

4/25/2024 Peer Exchange

Resources and Tools for Successful Rail Trails

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Trail Resources and Planning Manager



Agenda

- Intro to RTC
 - TrailNation (Projects, Playbook, Collaborative)
- Resources and Tools
 - Trail-Building Toolbox
 - Early Warning System
 - Resource Library
 - Webinars
 - Federal Funding Resources (including TrADE)
 - Trail Blog and Magazine
 - TrailLink
 - Trail Stats
- Technical Assistance



At Rails to Trails Conservancy, we are building a nation connected by trails. We reimagine public spaces to create safe ways for everyone to walk, bike and be active outdoors.

Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath
Photo courtesy of Jason Cohen

What happens when we connect trails?



Strengthening
the Local &
Regional
Economy



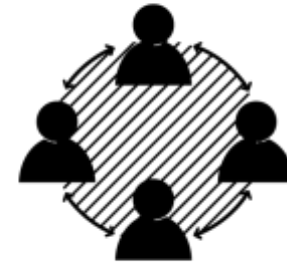
Creating Smart
Active
Transportation
Options



Protecting our
Environment



Improving
Recreation,
Health
& Wellness



Promoting
Social Equity

<https://www.railstotrails.org/trailnation/>

TrailNation Projects







<https://www.railstotrails.org/trailnation/#collaborative>

TrailNation Collaborative

The TrailNation™ Collaborative is a new peer learning community from Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) where advocates, public leaders and professionals can come together to share their experiences, their challenges and their strategies for accelerating the pace of equitable and connected trail and active transportation infrastructure.

Benefits: Monthly webinars and virtual dialogues, , dedicated Facebook group, regular newsletter, grant announcements



Join the Collaborative!



Resources and Tools

Discover more on RTC's website

<https://www.railstotrails.org/resources>

<https://www.railstotrails.org/trail-building-toolbox/>

Trail-Building Toolbox

Trail-Building Toolbox: basic information on how to build a rail trail

Headings: Correspond to different stages of trail building.

Navigating to the Trail-Building Toolbox:

[Railstotrails.org](#) >> [Resources & Tools](#) >> [Trail-Building toolbox](#)



Trail-Building Toolbox

Railbanking

Railbanking, established in 1983 as an amendment to Section 8(d) of the **National Trails System Act**, is a voluntary agreement between a railroad company and a trail sponsor (such as a trail organization or government agency) to use an out-of-service rail corridor as a trail until a railroad might need the corridor again for rail service. This interim trail use of railbanked corridors has preserved thousands of miles of rail corridors that would otherwise have been abandoned.



Railbanking takes place during the rail corridor abandonment process, and official negotiations with the railroad can begin only after the railroad submits an initial notification

<https://www.railstotrails.org/trail-building-toolbox/>

<https://www.railstotrails.org/collabsignup>

Early Warning System

- Monitor abandonment requests filed with the Surface Transportation Board
- Notify local elected officials and trail advocates (incl. TNC list)
- Assist by walking them through the railbanking process

To receive Early Warning System alerts for your state, sign up for the TrailNation Collaborative

in Alachua County, Florida

Posted 12/14/18 by [Rails-to-Trails Conservancy](#) in [Building Trails, Taking Action](#)



Photo courtesy [COWAC](#) | CC BY 3.0

You can [sign up to receive railroad abandonment notices for your state via email](#).

On or about Dec. 6, 2018, CSX Transportation Inc. filed for the abandonment of 0.23 mile of track in Gainesville in Alachua County, Florida. We are providing this information because it presents an opportunity to develop a real regional asset: a multi-use trail that can accommodate hikers, bikers, equestrians and other appropriate uses.

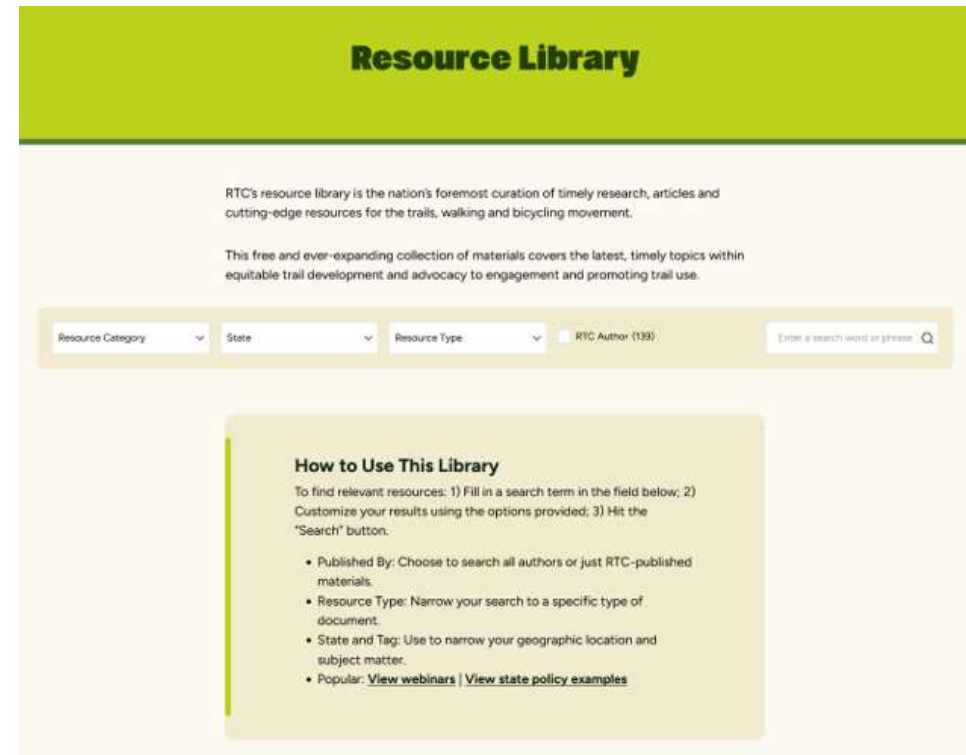
<https://www.railstotrails.org/resource-library/>

Resource Library

Resource Library: source for (mostly) PDF resources, including all publicly available reports, plans, etc.

Not just limited to RTC content

The tags and resource type are the best way to search—not the keyword box

The screenshot shows the "Resource Library" page with a green header. Below the header, there is a paragraph of introductory text, a search bar with filters for Resource Category, State, Resource Type, and RTC Author (109), and a "How to Use This Library" section with instructions and bullet points.

Resource Library

RTC's resource library is the nation's foremost curation of timely research, articles and cutting-edge resources for the trails, walking and bicycling movement.

This free and ever-expanding collection of materials covers the latest, timely topics within equitable trail development and advocacy to engagement and promoting trail use.

Resource Category State Resource Type RTC Author (109) Enter a search word or phrase

How to Use This Library

To find relevant resources: 1) Fill in a search term in the field below; 2) Customize your results using the options provided; 3) Hit the "Search" button.

- **Published By:** Choose to search all authors or just RTC-published materials.
- **Resource Type:** Narrow your search to a specific type of document.
- **State and Tag:** Use to narrow your geographic location and subject matter.
- **Popular:** [View webinars](#) | [View state policy examples](#)

<https://www.railstotrails.org/webinars/>

Webinars

- On a variety of trail development and policy (advocacy) topics
- Trail-Building Resources webinar
<https://youtu.be/JsRq7frTTak>

Upcoming webinars

- 6/11 - Overcoming Barriers: Innovative Practices to Securing Federal Funding
- 6/26 - Safety First: How to Effectively Demonstrate Safe Outcomes in Grant Applications
- 7/31 – Resources for Improving Accessibility on Multi-Use Trails



<https://www.railstotrails.org/policy/funding/>

Federal Funding Resources

- RTC's provides the latest information about potential federal funding opportunities for trails and active transportation.
- Tools to help communities successfully apply for grants or navigate reimbursement programs.
- TrADE – Transportation Alternatives Data Exchange – Track and report how states use their TA dollars

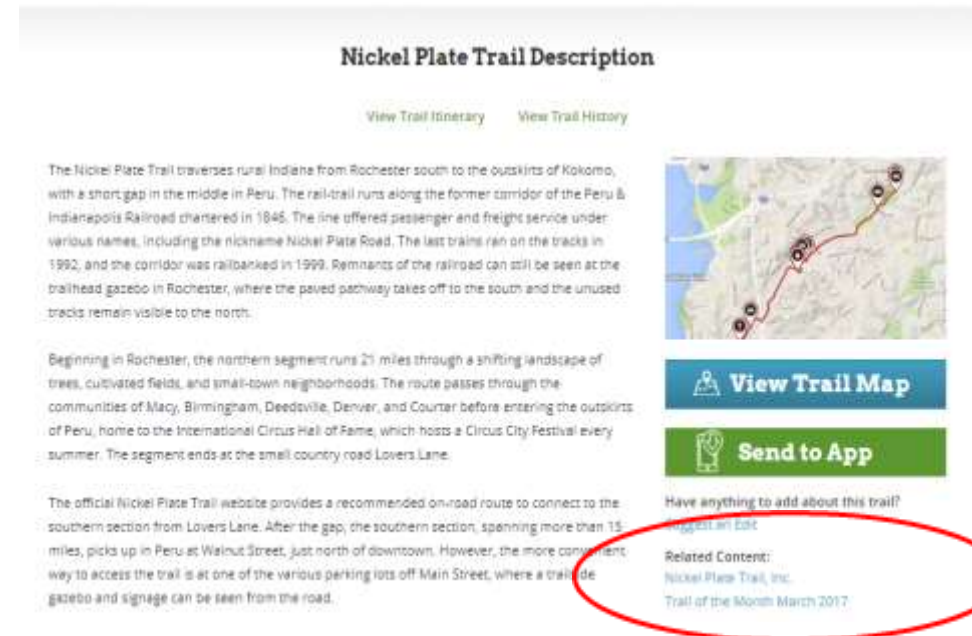
Also provide info and support via the Toolbox || Webinars || Collaborative (newsletter) || direct technical Assistance



<https://www.traillink.com/>

TrailLink

- RTC's trail-finder website and mobile app
- Use TrailLink to:
- Find trails near you
 - See detailed descriptions, photos, maps and user reviews
- Find links to trail managers



Rail Trail Stats by State



- What we know about rail-trails in each states
- Number and mileage of open rail trails
- Number and mileage of project rail trails*
- *Depend on local information to keep this up to date
- Can view for the US as a whole and for each state.
- Reflect the numbers in our database in real time.

<https://www.railstotrails.org/trailblog/>

TrailBlog & Magazine

By: Andrew Dupuy
February 25, 2021



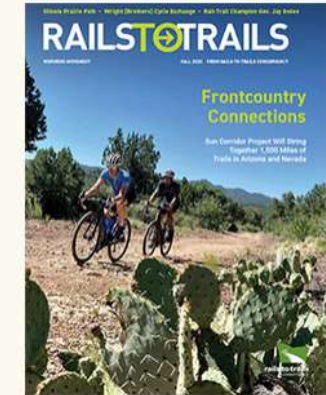
TEJAS' HISTORIC BATTLEFIELD TRAIL | PHOTO BY MARK LENNANN



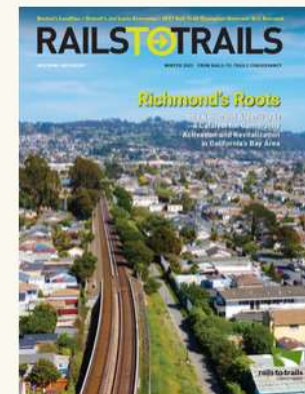
2023 WINTER ISSUE



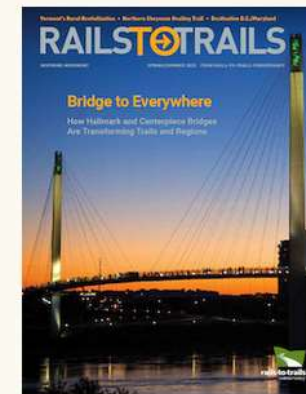
2023 SPRING/SUMMER ISSUE



2023 FALL ISSUE



2022 WINTER ISSUE



2022 SPRING/SUMMER ISSUE



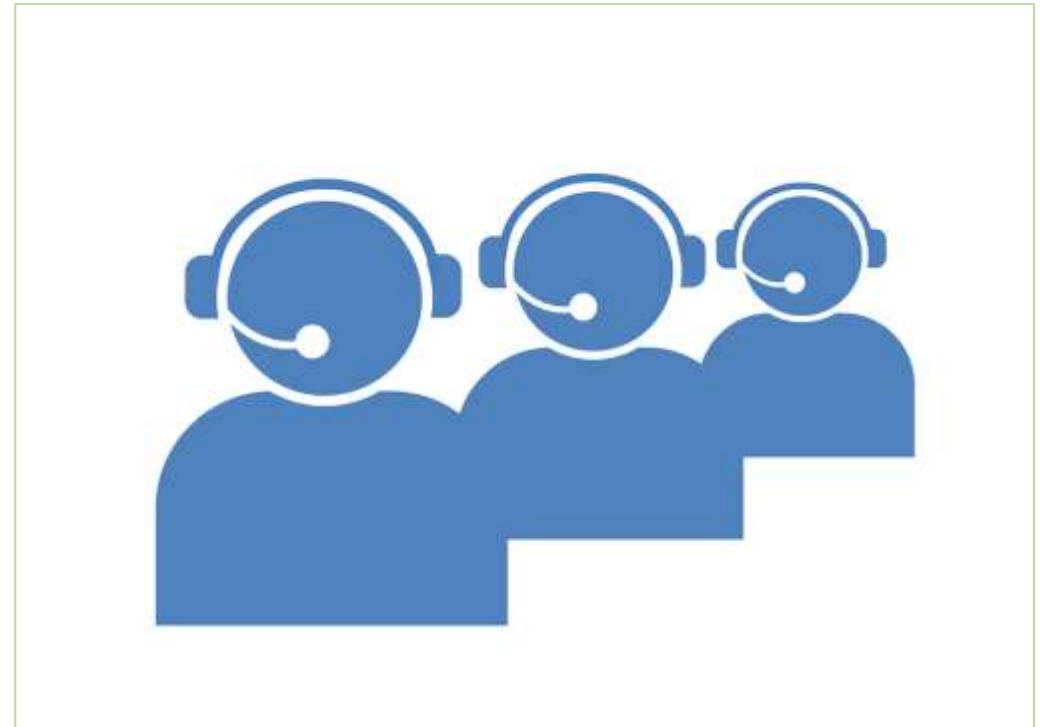
2022 FALL ISSUE

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance via email and phone

RTC National contact:

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Email Trail Development Team

Join the TrailNation Collaborative!



<https://www.railstotrails.org/collabsignup>