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**Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Names Indiana State Representative Carey Hamilton
2022 Doppelt Family Rail-Trail Champion**

*Rep. Hamilton to be celebrated during a tour of the Great American Rail-Trail® through Indiana,
showcasing state's leadership in advancing connected trail systems*

RICHMOND, INDIANA—Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC), the nation's largest trails, walking and biking advocacy organization, today announced Indiana State Representative Carey Hamilton (D-87) as [the 2022 Doppelt Family Rail-Trail Champion](#). Rep. Hamilton is being honored for her leadership in founding the Indiana Legislative Trails Caucus, an innovative model designed to create focus in the state legislature for accelerating investment and development of multiuse trails across the state.

"Rep. Carey Hamilton holds a deep appreciation for the role of trails in creating communities where we all want to live—places where quality of life is valued alongside economic growth and transportation choice," said Brandi Horton, vice president of communications at RTC. "That appreciation has translated into powerful leadership for trails in the state legislature. Rep. Hamilton has built bipartisan enthusiasm for trails in Indiana in a way that is enduring and will transform how trail systems are built in the Hoosier State and across the country."

Under Rep. Hamilton's leadership, the bipartisan Indiana Legislative Trails Caucus is accelerating investment in the state's trail system as a strategy to spur local economic development and strengthen neighborhoods, already securing more than \$60 million for trail development. RTC is celebrating that leadership and Indiana's Legislative Trails Caucus as a model for the nation.

"Over the past several years, we've all experienced how important it is to have safe spaces to walk, bike and be active outside, right where we live. There is more clarity now for everyone about why it matters to invest in outdoor infrastructure, like trails, that make our communities great places to live. They're fundamental to our physical and mental health, plus they give us new opportunities to create jobs and provide transportation options for people," said Rep. Hamilton (D-87). "Expanding our trail network spurs local economic development and strengthens neighborhoods, while improving quality of life and public health for Hoosiers."

The award comes at the tail-end of Indiana's Year of the Trails, where RTC recognized two leaders who have propelled the Hoosier State into a new era of trail development. In 2021, [Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb was recognized for launching the Next Level Trails program](#), which has invested the largest infusion of trail funding in the state's history.

The momentum behind trail funding and development in the governor's office and the legislature is anticipated to have a significant impact on efforts to build out the state's section of the cross-country Great American Rail-Trail. Indiana is a key state along the preferred route of the [Great American Rail-Trail](#), which is more than 50% complete and will connect the nation by trail across 3,700 miles and 12 states. The Great American preferred route would connect 225 miles of trail in Indiana when complete.

Rep. Hamilton will be honored at a reception at the Cardinal Greenway Depot in Muncie, Indiana, on Sept. 13 at 6:30 p.m. during a [tour of the state's portion of the Great American Rail-Trail](#). Media are invited and should register with Patricia Brooks at patricia@matchmapmedia.com.

Since 2011, the Doppelt Family Rail-Trail Champions award has honored individuals from across the country who have made significant contributions to the rail-trail movement through their hard work, volunteerism or support. Rep. Hamilton is the 41st Rail-Trail Champion to be recognized by RTC. Learn more about the nation's rail-trail champions: rtc.li/trail-champions.

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is the nation's largest trails organization—with a grassroots community more than 1 million strong—dedicated to building a nation connected by trails, reimagining public spaces to create safe ways for everyone to walk, bike and be active outdoors. Connect with RTC at railstotrails.org and @railstotrails on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).