



Maryland Department of Transportation
The Secretary's Office

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor

Michael S. Steele
Lt. Governor

Robert L. Flanagan
Secretary

James F. Ports, Jr.
Deputy Secretary

July 7, 2006

Mr. Kevin Brandt
Superintendent
Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historic Park
National Park Service
1850 Dual Highway, Suite 100
Hagerstown, Maryland 21742

Dear Superintendent Brandt:

This is to inform the National Park Service (NPS) that the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) supports a full Environmental Impact Study regarding the construction of proposed Georgetown University boathouse along the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT). The Environmental Assessment completed by the NPS has selected Alternative C as the Preferred Alternative. However the Environmental Assessment notes that, "*Construction activities would require shifting the CCT, widening the paved area to provide access, and relocating the northern fence adjacent to the WCC (Washington Canoe Club). This would result in a slight to moderate impact on trail users.*" It appears that the usable width of the trail will be reduced under the Preferred Alternative.

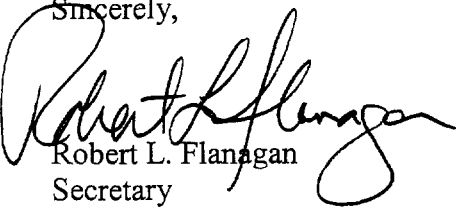
The CCT is a very popular trail that provides access for thousands of trips annually between Montgomery County, Maryland and the District of Columbia. Maryland residents use the CCT for both commuting and recreational purposes. MDOT has contributed nearly \$1.5 million in Transportation Enhancement Program funds for both the construction of a 4-mile section of trail between the DC line and Bethesda and for the construction of a 120-foot long trail bridge crossing of MD Route 190/River Road between 1992 and 1994. The potential reduction of usable trail width both increases the risks of collisions between trail users and decreases the current level of comfort for bicyclists and pedestrians.

As evidenced by our past financial contributions MDOT is committed to maintaining the best use of the CCT. An EIS would help ensure that the needs of trail users are being fully considered when evaluating how to accommodate the proposed Georgetown University boathouse.

Mr. Kevin Brandt
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Thank you for your consideration of this matter. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Michael E. Jackson, Director of Bicycle and Pedestrian Access at 410-865-1237 or mjackson3@mdot.state.md.us. He will be pleased to assist you. Of course you should not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Flanagan
Secretary

cc: Mr. David Dionne, Chairman, Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory
Committee
Mr. Michael E. Jackson, Director, Bicycle and Pedestrian Access, MDOT
Mr. David Marks, Chief of Staff, MDOT
Mr. Sam Minnitte, Director, Office of Planning, MDOT
Ms. Sylvia Ramsey, Manager, Community Enhancement Programs, MDOT