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Rail-Trail Sojourn to Demonstrate the Benefits of Regional Trail Systems

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Approximately 300 cyclists are traveling from Cumberland, Maryland, to Coraopolis, Pennsylvania, June 21–26, 2015, to participate in Rails-to-Trails Conservancy’s 14th Annual Pennsylvania Rail-Trail Sojourn.

For the first time, participants will pass through two completed miles of the Sheepskin Trail leading to Dunbar, Pennsylvania, a key segment to the area’s developing regional trail network. When complete, this segment will create more than 500 miles of contiguous trail system throughout Pennsylvania, Maryland, and West Virginia. It is estimated that such a trail would generate more than \$40 million in direct spending from trail users annually.

Participants representing 42 states will learn about the economic and quality-of-life benefits that a regional trail network brings to the communities along its path. In addition, the sojourners will use all 46 miles of the Montour Trail for the first time. Last year, Sojourn participants broke ground on the final portion, and this year, they will ride the completed segment.

“We’re excited to be able to share this incredible trail system with folks from all over the country,” says Tom Sexton, RTC’s Northeast Regional Office and sojourn director.

“Sojourn riders will see the best of the best when it comes to trail systems in the United States, and we hope they will be inspired to develop trails in their own communities.”

With completion of the Sheepskin Trail, a north-central West Virginia and southwestern Pennsylvania trail system will be created, which will be similar to the popular 150-mile Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) connecting Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Cumberland, Maryland.

For more information about the 2015 Pennsylvania Rail-Trail Sojourn, go to railstotrails.org/sojourn.

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC), a nonprofit organization with more than 160,000 members and supporters, 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, RTC'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.