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New Fund Launched to Support Trail Development Projects

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) is awarding \$65,000 under its newly launched Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund, which provides funding to support organizations and local governments that are implementing projects to build and improve rail-trails. The fund was established by Jeff Doppelt of Great Neck, New York, a long-time supporter of RTC and development of rail-trails in the United States.

“We are so grateful for the continued support of Jeff and his family,” said Keith Laughlin, President, RTC. “Providing funding through a competitive grant process will help to catalyze rail-trail development across America.”

The fund will award a total of \$65,000 per year for the next five years to qualifying projects. This year’s winners include:

- \$40,000 to the Allegheny Trail Alliance for renovation of the Pinkerton Tunnel, which will create a continuous rail-trail connection through a section of the Great Allegheny Passage in Pennsylvania, eliminating a 1.5-mile detour;
- \$7,500 to Missouri Rock Island Trail, Inc., to support trail development on a 145-mile segment of the inactive Rock Island Line in Missouri, which will eventually be a crucial part of a 384-mile cross-state trail system linking St. Louis and Kansas City; an additional \$7,500 will be used for trail consulting services; and
- \$10,000 to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to engage communities along 126 miles of undeveloped corridor to complete the Cowboy Recreation and

Nature Trail in Northwest Nebraska, while developing a strategy for economic development opportunities along the trail.

“Each of these projects is critically important to improving and expanding our nation’s rail-trail network,” said Jeff Doppelt. “By providing much needed funding, our objective is to leverage additional investment that can move such projects forward much more quickly.”

Applications for 2016 funding will be accepted in December 2015. More information on the next grant cycle will be posted on the RTC website (www.railstotrails.org) as it becomes available. In addition, more details on the individual trails can be found at TrailLink.com.

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.