



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 16, 2021

CONTACT:

Patricia Brooks, patricia@matchmapmedia.com, 202.351.1757

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's 2021 Trail Grants Program Invests \$145,000 in Community Projects to Fill Critical Funding Gaps

Awards include \$60,000 to build on vision for cross-country Great American Rail-Trail™ in honor of the legacy of late trail philanthropist Jeff Doppelt, who passed away in 2021

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) today announced the recipients of its 2021 Trail Grants Program, awarding 145,000 to fill critical trail gaps, with an emphasis on regional and community development goals.

The awards included \$60,000 in Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund grants, used this year to advance projects that bring forward the vision for the cross-country Great American Rail-Trail, a developing 3,700-mile trail that connects across 12 states between Washington, D.C., and Washington State. This year's Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund grants are made in honor of the legacy of the late rail-trail philanthropist, Jeffrey L. Doppelt, who passed away from COVID-19 in January 2021. A member of RTC for more than 25 years, Jeff invested over \$800,000 in the nation's rail-trails, benefiting more than 40 projects nationwide.

"The RTC Trail Grants Program offers support to projects that are often not funded otherwise and are left out of traditional funding streams. These grants often fill critical gaps—both in trail development and funding—delivering returns on investment that bring lasting benefit to communities," said Ryan Chao, president of RTC. "As we mourn our good friend Jeff Doppelt, we see his legacy and vision live on with the progress we are making on the Great American and on completing trail projects large and small that have significant impact on the nation."

The 2021 Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund grants contribute to the development and maintenance of trail gaps on or near the preferred route of the Great American Rail-Trail. Recipients include the following:

- **Cedar Trails Partnership** (Iowa), receiving a \$10,000 Doppelt Fund matching grant to help rehabilitate a 1.5-mile section of trail closed due to flood damage
- **Yellowstone Historic Center** (Montana), receiving a \$10,000 Doppelt Fund grant for the conversion of a 9-mile abandonment along the Yellowstone Shortline Trail into a multiuse path from the Montana–Idaho border
- **Headwaters Trail System** (Montana), receiving a \$10,000 Doppelt Fund matching grant to support the development of the 0.8 mile remaining to complete a 12-mile network in Gallatin

County to connect the Headwaters Trail, as part of the preferred route of the Great American Rail-Trail

- **Northwest Nebraska Trails Association** (Nebraska), receiving a \$10,000 Doppelt Fund grant for the Cowboy Trail Connection’s development of engineering documents for construction of the first miles of Cowboy Trail Connection into Chadron in Dawes County
- **Rails-to-Trails of Wayne County** (Ohio), receiving a \$10,000 Doppelt Fund matching grant to complete a 1.6-mile gap between two sections of the Heartland Trail
- **Peninsula Trails Coalition** (Washington), receiving \$10,000 to support a consultant for the Olympic Discovery Trail, as part of the preferred route of the Great American Rail-Trail in Jefferson and Clallam counties

The 2021 Trail Grants Program recipient list emphasizes investments in projects with the potential to strengthen or connect trails in five communities nationwide. The recipients include:

- **Downtown Greenway** (North Carolina), receiving a \$15,000 RTC Trail Grant to support the completion of a final 1-mile rail-trail section
- **Friends of the Salem Bike-Ped Corridor** (New Hampshire), receiving a \$10,000 RTC Trail Grant to construct a trail segment, trailhead and amenities
- **New Jersey Rail-Trail Projects**, receiving \$60,000 in RTC Trail Grants, including \$20,000 to the New Jersey Bike-Walk Coalition to advance community engagement for the Essex-Hudson Greenway trail and \$10,000 to the Embankment Preservation Coalition to advance the proposed 1-mile trail along the Harsimus Stem Embankment

For a listing of all grant recipients, visit railstotrails.org/grants. Gifts in memory of the life of Jeffrey L. Doppelt will honor his dedication and commitment to support trail building in every community across the country: railstotrails.org/jeffdoppelt. To learn more about the Great American, visit railstotrails.org/greatamericanrailtrail.

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](#).