

Frequently Asked Questions about KRTC

1. **What is KRTC.** Kentucky Rails to Trail Council, Inc. is a non profit volunteer organization. Our purpose is to “foster and facilitate the conservation of greenways and railroad right-of-ways in Kentucky by the conversion of such holdings to trail use for the general public.”

2. **What are trails and greenways?** Greenways are corridors of protected open space managed for conservation and recreation purposes. Greenways often follow natural land or water features and link nature reserves, parks, cultural features and historic sites with each other and with populated areas. Greenways can be publicly or privately owned and some are the result of public/private partnerships. Trails are paths used for walking, bicycling, horseback riding or other forms of recreation or transportation. Railtrails are trails made from abandoned railroad corridors.

3. **Why Establish Trails and Greenways?** Trails and greenways positively impact individuals and improve communities by providing not only recreation and transportation opportunities, but also by influencing economic and community development. Some of the many trails and greenways benefits include:

- * making communities better places to live by preserving and creating open spaces;
- * encouraging physical fitness and healthy lifestyles;
- * creating new opportunities for outdoor recreation and non-motorized transportation;
- * strengthening local economies through tourism and job development
- * protecting the environment; and
- * preserving culturally and historically valuable areas.

4. **When did KRTC begin.** It was incorporated as a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit tax-exempt organization in 1995.

5. **How large is the membership.** 238 dues paying members, however not all members are current with their dues. For ease in bookkeeping, dues are now due in January for a calendar year.

6. **Who gets the KRTC newsletter.** The KRTC newsletter goes out quarterly to approximately 1000 recipients. The mailing list includes members, persons interested in RT in KY, local RT groups, local and state officials, landowners and adjacent landowners of rail trails. The newsletter is a major way of providing information on RT in Kentucky.

7. **How diverse is the membership.** Geographically there are members from across the state. Approximately 55% are from the central part of the state and 20% from around Louisville.

8. **What is the relationship of KRTC to the national Rail-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC).** The Rail-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) is a national rail trail building and advocacy organization. KRTC supports the RTC by paying dues as

a Trail Partner. RTC provides help through technical assistance from their staff. Some individual members belong to both groups. The RTC website is <http://www.railtrails.org> and an excellent source of information.

9. **What is the relationship of KRTC to local nonprofit rail trail organizations in Kentucky.** Local nonprofit organizations such as the Bluegrass Rail to Trail Foundation (BRTF) are active at the local level whereas KRTC is active supporting railtrail interests and local railtrail groups state wide. KRTC has been instrumental in starting and supporting local nonprofit rail trail groups. Local nonprofits are focused on the creation/development of a specific rail trail. For example BRTF's goal is to implement the creation of the Lexington/Big Sandy Rail Trail along the abandoned CSX line in Fayette, Clark and Montgomery Counties. The Lake Cumberland Trail Foundation (LCTF) was the development group for the Cathy Crockett Memorial Trail.

10. **What is the status of railtrails in Kentucky.** There are 16 miles of rail trail. The longest trail is the 7 mile River Walk (a greenway) in Louisville. There are over 160 miles of rail trail in some stage of planning or development. Projects completed or under construction are: Brighton East Trail (Fayette), Cadiz Railroad Trail (Trigg), Cathy Crockett Memorial Trail (Pulaski & McCreary), Central City-Greenville-Pond Creek Trail (Muhlenberg), Louisville Riverwalk (Jefferson), South Elkhorn Trail (Fayette), Winchester Trail (Clark). Proposed projects are: Benton Trail (Marshall), Bullitt County Trail, Crittenden County Trail, Elizabethtown Trail (Hardin), Frankfort Trail (Franklin), Kings Mountain Trail (Casey), Lexington-Big Sandy Trail (multiple counties), Madison County Wetlands Trails (Madison), Northern Kentucky River Path (Campbell, Kenton & Boone), Oldham County Interurban Greenway, Rowan County trail, White Plains Trail (Hopkins), Wild Turkey Rail Trail (Anderson) Wingo trail (Graves).

11. **What was HB 221.** HB 221 was passed in the 2000 KY legislative session. HB 221 provided for the establishment of an Office of Rail Trail Programs in the Department for Local Government. Lee Creech is the first coordinator of the state's new Railtrail Development Office. The Office is monitoring abandonments and as a first step is making a statewide inventory and assessment of abandoned rail corridors.

12. **What is KRTC current biggest project.** KRTC is working on having their 4th Rail-Trails and Greenways biannual state wide conference. These conferences give information and provide problem solving forums on how to develop trail projects in local communities. The conferences are targeted to trail and greenway advocates, elected officials, community development advocates, public health, de-

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3rd International Trails & Greenways Conference

(The following article was written by Keith Lovan, a municipal engineer for Lexington-Fayette County. He and Doug Greene, the Administrative Officer for the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program in Fayette County, recently attended the International Trails & Greenways Conference.)

The 3rd International Trails and Greenways conference was held on September 26-29th in St. Louis in Hyatt Regency at Union Station. The hotel is located in a historic train depot that has been preserved, renovated, and converted into a hotel, convention center, shopping area and entertainment center. Within walking distance are the famous Arch, Busch Stadium and the TWA dome. Arriving early gave Doug Greene and I the opportunity to do a lot of sightseeing the first day. Overall I'd say the city was an excellent choice for the conference as well as a destination for a weekend getaway.

Doug and I attended the conference hoping to gather new ideas about Rails to Trails and to find out what's happening around the country. We met up with old friends from previous conferences and made many new friends. It was also nice meeting the new staff from the regional office in Ohio and Jim Deming former director of the Ohio office who zipped passed Kentucky Y on his way to his position in Tennessee.

In light of the recent tragedies there was some talk of canceling the conference. The RTC folks ran a quick poll and found out that 95% of the registrants were still planning to attend. If there were any problems with organizing the conference they went unnoticed.

My most notable observation was the amount of work our neighbors to the north are doing. Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and West Virginia are miles ahead of us with respect to participants, trail mileage and representatives. My impression of this conference was that communities that design, construct and support high levels of biking and walking have happier citizens, lower crime rates, better health and an overall better quality of living.

The conference began with a somewhat weak welcoming reception in the Grand Hall. The surroundings were incredible with high ceilings and beautiful stained glass, however the acoustics were less than desirable. Fifteen minutes into the event the food ran out. Other than that, everything else went on without a hitch.

The workshop topics ranged from Public Health, Building Trails, Urban and Regional Systems to Smart Growth and the Next Generation. They generally had up to 5 workshops per session to choose from. In my opinion, a sign of a good conference is when there are so many workshops to choose from that you can't decide which ones to attend. I chose a lot of the technical and planning sessions, while Doug was interested in the sessions that dealt with smart growth, health benefits and urban systems.

One the final day there was an abbreviated workshop, and then everyone participated in different mobile workshops. Both Doug and I chose the bike and boat trip. The 26-mile bike ride on the Katy Trail was followed by a boat ride on the Missouri River. Both trips were unforgettable because of the view, wineries and companionship. I found plenty to do on the boat during its 2 hours other than sit and stare.

The closing plenary was exceptional with a rousing speech by Congressman James L. Oberstar, a congressman from Minnesota. His enthusiasm was incredible. He said that he bikes everyday and takes all issues about cycling very seriously. If the Democrats regain the House next year he will be the committee chair for the Department of Transportation. If you need a reason to vote in next year's election, consider his promise. He assured the attendees that if he becomes the committee chair then bike issues will definitely be addressed. The highway lobbyists will have to come to him rather than the other way around.

This was an excellent conference and I urge anyone who is interested in Rails to Trails make plans to attend the next conference. The information that you get and the people that you meet make this experience well worth the time and money.

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Recent TE Funding

Excerpts from an article in Connections, put out by the National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse, Summer 2001 (www.enhancements.org)

In FY 2000 the states obligated (amount authorized to spend) more Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds than in any past fiscal year. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities, combined with rail trails, comprise over half of the Federal programmed TE funds between FY 1992 and FY2000 for a total of 2 billion.

Several rail trail and greenway projects have received TE funding in KY in the last two years. The national obligation rate for TE funds was 67.9 percent but still short of the Federal Highways Administration's (FHWA) stated goal of 75% and lags behind other Federal-aid highway programs obligation rates. For example, at the end of FY2000 the funds for the National Highway System was 93% obligated. In general the states select projects at a high rate but TE projects experience a lag between selection and implementation. KY in FY92-00 had \$77,950,761 available in TE Funds, and as of FY2000 95.5% was programmed and 80.4% was obligated. KY ranked 12th in states that had obligated their funds. However only \$31,921,549 or 41.0% has been reimbursed. (Rank 37th).

In Kentucky we need to be aware and track funds that are allocated and make sure that they get used for projects in our communities.

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sign and planning professionals, landscape architects, and officials from transportation, park and recreation agencies. Tentative dates for the 2002 Conference are mid to late February in a mid state location. The cost of the 2002 conference will be between \$10,000-\$15,000 even with substantial volunteer help. KRTC is actively looking for agencies, business and individuals to underwrite the cost of the conference.

13. What are the different options for funding a trail or greenway? There are several major sources for funding trails and greenways.

1. TEA-21. In 1991, Congress enacted the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), a six-year bill authorizing a wide range of federal-aid transportation programs, including programs that fund trail acquisition and development. In June of 1998, the Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-first Century (TEA-21) was enacted and expanded. Transportation Enhancement Activities can include :

- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Pedestrian and bicycle safety and education activities
- Acquisition of scenic easements and historic easements and sites
- Scenic or historic highway programs including tourist and welcome centers
- Landscaping and scenic beautification
- Historic preservation
- Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors
- Control and removal of outdoor advertising
- Archaeological planning and research
- Mitigation of highway runoff and provision of wildlife under crossings
- Establishment of transportation museums

2. A second source of funding authorized by TEA-21 for trail projects is the Recreational Trails Program, which funds acquisition, construction, and management of recreational trail facilities.

3. Community Development Block Grant Program. The CDBG program directly funds cities and towns for projects with community-wide benefits. Trails can qualify for CDBG money, particularly those with documentable economic, cultural and historic merits. Generally, information on CDBG grants is available through you mayor's office.

4. Corporate and private foundations.

14. How do Trails and Greenways Support Economic Development? Trails and greenways provide countless opportunities for economic renewal and growth. Increased property values, tourism and recreation-related spending on items such as bicycles, in-line skates and lodging are just a few of the ways trails and greenways positively impact community economies. In a 1992 study, the National Park Service estimated the average economic activity associated with three multi-purpose trails in Florida, California and Iowa was \$1.5 million annually.

15. How do Trails and Greenways Promote Healthy Living? Many people realize exercise is important for maintaining good health in all stages of life; however many do not regularly exercise. The U.S. Surgeon General estimates that 60% of American adults are not regularly active and another 25% are not active at all.

In communities across the country, people do not have access to trails, parks, or other recreation areas close to their homes. Trails and greenways provide a safe, inexpensive avenue for regular exercise for people living in rural, urban and suburban areas.

Trails and greenways help improve air and water quality. For example, communities with trails provide enjoyable and safe options for transportation, which reduces air pollution. By protecting land along rivers and streams, greenways prevent soil erosion and filter pollution caused by agricultural and road runoff.

16. How do Railtrails Preserve Our History and Culture? Trails and greenways have the power to connect us to our heritage by preserving historic places and by providing access to them. They can give people a sense of place. Trails and greenways can draw the public to historic sites. The rail lines themselves with their tunnels, buildings, and bridges are historic features. Rail-trails along historic rail corridors provide a glance at the importance of this mode of transportation. They preserve transportation corridors.

Through their votes, thousands of Americans have said 'yes' to preserving open spaces, greenways, farmlands and other important habitat. During the 1998 election, voters in 44 states approved over 150 conservation-related ballot initiatives. Trails and greenways provide what many Americans seek - close-to-home recreational areas, community meeting places, historic preservation, educational experiences, natural landscapes and beautification. Both trails and greenways help communities build pride by ensuring that their neighborhoods are good places to live, so that children can safely walk or bike to a park, school, or to a neighbor's home. Trails and greenways help make communities more attractive and friendly places to live.

"A livable suburb or city is one that lets us get home after work fast, that restores and sustains our historic neighborhoods, that preserves among new development some family farms and green spaces. A livable neighborhood lets you and your family walk through a natural ecosystem as you simply take an evening stroll down your street." - Vice President Albert Gore

18. Can KRTC own a rail trail ? Yes. Rail trails can be owned and managed by responsible private groups as well as by governmental groups. KRTC has recently amended their bylaws so that they can function, if needed, as a land trust and hold (own) abandoned rail corridors until a government agency or other suitable rail trail proponent accepts it for development. However KRTC does not seek to be the developer or the final and permanent owner of a railtrail. KRTC works to have local governments and/or park services cooperate to create rail trails. Rail trails are linear parks and as such or public lands owned by municipalities, counties, park services or other governmental entities.

Railbanking—An Important tool for RailTrails

In 1983, concerned by the rapid contraction of America's rail network, the U.S. Congress amended the National Trails System Act to create the railbanking program. Railbanking is a method by which lines proposed for abandonment can be preserved through interim conversion to trail use. Railbanking can be used if the title to an about-to-be-abandoned rail corridor is in question and there is any interest in trail use. Railbanking is for a period of 6 months with one possible extension of an additional 6 months.

Some railroad rights-of-way contain easements that revert back to adjacent landowners when an abandonment is consummated. However, if a line is railbanked, the corridor is treated as if it had not been abandoned. As a result, the integrity of the corridor is maintained, and any reversions that could break it up into small pieces are prevented.

A railbanking request is not a contract and does not commit the interested party to acquire any property or to accept any liability. It invites negotiation with the railroad company under the umbrella of railbanking. A party filing a "Statement of Willingness To Assume Financial Responsibility" is not accepting any financial responsibility. It is merely expressing an interest in possibly doing so.

1. The tracks and ties on a railbanked line can be removed. However, bridges and trestles must remain in place, and no permanent structures can be built on the right-of-way.
2. Under railbanking, there will likely still be an actual sale of the property, and the railroad will likely still want compensation. Railbanking is not generally a method for obtaining a free trail.

A railbanked line is subject to possible future restoration of rail service. Any railroad can apply to the STB to resume rail service on a railbanked corridor. However, if the STB restores rail service, the trail agency is entitled to fair market value for the corridor. The terms and conditions of a transfer back to rail service would be determined by the STB.

2002 KRTC Conference

KRTC plans to hold its 2002 Conference on either the 16th or 23rd of February, 2002. One theme will be "Practices and Experiences in Neighboring States". The location will be in the center part of the state. If you would like to volunteer in this important project please contact Dave Parker at ParkerD@pbworld.com or at 859- 272-5400.

Proposed Bike Path would Follow River

Melbourne – Soon, cyclists will be able to travel some 40 miles through Campbell, Kenton and Boone counties on a designated bike path following the Ohio River. But Melbourne Mayor George Koopman is just pleased that the first piece of that proposed trail, known as the River Path, will link his little river town with nearby Pendery Park on Kentucky 8.

"Now the only way for pedestrians or bike riders to get from Melbourne to the park is on Kentucky 8, and that's really dangerous," he said.

A \$48,000 state grant recently was awarded to construct slightly more than a mile of bike path that will connect with the mile long path that now encircles Pendery Park, a Campbell County park on the south shore of the Ohio River that includes ball fields and playgrounds.

The county is matching the grant 100 percent with labor and materials to build the 10-foot wide strip of asphalt.

Local Group News

Northern Kentucky— Mary Singler & Lee Rafales are interested in forming a group in Northern Kentucky to work on regional rail trail projects. They can be contacted at mary.singler@mail.state.ky.us or at 859-578-7660.

Daniel Boone Rails to Trails (DBRTT) - The DBRTT group are working with Matt Collinsworth, Downtown Manager, and the Greenway Committee to implement the TEA-21 grant within the City limits of Morehead. All of the landowners have been identified and plans have been made to start having the land appraised so that we can make an offer to the landowner. A grant was also received to construct 3 foot bridges that are needed in town.

The members have spent a couple of weekends visiting with landowners in the county and have obtained a few letters of intent. The challenge has been catching people at home. Their membership is still growing and they remain very optimistic about the project. Contact person is April Haight at adhaight@yahoo.com or

Bluegrass Rails to Trail Foundation (Fayette, Clark and Montgomery Counties). BRTF in conjunction with the City of Winchester continues to submit grants for the first portion of a trail inside the city limits. BRTF continues to meet on the second Tuesday of the month. Next meeting is at Rio's in Mt. Sterling Nov. 13 at 6:30 pm.

Lake Cumberland Trail Foundation - The LCTF was awarded a Transportation grant this year in the amount of \$93,750.00 They are expecting the go-ahead from transportation officials any day now to proceed with using the funds. Contact person is Rick Bates at rbates@ca.uky.edu or 606.577.6000

My Reasons to continue to support Rails to Trails in Kentucky.

On my list of things to do for the week of September 10th was to start working on the KRTC newsletter and to make two fund raising phone calls. After the disaster at the World Trade Center on Tuesday the 11th, it was not a priority to ask individuals for money to build rail trails in Kentucky when downtown Manhattan was a disaster area and 6000 or more people were dead or dying in New York. I did not have the focus or motivation to be enthusiastic about rail trails and write and edit a newsletter. I, like others, needed a time of mourning and reflection. I did go down in my basement and unearthed my 4th of July flag. I felt like I was making a small but important gesture as I clamped it to the post and saw it ripple in the breeze. I continued on with the basic routines of my life, and today 2 weeks later I'm getting down to writing for KRTC. The following are some reasons why I will continue to support KRTC in promoting and helping Kentucky build rail trails.

1. As President Bush and other leaders encourage, we should get on with our normal life, fly in airplanes if that is what we did, shop, travel to visit family and friends, spend, go to plays, go to our work and for me and I hope others, support railtrails.
2. Rail trails are ways of connecting communities. They are a part of the infrastructure that will strengthen our local communities at the grass root level. The terror and fear that was the goal of the attack on the WTC isolates us from one another while greenways, paths and trails help us meet and interact with one another. Local groups of citizens from different walks of life and different backgrounds working to have railtrails is 180 degrees from the destabilization of our lifestyle that the terrorist attack hoped to create.
3. Fewer federal funds may be less available for rail-trails in the near future. Shifting priorities in our national budget may see increased spending on defense, funding to fight terrorism, and aid to victims of terrorist acts. If this happens, and federal funds for rail-trail projects decrease, rail-trail groups will have to rely even more on volunteer efforts and donations from private sources.
4. As a woman, it pleases me that I belong to an organization that has both men and women active as members and leaders. The intellectual, physical and social freedoms that I enjoy I cherish more as I hear of the Taliban's very narrow, cruel and patriarchal subjugation and victimization of women. Their sexist ideology appears to be an integral part or closely associated with the suspected terrorists.
5. More rail trails and promotion of non-motorized transportation helps us live more simply and preserve our own and global resources.

Articles about RailTrails with Tunnels

Because several of the planned Railtrails in Kentucky have tunnels the following articles might be of interest.

The lead article in the Sierra Club's month newsletter, *The Cumberland*, is an article on the North Bend Rail Trail in West Virginia that has 12 tunnels.

RTC Tunnel Report now available. Greatly anticipated, *TUNNELS ON TRAILS, A study of 78 Tunnels on 36 Trails in the United States* is now available from www.transact.org under the "Reports" category. This study was sponsored by Marin County CA and produced by the RTC office in California.

For information about the study and the report contact Joshua Hart at jhart@transact.org. This information was picked up from the electronic newsletter *Buckeye Trails Way*, the newsletter of the RTC Ohio Field Office. If you would like to be on their newsletter mailing list, please send email information to akuhn@transact.org

Next KRTC Meeting

The next meeting of KRTC will be on the usual third Tuesday, November 20th at 6:30 PM. The meeting will be at the Eagle Creek Branch Library off Richmond Road & across from St. Joseph's Hospital East in Lexington. The board has decided to experiment with different meeting locations other than downtown Lexington to see if it is more convenient location for more members to attend. Great place to learn more about rail trails and contribute. There is a lot to do at the state and local level. Come and see what is happening. As usual there will be no December meeting. We will then start again in January 2002 with the meeting on the third Tuesday, January 15th, 6:30 PM tentatively at the LFUCG Building in Lexington, 5th floor. Email dixiemoores@aol.com or call 859.266.5532 for definite location.

6. If a right-of-way slated for abandonment is saved through the process of railbanking and interim trail use, this preserves a transportation corridor that could again be converted to rail service in a time of future national need. The recent events have vividly demonstrated how vulnerable to disruption our transportation system is, and how suddenly the future can change in unimagined ways. This underscores the fact that rail corridors are national resources that should not be casually abandoned.
7. And last but not least, I like to ride bikes and walk on trails near where I live. It's safe. Dixie Moore



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www.KyRailTrail.org

KRTC is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit tax-exempt organization

Kentucky Rail-Trail LISTSERV
The Kentucky Rails to Trails Council has a LISTSERV for keeping in touch with meetings and events related to rail-trail happenings around the state. To join contact the KRTC secretary, at DixiMoore@aol.com

Kentucky Rails to Trails Council MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

\$ 10 Individual \$ 25 Family \$ 50 Patron \$ 250 Benefactor
 \$ 100 Patron \$ 500 Trail Blazer \$1000 Golden Spike \$5000 Corporate/Partner

Donation \$ _____ Address Correction

The Kentucky Rails to Trails Council is always in need of volunteers who wish to contribute a bit of their time to help whether it be in writing newsletter articles, being an officer, fundraising, web site design or other activities such as these. If you think you might be interested, let us know. I would like to volunteer with KRTC.

Please call me at: (____) _____ day evening

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

**Please make check payable and mail to: Kentucky Rails to Trails Council, Inc.
Post Office Box 597, Lexington, KY 40588-0597**