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**Mississippi's Tanglefoot Trail Voted 2019 Rail-Trail Hall of Fame Inductee**

*Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Honors Cultural and Economic Benefits of Mississippi's Longest Rail-Trail*

**Washington, D.C.**—Today, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC), the nation's largest trails organization, announced the induction of Mississippi's Tanglefoot Trail into the Rail-Trail Hall of Fame.

The Tanglefoot Trail is Mississippi's longest rail-trail, stretching 43.6 miles through the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains in the Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area. The paved trail winds through three counties (Chickasaw, Pontotoc and Union) and six communities (New Albany, Ecu, Pontotoc, Algoma, New Houlika and Houston)—bringing with it powerful benefits for the rural southern communities it serves. When the Tanglefoot Trail opened in 2013, it was nearly complete, and significant funding for its development came from the Transportation Enhancements program, the largest federal source of funding for trails and active transportation.

“The Tanglefoot Trail is a stunning example of the ways that federal funds, strategic investments in trails and regional partnerships can be applied to deliver powerful results for communities of all types,” said Ryan Chao, RTC president. “This trail, which provides a unique cultural experience and access to northern Mississippi's remarkable landscapes and forests, also delivers economic, transportation, and health and wellness opportunities for the region. This combination is what make it such an important addition to the Rail-Trail Hall of Fame.”

The Tanglefoot Trail is well known for its cultural value and the economic and transportation benefits it delivers to the region. The trail provides an experience for music lovers and history enthusiasts alike—following the route of a former rail line led in the 1800s by Col. William C. Falkner, great grandfather of Nobel-Prize-winning author William Faulkner, and being situated between the Tupelo birthplace and Graceland Estate of American icon Elvis Presley. However, it is also an economic generator for the three-county region it connects.

The trail is sponsored by nearly 100 local businesses who are active participants in its development, while also inspiring new small-business investment along the route. Local officials have cited the trail's role in inspiring more than a dozen new businesses since its opening in 2013. The trail also supports strong partnerships between the communities along the route—each has a role in the trail's governance, fostering a regional approach to decision-making.

“The Tanglefoot Trail has delivered an invaluable opportunity to make our communities more livable, seizing their ‘rural advantage’ as both a tourism economy and a strategy to deliver powerful health, economic, social and transportation benefits,” said Ray Collins, chairman of the GM&O Rails-to-Trails

District board of directors. “This trail connects the people of Union, Pontotoc and Chickasaw. It’s incredible the value we’ve gained years after the partnerships were forged to convert an old rail line into a vibrant trail that enriches quality of life and is a community and regional source of pride.”

Mississippi’s Tanglefoot Trail was among three trails voted on by the public for the status of RTC’s 2019 Rail-Trail Hall of Fame inductee. It received more than 14,000 votes—more than half of all the votes tallied. The other nominees were New Jersey’s Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park Trail and Wisconsin’s Glacial Drumlin State Trail. The trail joins 32 previous Hall of Fame winners recognized for outstanding scenic value, use, amenities, historical significance and community value. For more information about the Rail-Trail Hall of Fame, visit [railstotrails.org](http://railstotrails.org).

*Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is the nation’s largest trails organization—with a grassroots community more than 1 million strong—dedicated to connecting people and communities by creating a nationwide network of public trails, many from former rail lines. Connect with RTC at [railstotrails.org](http://railstotrails.org) and @railstotrails on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).*