

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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RELEASE: July 20, 1999

Whitman Opens Pemberton Bike Trail

New Jersey Governor Christie Whitman today joined local children to bicycle through newly-created trails in Pemberton following a ribbon cutting ceremony officially opening a portion of the Pemberton Rotary "Rails to Trails" project.

The ceremony and bike ride highlighted 18 months of work by the Rotary, with assistance from the state Departments of Transportation and Environmental Protection, local businesses, school children and countless volunteers to turn the abandoned railroad corridors in the northern section of the township into a walking and bicycle trail.

"Riding the new trail today illustrates that mile-by-mile we will reach our goal of building 2,000 miles of bicycle trails across New Jersey. State and federal funds set aside for this initiative will support local community efforts," said Gov. Whitman.

"The partnerships formed to raise funds and get the work done to create the Pemberton trail is a model for communities throughout New Jersey," Gov. Whitman said.

The Bike Trail Initiative was outlined in the Governor's Inaugural address and to date 249 miles of trails are in progress, with 31 miles completed. The state Fiscal Year 1999 budget included \$15 million for the trails, and additional \$6.4 million was included in the Fiscal Year 2000 budget.

The Pemberton "Rails to Trails" project was funded by \$40,000 in cash and in-kind contributions to the Pemberton Rotary, \$20,000 in donations from more than 30 local companies and community groups and two \$10,000 federal National Recreation Trails Fund grants administered by the Department of Environmental Protection.

In addition, the Department of Transportation supplied crushed stone to cover the trail and the labor to install it and provided and installed trail markers to guide hikers and cyclists. The value of DOT's contribution is approximately \$50,000.