

## Media Release

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **BLAND COUNTY TO LAUNCH ONE-OF-A- KIND TRAIL SYSTEM**

*~ Bland County Signs Frederico Morini as the Name Behind its Signature Trail System ~*

(The County of Bland, Virginia) – June 16, 2008, the Bland County Economic Development Authority (EDA) has taken the first step to launch a one of a kind trail system for Virginia. The EDA has entered into an agreement (06-13-08) for internationally renowned Italian cyclist Frederico ‘Fred’ Morini, of Team Morini, to establish a four-(4) trail network of cycling routes within the County.

“This Signature Trail System will be the centerpiece of the County’s tourism initiative and will play a large roll in the County’s long-term economic development efforts”, stated David Dillow, EDA Chairman. The cache behind the trail system will be the signature of Fred Morini. The County feels that signing Fred as the name and face of the Bland County Signature Trail System will give them international exposure and provide the needed horsepower behind their marketing push. “This endeavor has the potential to catapult Bland County, Virginia as an international cycling destination and plans have been put in place to cross-advertise, market, and aggressively promote this project with Team Morini”, stated Jonathan Sweet, County Administrator.

“This partnership with Bland County to advance tourism by-way-of cycling is one of my most exciting ventures yet”, stated Fred Morini. Fred began cycling in 1983 with Ciclo Sport Selci, his hometown team. He excelled as an amateur cyclist and advanced to higher and more elite levels of racing. His success continued as an amateur with multiple race wins with many of the more well-known cycling teams, such as Maltinti and team Brunero – Mapei. A pivotal moment before beginning his professional career in the German Gerolsteiner, was following an invitation to attend the European Championship in Sweden in 1998, and as an alternate for the World Championship in Holland that same year. During his debut as a professional, he quickly made headlines thanks to his high placement finishes in various competitions, and after only a few months, he won his first race in the highest category - the third stage of the Tour of Austria. Due to physical limitations as a result of a terrible accident in December 2001, his professional career came to an end. From that day forward, Fred began a new life along side the great champion Davide Rebellin, organizer of various events, television personality and technical advisor to not only cyclists but to members of the International Cycling Organization, including the Giro D’Italia, Tour de France and the Vuelta of Spain. “...With the breathtaking natural beauty, the challanging topography and elevations, and delightful people, Bland County is one of my favorite places in the world to ride”, shared Fred Morini.

The County intends to utilize VDOT to mark the Trail’s routes on the State Primary and Secondary Roads. The concept for the proposed signs will be a

color-coded guide similar to that of ski resorts' diamond system. The use of a color-coded system to denote degree of difficulty to riders will provide the following insights: **Green** – Easy / Beginner; **Blue** - Moderate / Novice; and **Black** - Challenging / Advanced.

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