



Learn How to Advocate for Trails Where You Live!

Elle Segal, Advocacy Outreach Director

Brandi Horton, Vice President for Communications

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Technical Support

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- Log out and back into the webinar
- Listen by phone: +1 301 715 8592; meeting ID: 824 3439 9954
- Browse Zoom Customer Support topics & contact Customer Support: <https://support.zoom.us>

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Trails matter to our lives.



One in four (24%) people say their **trail use has increased** and 61% say they'd like to **spend more time on the trail**. 90% of people say that it is important that **everyone have access to trails**.



88% of people say that **tax dollars should be spent** on maintaining and improving trails.



People agree that trails encourage **more physical activity** (89%); local business and **economic opportunity** (66%); and provide **transportation options** where they live (58%).

What does it take to build more trails?

Planning, funding, building and maintaining trails is hard work!

- Community engagement
- Local/regional/state political support
- Support and funds from the federal government and your Members of Congress

What is advocacy?

- Taking a position on an issue (big or small)
- Supporting a cause
- Growing community support
- Working with local, regional, state and federal decision makers to support your cause



RTC's Advocacy Role

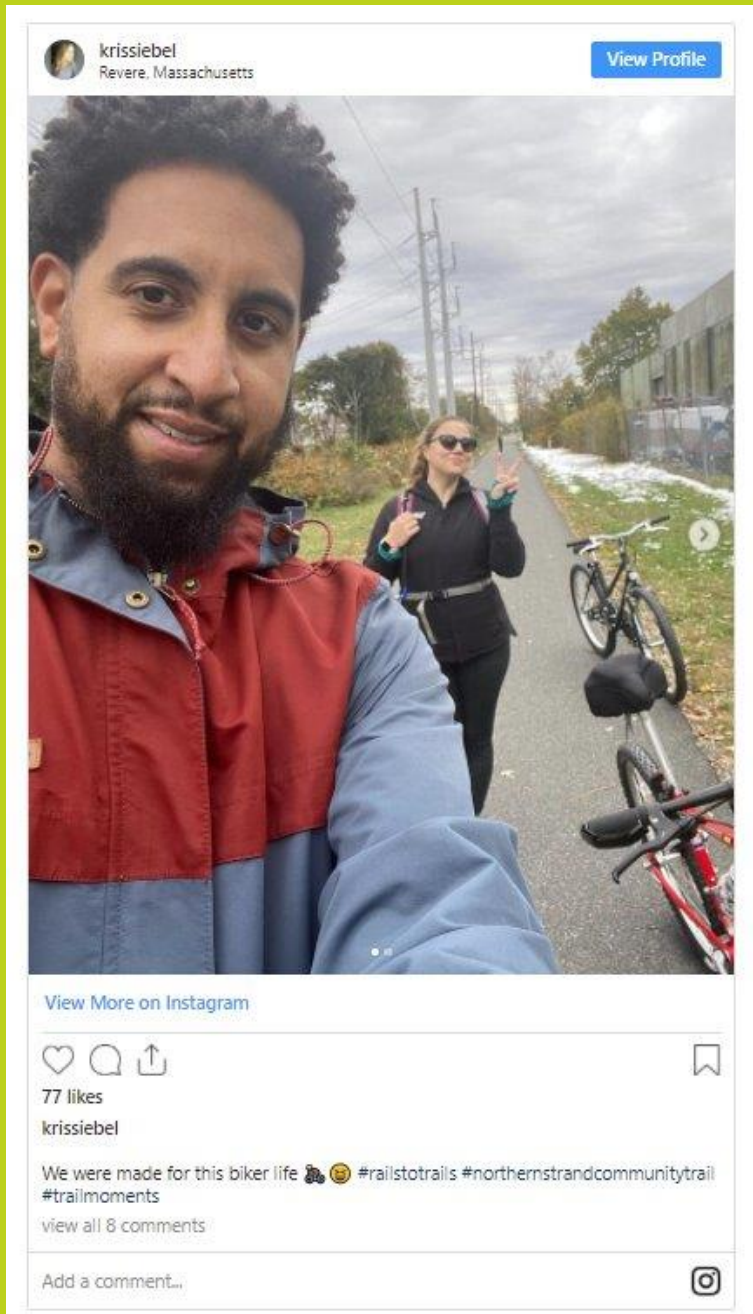
- Federal and state: funding and policy changes
- Local and regional: planning and policy changes
- Advocating for connectivity, access for everyone, safety, sustainability
- Celebrating leaders nationwide who are prioritizing trails as essential infrastructure
- Elevating policies, programs and impact to make the case for trail networks





RTC's Advocacy Impact

- Bipartisan Trail Caucuses
- Ballot Measures
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Advocacy
- Increased funding and applying for grants
- Connectivity funding (federal grants, earmarks, state funds)



Your Role in Advocacy

Advocacy can vary from small, everyday actions to larger scale efforts. For example:

- 1) **Everyday advocacy:** introducing your network to trails, sharing on social media, telling your story about why trails matter

#Trail Moments



www.trailmoments.org #TrailMoments



As a family, we try to engage with everything that nature has to offer us and aim to get outside for 30 minutes every day.

– *Chelsea Murphy, @shicolorsnature, Washington*



On my first day of owning [my e-bike], I rode 30 miles by myself. Now, I can fearlessly go to the grocery store, meet up with friends, exercise and have a more pleasant way of getting around the city.

– *Victoria Yuen, Washington, D.C.*



I've done enough harrowing journeys on the sides of highways, now I'm excited to begin a new chapter focused on exploring and highlighting rail-trails around our nation.

– *Ian Mackay, @iansride Washington*

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Celebrate Trails Day

Since 2013:

- Tens of thousands of participants across the country
- Hundreds of Partners
- ~870 events planned

In 2023:

- 13K+ people took part in 50 states + D.C.
- 220+ partners; 120+ events
- 1.3 million active minutes logged





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- 3) **Direct advocacy:** attending meetings with elected officials (city council, county meetings, agency discussions); engaging elected officials (local, state and federal); letters to the editor and press

500 Miles x 2025: Circuit Citizens

Goal: Cultivate grassroots to grow advocacy

Call to Action:

Share Your Love for Trails [thank you messages to commissioners in 9 counties]

Become a Circuit Citizen

Join a County Action Team



Making 500 Miles of Circuit Trails a Reality by 2025: Circuit Trails Coalition Releases Action Plan to Reach Interim Goal for Regional Trail Network

January 23, 2020 - by MyChesCo - [Leave a Comment](#)



How to talk about trails.

Focus on connecting to everyday destinations

Trails make our communities healthier, safer and greener

Everyone should have access to trails

Trails create jobs and help our economy

Trails are essential infrastructure for our country



THIS IS IMPORTANT ALL THE TIME, NOT JUST DURING ELECTION SEASON.



Why this matters now.

Your local, state and federal representatives need to hear from you about how important trail connectivity is to your community.

Officials hear about so many issues and are often balancing the needs of many communities and projects.

We need to keep trails, walking and biking top of mind for officials so it is relevant during decision making.

It's important to use language that reinforces trail networks are essential to communities and require consistent and dedicated resources.

What's Next?

Take Action Today:

- Using social media (tag @railstotrails)
- Letters to the editor
- Attend community meetings
- Organize events on the trail
- Meeting with elected officials and leaders

Changemakers for Trails:

- Celebrate Trails Day on 4/27
- Additional webinars this year
- Case studies of success

Resources:

- Webinars
- Blogs
- Advocating for Trails Site
- New Advocacy How To Guide



**Let's hear your
questions!**