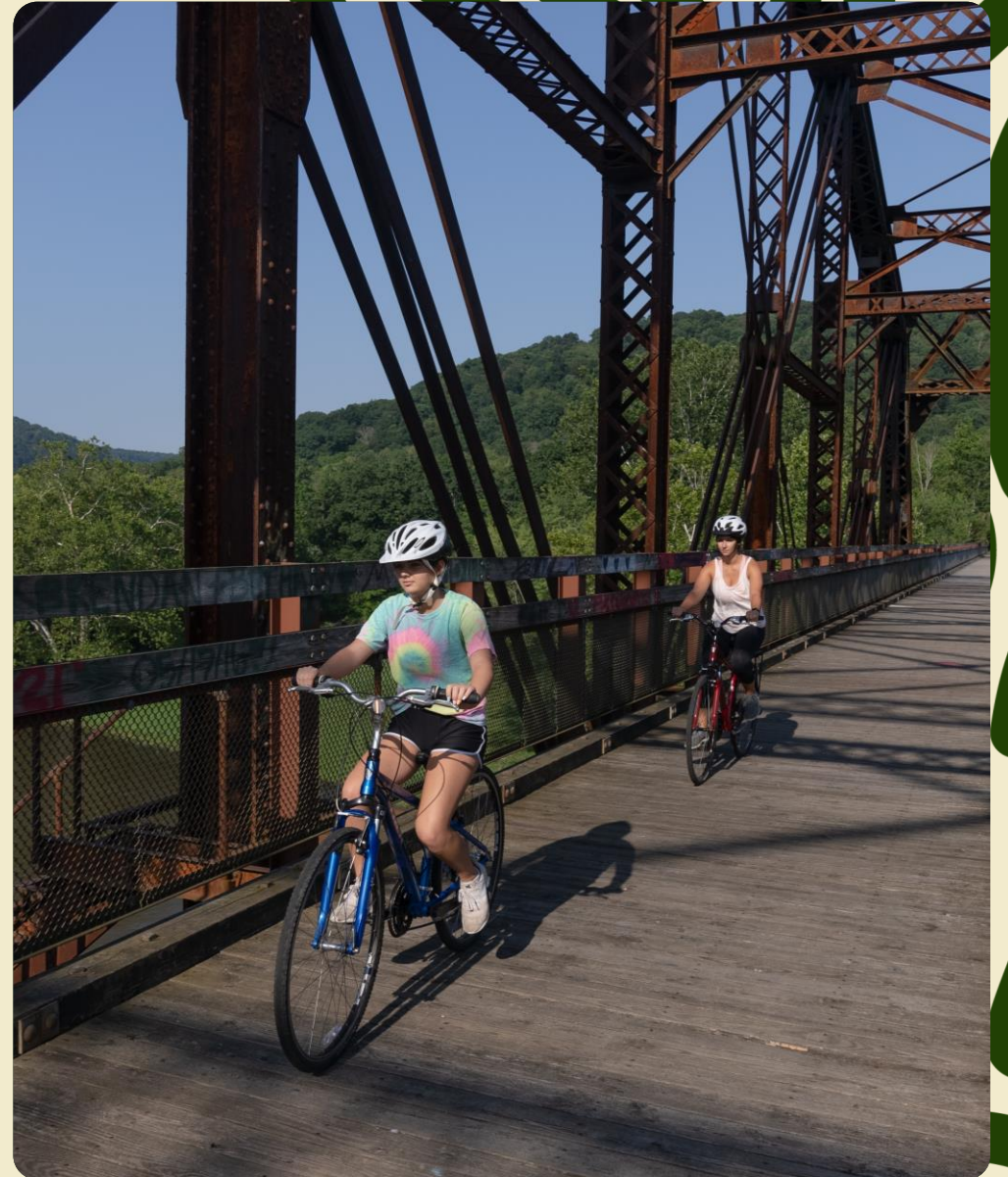


APRIL 23, 2024

Trail Funding Unpacked: Navigating Resources for Sustainable Maintenance

TrailNation Collaborative Online Dialogue





TRAIL NATION

rails-to-trails
conservancy



TRAIL NATION

PROJECTS



TRAIL NATION

PLAYBOOK



TRAIL NATION

COLLABORATIVE

TRAIL FUNDING UNPACKED

Agenda

- 1. Welcome & Housekeeping**
- 2. Setting the stage**
- 3. Breakout 1 (15 minutes)**
- 4. Presentation (TA/ RTP)**
- 5. Breakout 2 (15 minutes)**
- 6. Large Group Discussion**
- 7. Wrap up & Evaluation Survey**

Today's Tools

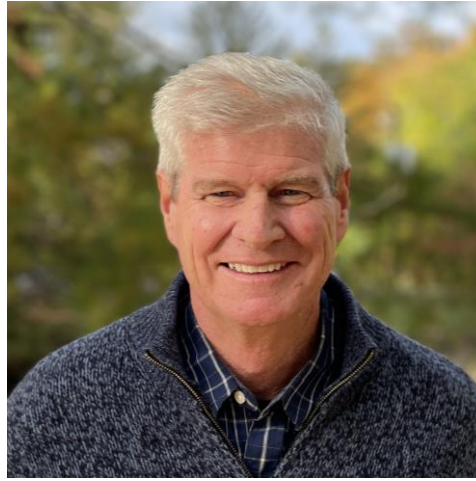
- Use the CHAT box to interact with attendees and pose questions for the Q&A session
- Please update your name in Zoom to include your name, state, and affiliated organization
- Ex. Yvonne Mwangi, D.C., Rails to Trails Conservancy
- Please remember to MUTE yourself to minimize distractions for others.
- Today's session is being recorded until the breakout groups– please STOP VIDEO if you do not want to be shown in the recording.
- CLOSED CAPTIONING is enabled. Click the "CC" box at the bottom of your screen to utilize this tool.
- We'll use BREAKOUT ROOMS to gather in small peer groups. These will be automatically assigned.

Today's Team



Kim Chesser

State Agency Advocacy Specialist



Tom Sexton

Northeast Regional Director



Yvonne Mwangi

Trail Resources & Planning Manager



**Poll: Who's in the
room?**

Maintenance for a Growing Movement



250

**Miles of rail-trails in
1986**

26,000

Miles of rail-trails today

Defining Maintenance



Maintenance is often defined differently depending on who you talk to:

- **Routine maintenance** – regularly scheduled tasks done at least once a year to keep the trails safe and usable; e.g. mowing of shoulders, vegetation management, trash pickup, cleaning graffiti and drainage maintenance
- **Lifecycle** - Repaving, replacement of amenities and other hardscape that have passed their lifecycle
- **Major events** - Weather events, natural disasters etc. Unplanned for and unforeseen events that cause maintenance needs

RTC Maintenance Resources

- Trail-building Toolbox page: Maintenance Basics
- Webinar: Routine maintenance costs for 4-season trails
- Worksheet: Trail Maintenance Budget Worksheet
- Toolbox page: Trails and Climate Resilience
- Webinar: Trails and Climate Change: Disaster Management

Yearly Routine Rail-Trail Maintenance Costs Per Mile

						
	Armstrong Trail	MoPac Trail West	Northern Rail Trail	Panhandle Pathway	Sammamish River Trail	Schuylkill Banks
Location	Western Pennsylvania	Lincoln, Nebraska	Central New Hampshire	Northern Indiana	Seattle, Washington	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Trail Surface	Stone Dust-Rural	Concrete-Suburban	Stone Dust-Rural	Asphalt-Rural	Asphalt-Suburban	Asphalt-Urban
Visitation	69% increase from 2019 to 2020	N/A	2019: 150,000 average total	N/A	2018: 572,832 Total (278,735 Peds, 294,097 Bikes)	2019: 1,726,215 user trips
Primary Maintenance Performed By	Nonprofit staff and volunteers	Park district staff	State staff and volunteers	All volunteer	County staff	City and nonprofits staff
Length Studied	36 miles	5 miles	34 miles	23 miles	10 miles	1 mile
Total Yearly Cost Per Mile	\$2,377	\$679 (not including trailheads)	\$1,330	\$967	\$7,819	\$102,322
Volunteer Hours	1,908	32	355	687	0	1,228
Surface and Structures	2468-foot tunnel and seven bridges	Six bridges inspected on a five-year rotation	Winter sanding a safety challenge at crossings	One 230-foot bridge	No bridges	Trail located between active tracks and river
Vegetation	Emerging high-tree canopy over trail	No tree canopy reduces costs significantly	Japanese Knotweed overtaking native species	Controls root damage by trenching	Trenching not allowed per archeology	Extensive grass areas and plantings
Level of Amenities	Low	Low	Low	Low	High, with one fixed toilet and three temporary	Very high and very rich level of design
Cleanliness and General Comments	"Pack it in, pack it out" policy	Removes snow after 2 inches	Most significant impact is from beavers	Occasional dumping of tires/mattresses	Has 18 trash receptacles at trail heads	Trash receptacles emptied daily, floods annually

Created 2019. Updated 2022

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Thank you to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for their financial support





Breakout 1

- Introduce yourself
- How are you paying for trail maintenance? (including routine, lifecycle, major events)
- What are the pros/ cons of your current approach?



Maintenance Funding Overview

Kim Chesser, State Agency Advocacy Specialist

Transportation Alternatives and Recreational Trails

Transportation Alternative: the largest federal source of funding for trails

- 95% goes to bike/ped, including rail-trail conversions, trail reconstruction, and Safe Routes for Non-Drivers
- Other eligibilities include: preservation of historic transportation facilities (like train depots), and stormwater mitigation

Recreational Trails Program is a set-aside of TA, historically, the source of federal dollars for maintenance.

Under BIL, TA is now eligible for trail maintenance.

Maintenance Eligibilities Under TA/RTP

Routine, lifecycle, and major events

- Trail maintenance and restoration
- Trailside and trailhead facilities
- Equipment for construction and maintenance
- Construction of new trails
- Acquisition of trail corridors
- Assessment of trail conditions
- Safety and environmental education



Breakout 2

- **Have you applied or plan to apply for TA and/or RTP funds for maintenance from your state DOT or MPO? Why or why not?**
- **What are your biggest barriers to accessing TA and/or RTP funding for trail maintenance?**
- **What activities are not eligible that you wish were??**
- **Regarding the updated guidance, how could you better use TA funds for maintenance?**
- **Are there specific changes or improvements you would like to see that would make federal maintenance funding more accessible and effective**

Large Group Discussion/ Q & A



Kim Chesser

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Tom Sexton

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Join the TrailNation Collaborative!

Upcoming Events:

6/11 - Overcoming Barriers: Innovative Practices to Securing Federal Funding (webinar)

6/26 - Safety First: How to Effectively Demonstrate Safe Outcomes in Grant Applications (webinar)

7/31 – Resources for Improving Accessibility on Multi-Use Trails (webinar)



Celebrate
Trails
Day

powered by rails to trails conservancy

Save the Date!

April 27, 2024

