



Group gets grant to fund trail

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The Flint River Trail officially has received a much-needed boost.

Project organizers were awarded a \$220,000 grant to help fund a 19-mile-long trail.

Mike Norris, Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission transportation planning director, said the funding will help connect the trail between city and county lines.

Norris said the funding -- which is being shared equally between the county and city -- will help the project's construction between Starr's Cave Nature Preserve and Flint Creek to the Case New Holland Corp.

The grant is part of the federal recreational trails program and was approved by the Iowa Transportation Commission.

Norris said the group applied for \$500,000.

He said because the funding will aid both the city of Burlington and Des Moines County, the two entities applied together.

"That's why we did the joint application, so we could jointly develop the trail and not compete against each other for the money," Norris said.

Norris said the money from the transportation commission will become available on Oct. 1. He said between now and then, the city and county will have to go through project development, including a proposed design and environmental study clearance, with the DOT.

The total cost of the trail project is \$3.5 million and construction is set to begin in 2009.