



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Nov. 15, 2023

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## **Rails-to-Trails Conservancy 2023 Grants Lift Up Efforts to Develop and Activate Trail Networks Nationwide**

*RTC's Trail Grants have provided nearly \$3 million over 15 years to organizations and local government agencies to build community participation and fill critical gaps in infrastructure*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**—Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) today announced that it has awarded \$348,000 in grants that support programs working to develop and activate local and regional trail networks. The projects and programs funded are helping to create equitable access to safe spaces where people can walk, bike and be active outside in the communities where they live.

“At RTC, we believe having space to be active outside is a fundamental right. These grants are critical to supporting organizations that are bringing RTC’s vision of trails connecting everyone, everywhere, to life,” said Mary Ellen Koontz, the lead of RTC’s TrailNation™ Collaborative initiative. “Trail networks are emerging in hundreds of communities across the country, and they are what’s needed to make it safer and more convenient for millions of people to access the outdoors where they live—whether that’s to be active, get around town or have fun in nature.”

As more trail networks are emerging nationwide, RTC’s Trail Grants program invests in the infrastructure and programming that’s necessary to create more access to trails for more people across the country. These grants help organizations and government agencies accelerate their trail network plans, while supporting community-based organizations working to connect more people to these spaces in neighborhoods across the country.

“The work to create, connect, maintain and activate these spaces is critical, yet the funding needed to move these projects forward far exceeds what’s available,” said Koontz. “We are grateful to be able to support 30 grants this year; however, we actually received funding requests from 135 organizations totaling nearly \$2.9 million. It’s clear we need significantly more public and private investment to meet the burgeoning demand for safe spaces for people to be active outside.”

The Trail Grants program supports, develops and activates local and regional trail networks nationwide. The entire list of grantees is available at [railstotrails.org/grants](http://railstotrails.org/grants).

- **National awardees include:** [Latino Outdoors](#)’ Vamos Outdoors program, which provides members of the Latinx and other underrepresented communities with transformative outdoor experiences; [HBCUs Outside](#), which is working with six Historically Black Colleges and Universities to develop outdoor experiences and engage with the outdoor industry; and [Black](#)

[People Who Hike](#), which is focusing on growing engagement and participation along the Great Rivers Greenways, a trail network in the Greater St. Louis region.

A collection of grantees are advancing trail development and community engagement in RTC's flagship initiatives—including [TrailNation](#), a portfolio of projects that are redefining how trail networks are built across the country; and the [Great American Rail-Trail](#)<sup>®</sup>, the nation's first multiuse cross-country trail, which will link Washington, D.C., and Washington State. Those grantees are:

- **Circuit Trails (Greater Philadelphia and southern New Jersey):** Camden Greenways Inc. received a grant to build organizational capacity in support of trail development in Camden City.
- **Bay Area Trails Network (California):** Rich City Rides received a grant to host Fix-it Friday and Everybody Rides programs to get more people on bikes in Richmond, California.
- **Capital Trails Network (Greater Washington, D.C., region):** Black Women Bike DC received a grant to support their “Breakfast, Maintenance, and Ride” and Learn to Ride clinics to engage more people to get outdoors.
- **Baltimore Greenway Trails Network:** Black People Ride Bikes received a grant for their Fostering Unity on Wheels program and the City of Baltimore to install trail counters and lead trail event programming throughout the city.
- **Great American Rail-Trail:** Grants were awarded for trail maintenance, surface improvements and match funding to the Nickel Plate Trail and Prairie Trails Club in Indiana; Powell County, Montana; and the City of Weirton Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners in West Virginia.

Other grant recipients serve a range of rural, urban and suburban areas. They include: Freshwater Land Trust (Birmingham, Alabama); Anchorage Parks Foundation (Anchorage, Alaska); City of Hot Springs Parks and Trails (Hot Springs, Arkansas); Bronzeville Trail Task Force (Chicago); Special Olympics Kansas (Mission, Kansas); West Michigan Trails (Grand Rapids, Michigan); Montana Trails Coalition (Clancy, Montana); Cross New Hampshire Adventure Trail (Littleton, New Hampshire); NC Great Trails State (Morganton, North Carolina); City of Trotwood (Ohio); Borinquen Trail Inc. (Dorado, Puerto Rico); Metropolitan Richmond Sports Backers (Virginia); ForeverGreen Trails (Tacoma, Washington); and Wenatchee Valley TREAD (Wenatchee, Washington).

The 2023 Trail Grants are part of RTC's longstanding program, which has distributed nearly \$3 million across more than 380 grants to over 225 organizations since 2008. Learn more about RTC's Trail Grants program at [railstotrails.org/grants](https://railstotrails.org/grants).

*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](https://railstotrails.org) and @railstotrails on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).*