

The Casco Bay Trail Alliance is also working to create a recreational trail in Maine, and sees the many benefits of the extension of the Eastern Trail. Off-road corridors are an incredible community resource, providing safe recreational space for walkers and bicyclists, promoting public health, and creating new transportation options and exciting opportunities for economic development. Maine's DOT recently developed a Long Range Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan, which encourage safe travel, world-class quality of life, environmentally sustainable transportation and a vibrant economy. We feel these values closely align with connecting communities throughout Maine with multi-use trail infrastructure, as would be achieved by the extension of the Eastern Trail.

In support of this important effort, Casco Bay Trail Alliance supports the projects included in this RAISE application, which will have a significant local and regional impact by providing safe and sustainable connections to economic opportunities and essential services in our communities. These projects will improve vulnerable user safety, reduce emissions, and overall improve quality of life for these communities.

Sincerely,

Martha Leggat
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