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PLANS ADVANCE TO EXTEND “COWBOY TRAIL” TO CHADRON, MOVING FORWARD NEBRASKA’S PORTION OF GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, Chadron mayor and Northwest Nebraska Trails Association finalize MOU agreement to develop the 5 miles of trail to complete Cowboy Trail Connection into Chadron

CHADRON, Nebraska—Today, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) joined Chadron Mayor Miles Bannon and the Northwest Nebraska Trails Association to sign a memorandum of understanding allowing for 5 miles of rail-with-trail to be developed alongside an active corridor owned by Nebraska Northwestern Railroad to be used to connect Chadron to the Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail (Cowboy Trail).

The Cowboy Trail connection is the latest announcement of progress along the preferred route of the Great American Rail-Trail. The easement marks a significant development in completing the remaining 5 miles of Trail Gap 59 – Cowboy Trail Extension 2 from Rushville to Chadron.

“As we celebrate plans to extend this segment of the Cowboy Trail to Chadron, we’re also witnessing an important milestone for the Great American Rail-Trail,” said Kevin Belanger, trail planner, at Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. “We are all grateful that Nebraska Northwestern Railroad recognized the value that this extension will have on the community. The agreement is an excellent case study in public-private-nonprofit partnership to benefit the greater community.”

The Northwest Nebraska Trails Association will follow the signing of the agreement with a request for proposals to begin the engineering process that will eventually lead to construction to develop the trail miles.

Earlier in the year, RTC announced a \$65,000 grant to be shared between two nonprofit organizations— Cowboy Trails West, Inc. and the Northwest Nebraska Trails Association to move the Cowboy Trail closer to completion. The Cowboy Trail, totaling 321 miles when complete, is one of the longest rail-trail conversions in the nation, spanning much of the state of Nebraska.

To learn more about the Great American Rail-Trail and to view the preferred route, visit greatamericanrailtrail.org and follow @greatamericanrailtrail and #GRTAmerican on Facebook and Instagram.

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 and @railstotrails on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).