



Naugatuck River Greenway Steering Committee

Torrington • Harwinton • Litchfield • Thomaston • Watertown • Waterbury • Naugatuck • Beacon Falls • Seymour • Ansonia • Derby

Laurie Giannotti
Trails & Greenways Program Coordinator
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

November 1, 2021

Dear Laurie:

This letter is being submitted in strong support of the University of Connecticut Extension Trails and Active Living Program's application to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Recreational Trails Program for the funding for the continuation of the CT Trails Census (CTTC) and CT Trail Finder (CTTF) Programs. Over the past several years, the CTTC has provided valuable information about multiuse trail use on the Naugatuck River Greenway (NRG) Trail and on multiuse trails across the state. More recently, the CTTF has offered an exciting new way for trail managers along the NRG to engage with trail users and potential trail users. We look forward to the continuation of both projects.

Consisting of representatives from all 11 municipalities along the Naugatuck River, along with regional, state, and federal representatives, the Naugatuck River Greenway Steering Committee (NRGSC) serves to promote, support and help guide the development of the NRG trail. Prior to the CTTC program, a common and universal complaint we heard from municipalities and trail groups that are trying to fund and build multiuse trails is about the lack of trail user data in Connecticut. With the knowledge provided by the CTTC, trail administrators are better able to plan, fund, design and construct or maintain trail facilities to best meet the needs of users. And with the CTTF web application, managers have a direct line to trail users and potential users. We were eager to get NRG Trail sections included early, and we are excited to see the list of trails included grow, and for future additions of events and businesses.

We fully support the scope of the University of Connecticut Trails and Active Living Programs. We know that a better understanding of trail use in the state will help us, and other trail organizations promote and build trails that will best serve communities, residents and visitors alike. We also know that effectively engaging the public about trails and recreation opportunities is critical to derive the most benefit from these assets. If you have any questions about the NRGSC or our support for this submission, please do not hesitate to contact NRGSC Co-Chairs Rista Malanca at Rista_Malanca@torringtonct.org, or Jack Walsh at johnwalshderby@comcast.net.

Sincerely,
NRGSC Co-Chairs:

Rista Malanca

Jack Walsh

*"The Naugatuck River from Torrington to Derby is rich with history, stunning scenery and wildlife. Just as the river built and shaped our towns and cities, the Naugatuck River Greenway will be a driving force for the next century and beyond.
Our mission is to harness the vitality and protect the health of the river for economic development and quality of life for all."*



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October 29, 2021

Laurie Giannotti
Trails & Greenways Program Coordinator
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

Dear Laurie:

This letter is being submitted in strong support of the Town of Seymour's application to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Recreational Trails Program for the funding to conduct a routing study of the Naugatuck River Greenway (NRG) Trail from downtown Seymour south to the Ansonia city line. Extension of the Naugatuck River Greenway Trail will greatly enhance trail user experience, draw more utilitarian arial users, and will be one more step in developing a safe, convenient, and enjoyable bicycle and pedestrian network that will make non-motorized transportation in the region a real option.

When complete, the NRG trail will stretch 44 miles along the Naugatuck River from Torrington South to Derby. The NRG Steering Committee (NRGSC), consisting of representatives from all 11 municipalities along the NRG route along with regional, state and federal representatives, serves to promote, support and help guide the development of the NRG and connections to other transportation facilities and amenities. We recognize multiuse trails as not only recreational facilities, but a means for alternative transportation, and ultimately, as a driver of local economies. In fact, a study commissioned by the NRGSC and published by NVCOG in 2017, estimated that if completed, the Seymour section of NRG would drive \$1.9 million in annual spending and more than \$11.4 million in cumulative health benefits by 2031.

There is currently a gap in established routing between the open section of NRG Trail in downtown Seymour and Ansonia's section of NRG Trail. Ansonia received funding in the previous Recreational Trails Program round to address the routing within that City. If funded, Seymour will continue that work, developing routing that will connect open sections of trail in Seymour and Ansonia. It is the logical next step for Seymour to take to fulfil its commitment to complete the trail through the Town, and we hope that you will consider their proposal.

If you have any questions about the NRGSC or our support for Seymour's Recreational Trails Program submission, please do not hesitate to contact NRGSC Co-Chairs Rista Malanca at Rista_Malanca@torringtonct.org, or Jack Walsh at johnwalshderby@comcast.net.

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Laurie Giannotti
Trails & Greenways Program Coordinator
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

Dear Laurie:

We are writing this letter in support of the City of Torrington's application to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Recreational Trails Program for funding to construct a section of Sue Grossman Still River Greenway Trail between North Elm Street and Newfield Road. Additions to this already popular trail will greatly enhance trail user experience, draw more utilitarian and recreational users, and help in developing a safe, convenient, and enjoyable bike and pedestrian network that will make non-motorized transportation in Western CT a real option.

While the Sue Grossman Still River Greenway trail will not officially be part of the Naugatuck River Greenway (NRG) Trail, there are plans to connect the two in downtown Torrington, and we view it as a natural extension of the NRG Trail that will one day extend access from the NRG to Winsted. When complete, the NRG trail will stretch 44 miles along the Naugatuck River from Torrington South to Derby. The NRG Steering Committee (NRGSC), consisting of representatives from all 11 municipalities along the NRG route along with regional, state, and federal representatives, serves to promote, support, and help guide the development of the NRG and connections to other transportation facilities and amenities. We recognize multiuse trails as not only recreational facilities, but a means for alternative transportation, and ultimately, as a driver of local economies.

Looking to successful examples of trail development around the country, trail usage, especially by cyclists, is closely related to trail length and access to destinations. As such, we are continually looking at ways to extend the reach of the NRG Trail by connecting to existing trails and bike and pedestrian infrastructure as well as neighborhoods and destinations. Construction of a connection between the NRG Trail in Derby to the Shelton Riverwalk on the south end of the NRG Corridor are underway, and we welcome similar connections in Torrington. This project will bring that eventuality one step closer, and we are happy to support the effort.

If you have any questions about the NRGSC or our support for Torrington's Recreational Trails Program submission, please do not hesitate to contact NRGSC Co-Chairs Rista Malanca at Rista_Malanca@torringtonct.org, or Jack Walsh at johnwalshderby@comcast.net.

Sincerely,

Jack Walsh
NRGSC Co-Chair

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Laurie Giannotti
Trails & Greenways Program Coordinator
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

Dear Laurie:

This letter is being submitted in strong support of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Government's (NVCOG) application to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Recreational Trails Program for the funding to conduct the Naugatuck River Greenway Trail - Waterbury Phase II Environmental and Engineering Study. Waterbury Phase II is a critical link between the soon to be completed NRG Phase I, and Downtown Waterbury. The complexity of the corridor requires the additional due diligence that the proposed project will provide, and it is an important step to make the trail a reality.

When complete, the NRG trail will stretch 44 miles along the Naugatuck River from Torrington South to Derby. The NRG Steering Committee (NRGSC), consisting of representatives from all 11 municipalities along the NRG route along with regional, state and federal representatives, serves to promote, support and help guide the development of the NRG and connections to other transportation facilities and amenities. We recognize multiuse trails as not only recreational facilities, but a means for alternative transportation, and ultimately, as a driver of local economies. In fact, a study commissioned by the NRGSC and published by NVCOG in 2017, estimated that if completed, the Waterbury section of NRG would drive \$11.8 million in annual spending and more than \$72 million in cumulative health benefits by 2031.

Waterbury has begun construction on its first section of the NRG Trail. That project had previously been delayed due to unforeseen environmental concerns and cost overruns associated with constructing a multiuse trail in an urban and postindustrial area. With that experience in mind, the approach that NVCOG and the City of Waterbury is taking to proactively assess environmental and engineering needs will be critical to the success of trail development in a difficult and demanding environment. This study is a smart next step for NVCOG and the City to take to ensure the success of future trail development into downtown, and we hope that you will grant their request.

If you have any questions about the NRGSC or our support for NVCOG's Recreational Trails Program submission, please do not hesitate to contact NRGSC Co-Chairs Rista Malanca at Rista_Malanca@torringtonct.org, or Jack Walsh at johnwalshderby@comcast.net.

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Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

Dear Laurie:

We are writing this letter in strong support of the Town of Watertown's application to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Recreational Trails Program for funding to design a section of Naugatuck River Greenway Trail between Frost Bridge Road and Branch Brook. This section of trail has been identified by our committee as a top priority, and the design that is proposed by the town is critical to unlocking the funding necessary to construct this important piece of the NRG Trail.

When complete, the NRG trail will stretch 44 miles along the Naugatuck River from Torrington South to Derby. The NRG Steering Committee (NRGSC), consisting of representatives from all 11 municipalities along the NRG route along with regional, state and federal representatives, serves to promote, support and help guide the development of the NRG and connections to other transportation facilities and amenities. We recognize multiuse trails as not only recreational facilities, but a means for alternative transportation, and ultimately, as a driver of local economies. In fact, a study commissioned by the NRGSC and published by NVCOG in 2017 estimated that if completed, the Watertown section of NRG would draw over 95,000 visitors annually, and with them \$2.1 million in annual direct spending and more than \$12.8 million in cumulative health benefits by 2031.

Thomaston has fully designed the adjacent section of trail, including a pedestrian bridge over Branch Brook and a trailhead and parking area on Old Waterbury Road. Both Watertown and Thomaston have been approved by NVCOG for LOTCIP funding to construct their adjacent sections of trail. CT DOT has not issued commitment to fund letters for these projects, however, citing concern over potential impacts to a City of Waterbury water supply main. The design work that Recreational Trails funding will support, will dispel those concerns, unlocking construction funds for the adjacent sections of NRG Trail in Thomaston and Watertown. We hope that you will grant the Town's request for design funds and capitalize on this opportunity to leverage so much additional funding.

If you have any questions about the NRGSC or our support for NVCOG's Recreational Trails Program submission, please do not hesitate to contact NRGSC Co-Chairs Rista Malanca at Rista_Malanca@torringtonct.org, or Jack Walsh at johnwalshderby@comcast.net.

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