TRAILS OF TODAY AS DIVERSE AS THE AMERICA THEY SERVE

National Trails Day, June 1, an Important Moment of Advocacy: Enjoyment

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Trails are for taking a gentle stroll through the wilderness. Trails are also for chewing up the miles on a road bike. And trails are also for chatting with your neighbors, learning how to ride a trike, getting to the office, riding your horse, and picking up the groceries. They are long and short, paved with asphalt and grooved into the forest floor, surrounded by mountains and deep inside America’s biggest cities.

“Trails have become as diverse and varied as the American people they serve,” says Rails-to-Trails Conservancy President Keith Laughlin, a national nonprofit organization that supports the development of trail systems. “The word ‘trail’ used to make us think of that quiet, dirt track winding through a forest. But now, some of the most popular trails in the country are super urban pathways that people use for their daily commute. And there exists everything in between. It’s a beautiful thing – as America has changed over the decades so too has the humble trail evolved into an important part of everyday life for millions of people.”

National Trails Day, June 1, is the perfect moment to celebrate the trail that you use and appreciate, whatever its size, shape or style. Hosted by the American Hiking Society, National Trails Day offers a wide variety of community events, hikes and rides, demonstrations and work parties to get involved in. More info: www.americanhiking.org.

National Trails Day is also the perfect excuse to simply get out on your local trail and enjoy it however you can.
“As we advocate for continued investment in trails and infrastructure for biking and walking, it is important to remember that one of the most potent forms of advocacy is just being on the trail, using it whenever you can, demonstrating support with your presence,” Laughlin says. “The strongest argument for the need to keep investing in trails is that millions of people use them, and that there is a powerful demand for more.”

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy has made it easy for people to find the trails nearest them with the provision of a free trail-finder website, www.TrailLink.com. TrailLink provides more than 24,100 miles of accurate GIS trail maps and descriptions for trails in every state, as well as user-submitted photos and reviews.

This National Trails Day, it’s easy to find a trail near you. Through the simple act of walking, riding, jogging or just enjoying the scenery along a trail you are part of a powerful movement supporting trails in communities large and small across America.

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, a nonprofit organization with more than 100,000 members, is the nation’s largest trails organization dedicated to connecting people and communities by creating a nationwide network of public trails, many from former rail lines and connecting corridors. Founded in 1986, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy’s national office is located in Washington, D.C., with regional offices in California, Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania. For more information visit www.railstotrails.org.