

February 2026

Celebrate Trails Day: An Overview of the Celebration + Ways to Advocate



California's Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Trail

Technical Support

In the event you run into technical difficulties, here's how to troubleshoot:

- Log out and back into Zoom
- Listen by phone: +1 309 205 3325; meeting ID: 840 9098 6440
- Browse Zoom Customer Support topics & contact Customer Support:
<https://support.zoom.us>

Live transcription is enabled for this training

THE NATION'S LARGEST TRAILS, WALKING AND BIKING
ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION

Our Mission

At RTC, we want to help you advocate to create, connect and maintain trails in your community.

Our Changemakers for Trails initiative is designed to help more people speak up for trails, walking and biking where they live and across the country.



Washington D.C's Met Branch Trail

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



Celebrate
Trails
Day

powered by rails to trails conservancy

Save the date: April 25, 2026



More than a day outside

Hosted on the fourth Saturday of April, Celebrate Trails Day is the annual springtime celebration of America's trails. Started by Rails to Trails Conservancy in 2013, the celebration encourages people to get outside and enjoy the nation's exceptional trails and trail systems.



It's a day of joy and impact—and an invitation to experience the potential of a nation connected by trails.



It's an opportunity to celebrate and build support for the spaces that make it possible for us to walk and bike as part of our day-to-day lives.



Hundreds of events take place nationwide, with people and local organizations taking part in every state.

How it's celebrated on trails around the country.



Photo by Geoff Creary

Self-Directed Outings

RTC has free resources to help people find trails near them and trail-use tips and ideas. RTC's TrailLink platform is your guide to America's trails.

Group Events

RTC and our partners bring the celebration to communities across the country through all types of events.

Types of Advocacy

There are different ways to engage with decisions makers and have an impact

- Everyday advocacy and online engagement: introducing your network to trails, sharing on social media, telling your story about why trails matter
- **Community advocacy and events on trails: events and activities where you live, organizing supporters (petitions etc.), attending community meetings**
- 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



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

Birmingham, Alabama

railstotrails and marketatpepperplace
Jones Valley Trail



Mayor Randall Woodfin

Cuyahoga County, Ohio



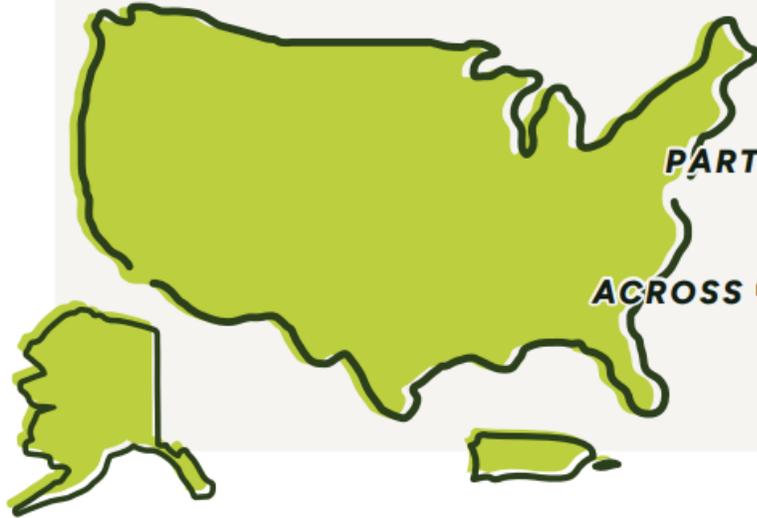
Mayor Justin Bibb and County Executive
Chris Ronayne

Tempe, Arizona



Mayor Corey Woods,
Councilmember Nikki Amberg,
State Sen. Lauren Kuby

By the Numbers:



MORE THAN **33,000 People**
PARTICIPATED IN **275+ Celebrations**
HOSTED BY **375+ Partners**
ACROSS **49 States, Washington, D.C**
AND **Puerto Rico**

Direct Impact:



More than 3.4 million active minutes
spent outside on Celebrate Trails Day in 2025.*



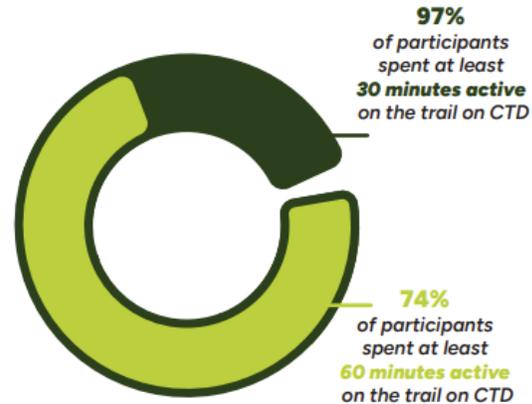
104 active minutes per person
spent outside on Celebrate Trails Day.*



\$1.3 million estimated total spent
for Celebrate Trails Day, with an average of \$41 spent by respondents
who indicated that they visited a business on or to prepare for
Celebrate Trails Day.*



97% of people agree
that using trails makes a difference for their mental health and well-being.



How To Get Involved

PROMOTE

Help spread the word about getting outside on Celebrate Trails Day—encourage your friends, family and community to join an event or go on a self-directed trail outing. *(Bonus, you have a chance to win prizes for participating!)*

ENCOURAGE PARTNERSHIP

Reach out to your local trail organizations and encourage them to be part of Celebrate Trails Day

PLAN

If you are part of a group or similar, consider organizing a ride, cleanup, community festival or other type of programming that invites people to experience the trail.

PARTICIPATE

Share how you are participating in the celebration. Capture the moment and share it on social media and your other communications channels (don't forget to tag @railstotrails!) + take RTC's survey to help us show how people participated and the nation impact of the celebration.

Event + Programming Ideas

Self-Directed

- Games: Scavenger Hunts, Bingo, I-spy
- Self-guided walks, runs or rides
- Art and history walks that follow interpretive signage
- Geo-caching, letterboxing, plogging
- Photo safari

Organized

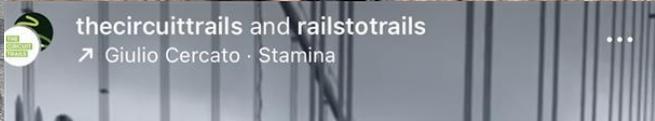
- Cleanups and maintenance days
- Group hikes, walks, rides, runs, races, yoga and meditation
- Biodiversity counts (e.g., BioBlitz) and guided nature walks (birding)
- Trailside festivals with local businesses, community groups, artisans
- Guided tours
- Education opportunities: wilderness survival, camping, stewardship, bike repair



mayorofspokane and spokanecity



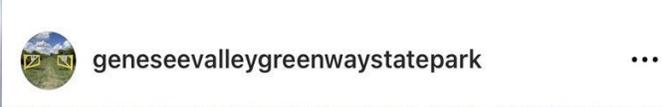
moncriefsprings_the movie and 3 others
The Historic Durkeeville, Florida



thecircuittrails and railstotrails
Giulio Cercato · Stamina



Mon River Trails Conservancy
April 27, 2025



geneseevalleygreenwaystatepark



johnscyclery
Duck, West Virginia



palmettotrail



outthereclublife



Planning Tips

- Confirm necessary permits, reservations, and/or insurance coverage
- Prepare with first aid and an inclement weather plan
- Partner with community groups on an event (including businesses!)
- Ensure inclusive access: price, location, mobility, restrooms, opportunities to rest
- Spread the word. Promote early and often!
- **Amplify impact by participating in larger observances and national days, such as Celebrate Trails Day!**



Celebrate Trails Day event in IL | Photo by Douglas Monieson

Infusing Advocacy

To meet the moment, we're planning to make this year's celebration the biggest and best yet, creating the brightest possible spotlight for the nation's trails and the many ways they benefit our lives.

Include elected officials. Invite decision-makers to experience the impact of trails in their community, building more support for your projects.

Generate grassroots advocacy. Have a postcard-writing station, a chance to sign a petition, or a sign-up form so they can stay involved.



Roselle Park Mayor Joseph Signorello and Councilmember Jay Robaina at a Celebrate Trails Day 2025 event, NJ | Photo by Upendra Sapkota

THIS MOMENT IS URGENT

What's At Stake

Meeting Demand and Making Progress

- In recent applications there was one grant for every 40 applications
- Trail networks in development in hundreds of communities and every single state
- Many communities have plans in place but no funding to build or maintain the trail—preventing millions of people from accessing trails

Keeping People Safe

- Every year, thousands are killed walking or biking due to unsafe conditions
- Studies show that bikeable, walkable communities are safer for everyone—including people in cars

Boosting the Economy

- For every \$1 invested in trails, \$1.72 is generated annually from local business revenue, sales tax revenue and benefits related to health and transportation.

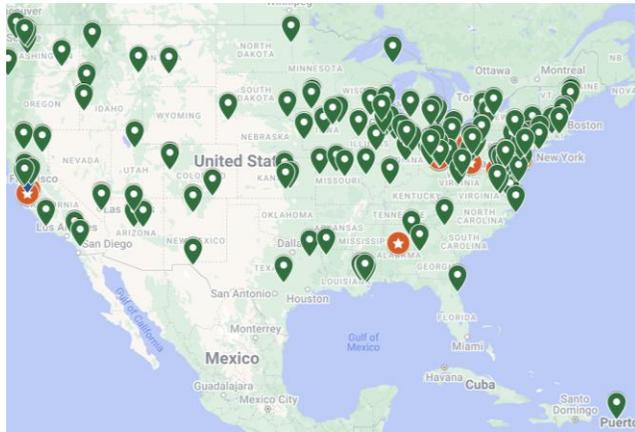
RTC's Priorities

- Strengthen and grow the largest sources of federal funds: Transportation Alternatives and the Recreational Trails Program
- Invest in large-scale connectivity through the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP)
- Continued support for competitive grants supporting safe and inclusive trails, walking and biking
- Advocating for dedicated state and local funding through legislation and ballot measures



The Metropolitan Branch Trail, Washington DC

Supporting your celebrations



Visibility for your celebrations

RTC posts an interactive map on our website to help the public find events and local opportunities to engage in Celebrate Trails Day, plus gets the word out on our email, earned media, and social media channels. View the 2025 map: <https://rtc.li/celebrate-trails-day-2025-map>



Helpful Resources

RTC provides helpful resources, from sample language and shareable graphics to tips to weave advocacy into your Celebrate Trails Day plans. Explore our partner resources: railstotrails.org/celebratetrailsday/toolkit



Promotional Materials

RTC makes available materials to our partners to help promote their celebrations. Sign up to partner updates to make sure you don't miss the opportunity to request materials.

CELEBRATE TRAILS DAY

You're Invited!

Learn more and sign up:

Celebrate Trails Day website

RailsToTrails.org/CelebrateTrailsDay

Email our team about Celebrate Trails Day

Events@RailsToTrails.org



What's Next?

Take Action Today:

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

Changemakers for Trails:

- Celebrate Trails Day April 25th
- Additional trainings coming this year
- Sign up to be part of the team to attend key meetings with elected officials
- Resources and training tools:
[Railstotrails.org/advocate](https://railstotrails.org/advocate)



Questions?

Let us know!

**Thank you!
Please reach
out!**



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