



January 24, 2014

Community Preservation Committee
Town of Groveland
183 Main Street
Groveland, MA 01834

Re: Groveland Community Trail

Dear Groveland Community Preservation Committee:

On behalf of the congressionally designated Essex National Heritage Commission, I write to offer our strong support for the Groveland Open Space and Trails Committee's request for funds to initiate development of Groveland Community Trail.

The project presents an important opportunity to increase recreational trail usage by providing town residents and visitors alike with a safe, attractive and functional community resource on which to recreate, commute and commune. Once completed, the Groveland Community Trail will serve as a vital new connection linking neighborhoods, businesses and the Merrimack River with municipally-owned destinations such as town hall, public library, schools and parks.

As a partnership organization involved in regional trail development, Essex Heritage views the Groveland Community Trail as an essential element of the region's emerging system of on- and off-road trails. In recent years trails linking a broad array of recreational, civic, commercial, and transportation destinations have been roundly embraced by numerous local, state and federal officials, civic organizations and, most importantly, residents in communities from Newburyport to Peabody and Lawrence to Salisbury.

The collective experience of communities from around the region is that trail building is a long incremental process, the success of which is largely dependent on municipal government's sustained commitment over time. To ensure that Groveland's groundbreaking trail facility fulfills its promise and enjoys widespread use, it is critical that the project be supported financially during the initial design phase. We are confident that doing so will ultimately yield a bounty of quality of life and economic benefits, and importantly, create the opportunity to leverage state monies for the trail's construction.

In closing, we ask that you to fully consider the Open Space and Trails Committee's request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Steelman".

Bill Steelman
Chief Operating Officer