



Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's 2018 Doppelt Fund Grants Fill Funding Gaps for Local Trail Projects

Nonprofit invests more than \$140,000 in critical trail maintenance, trail building and community engagement projects nationwide

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WASHINGTON, May 23, 2018 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Rails-to-Trails

Conservancy (RTC) today announced the recipients of its 2018 Doppelt Family

Trail Development Fund grants, with an emphasis on strategic investments that support significant regional and community trail development goals.

The Doppelt Fund supports small, regional projects that are vital to trail systems but often fall through the cracks of traditional funding streams. RTC received nearly \$5.5 million in application requests for the 2018 grant cycle, demonstrating the national reality of unmet trail funding needs.



A trestle along the Raccoon River Valley Trail in Iowa. One of 10 Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Doppelt Fund grants awarded in 2018 will help to connect this trail with the iconic High Trestle Trail north of Des Moines. Photo credit Rachel Mummey, courtesy Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.

"Trail managers commonly express frustration as they seek funding for projects that address important trail maintenance and development needs," said Eli Griffen, RTC's manager of trail development resources and the manager of the Doppelt Fund grant program. "These projects are often smaller in scope and scale, making them hard to finance within traditional funding streams. This grant program provides important resources communities need—in some cases, raising awareness of a project within the community, and in others,

maintaining trails or providing the match funding necessary to acquire a corridor and build the trail."

The 2018 Doppelt Fund grantees mark the largest pool of RTC-funded projects to date, with more than \$140,000 invested in 10 projects nationwide. The fund was bolstered by an additional \$40,000 legacy gift from North Carolina Rail-Trails, Inc. and a \$20,000 gift from an anonymous donor.

2018 Doppelt Fund grant recipients include:

- **City of Dayton (Ohio)**, receiving \$15,000, which will serve as a federal funding match for the acquisition of a former rail corridor that will eventually be home to a new trail, The Flight Line.
- **Dallas County Conservation Board (Iowa)**, receiving \$15,000 for the acquisition of six parcels of land required to extend the iconic High Trestle Trail to the Raccoon River Valley Trail north of Des Moines.
- **Friends of Clare County Parks & Recreation (Mich.)**, receiving \$5,000 to increase support for an off-road alignment of the Pere Marquette Rail Trail through Clare.
- **Idaho Panhandle National Forests, U.S. Forest Service**, receiving \$20,000 to resurface and reshape the slope of the Route of the Hiawatha through the St. Paul Pass Tunnel.

- **Marin County Bicycle Coalition (Calif.)**, receiving \$5,000 to promote efforts to convert the closed Alto Tunnel into a crucial trail link through Marin County.
- **Rock Island Rail Corridor Authority (Mo.)**, receiving \$25,000 for the Greenwood Connector, which will help to build the final 8-mile trail segment to complete a statewide trail connecting St. Louis to Kansas City via the Katy and Rock Island trails.
- **Western New York Land Conservancy, Inc.**, receiving \$10,000 to conduct a design competition to convert a former rail line in Buffalo into a trail and linear park.
- **New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition**, receiving \$7,500 to build support for the Ice & Iron Greenway, a future rail-trail through densely populated and underserved communities in North Jersey.
- **Rutherford County Government (N.C.)**, receiving \$30,000 for trail enhancements that will improve and encourage trail use, including the development of crosswalks and fencing; installation of educational kiosks and signs; and construction of wildlife viewing stations along an extension of the Thermal Belt Rail-Trail.
- **Southwest Renewal Foundation of High Point, Inc. (N.C.)**, receiving \$10,000 to increase capacity for the future Southwest High Point Greenway, including outreach expenses and matching funds for additional grants.

"The projects that we were able to fund this year are incredible," said Jeff Doppelt, a philanthropist from Great Neck, New York. "Through a relatively small investment, we're able to complete and connect iconic trails and improve the trail user experience. Hundreds of these types of projects exist all over the country; it's important that people begin to understand that the need far outweighs the funding available. These projects are essential to building and maintaining the trails that so many of us love and that communities rely upon for recreation, transportation and economic vitality."

Established in 2015, the Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund is a way to move forward critical projects that enhance health and transportation connectivity in their regions. A listing of all Doppelt Fund grant recipients can be found on [RTC's website](#).

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is the nation's largest trails organization—with a grassroots community more than 1 million strong—dedicated to connecting people and communities by creating a nationwide network of public trails, many from former rail lines. Connect with RTC at railstotrails.org and @railstotrails on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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