



rails-to-trails
conservancy

Sharing Space in a Crowded World

The Emergence of Rails-with-Trails



Rail~Volution
Kelly Pack, Director of Trail Development
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
October 19, 2011



Metro

CSX –
Amtrak -
MARC commuter rail

Metropolitan Branch Trail
Washington, DC

RAILS



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Rail-with-Trail (RWT)

A trail (shared use path) on, or directly adjacent to, an active railroad corridor.



Presentation Overview



I. RWT Basics

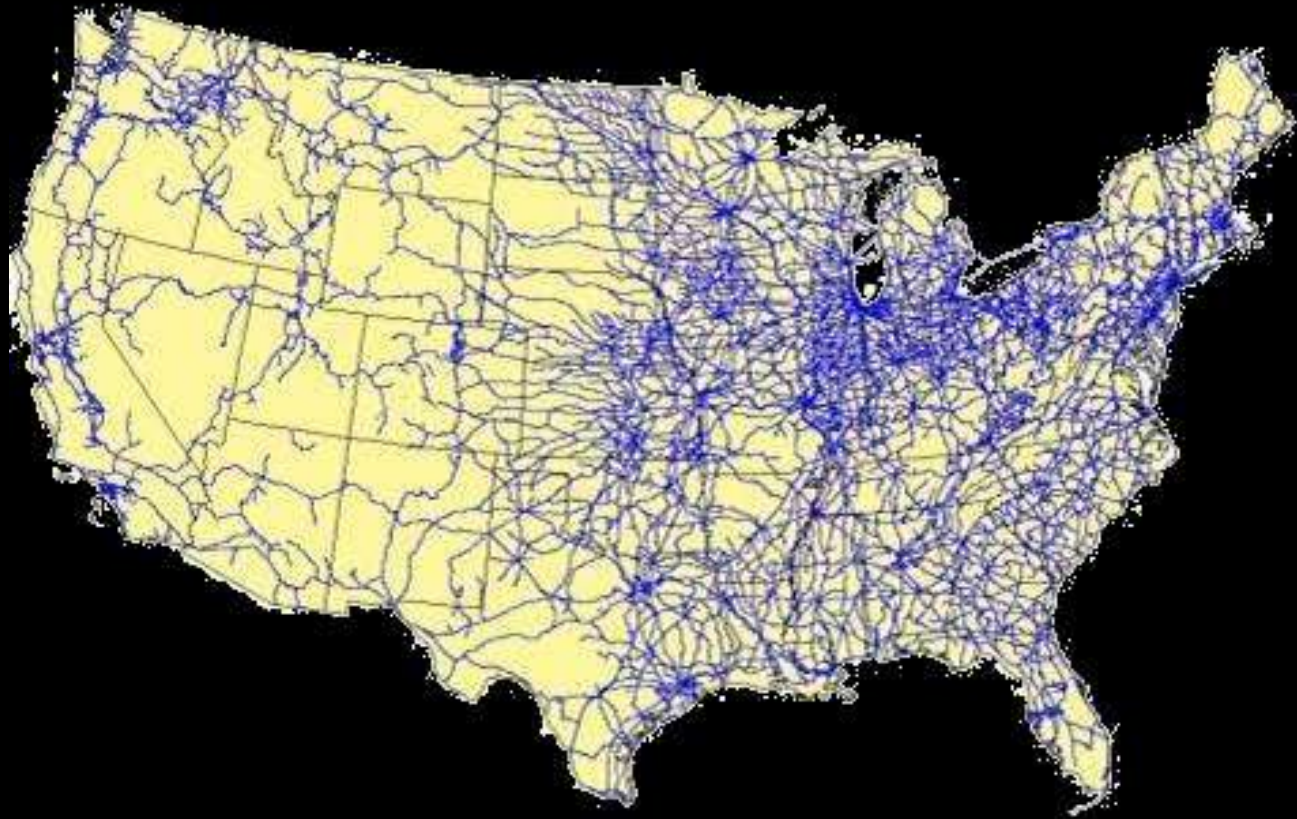
II. State RWT Trends

III. Transit and Trails

IV. Resources and Research

V. Share Your Story

National Railroad System

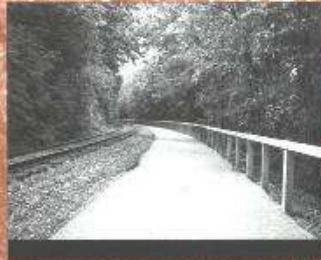


Prairie Path Trail
Illinois



High Line
New York City

RAILS -WITH- TRAILS



Design, Management, and
Operating Characteristics
of 61 Trails Along Active
Rail Lines



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Highway
Administration
Federal Railroad
Administration
National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration
Federal Transit
Administration

Rails-with-Trails: Lessons Learned

Literature Review, Current Practices, Conclusions

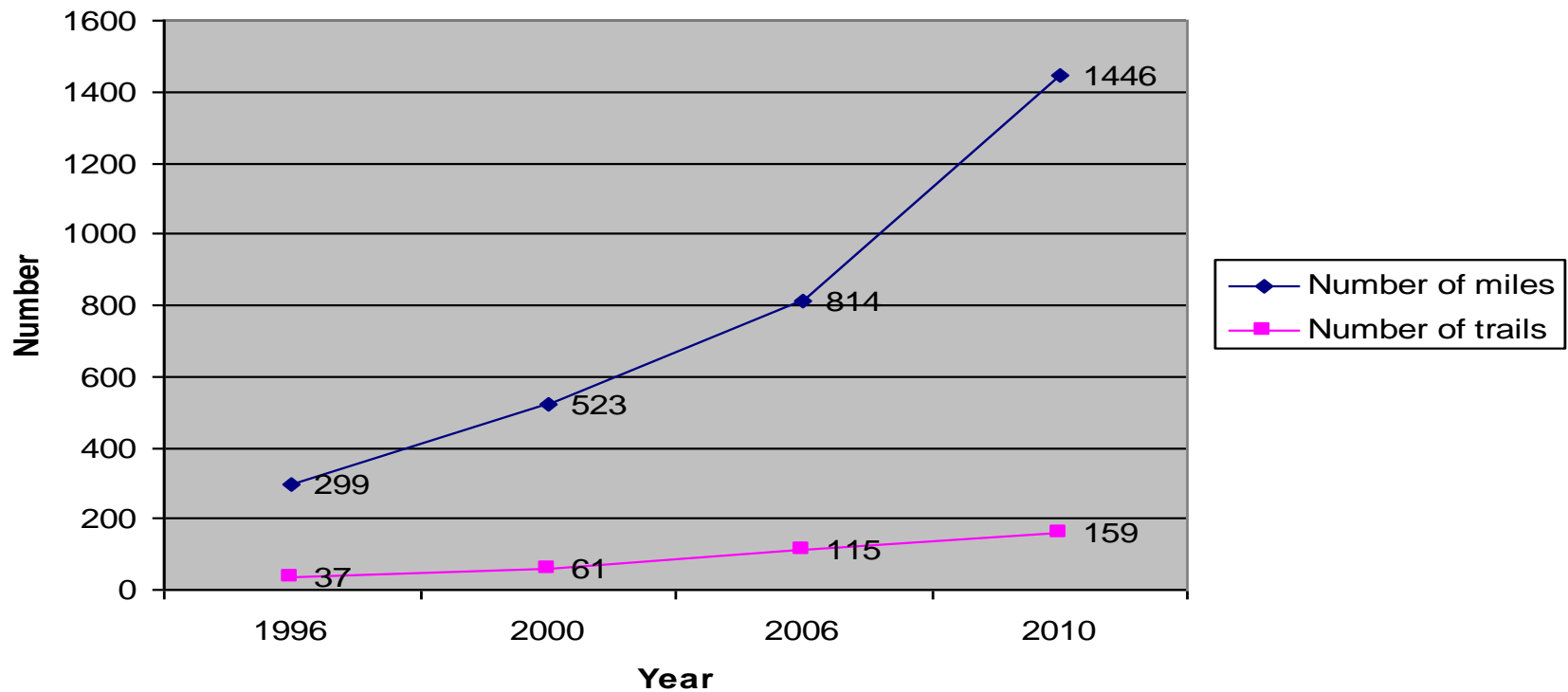


August 2010

13266-260052-041

Rails-with-Trails: A Growing Trend

Increase in Rails-with-Trails



Current Statistics

- ~180 Open RWTs
 - >1,600 Miles
 - 44 States
- (CA gets a ★)



MLK Promenade
San Diego, CA

Characteristics

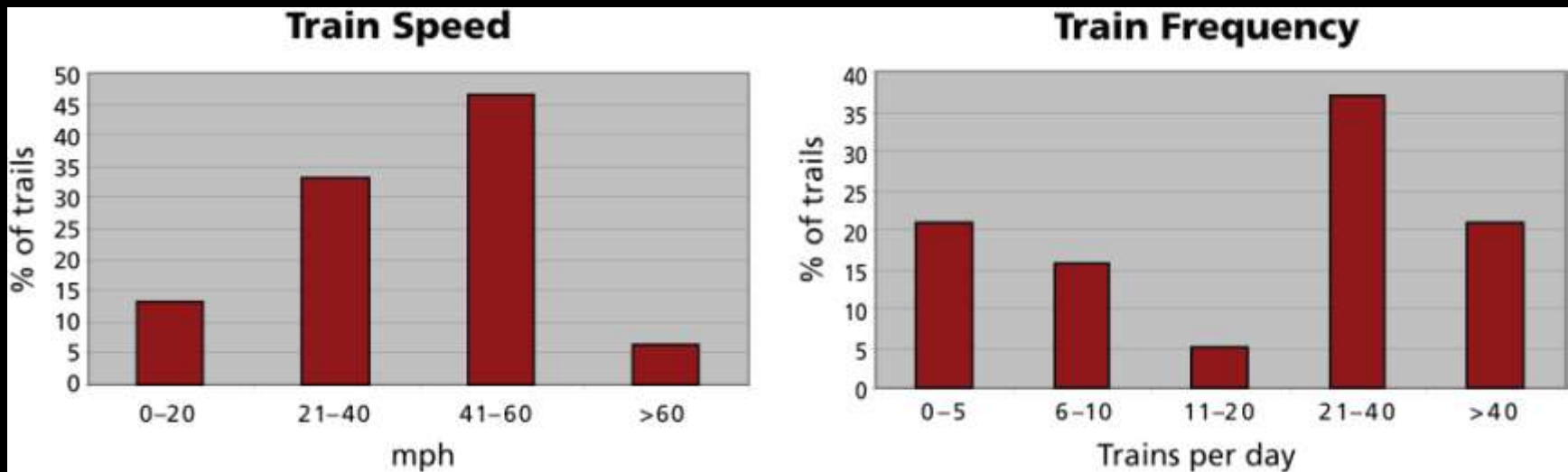
- Longest Trail: 57 miles (Railroad Trail, Michigan)
- Longest continually next to tracks: 22 miles (Railroad Trail, Michigan)
- Fastest Trains: 150 MPH (Southwest Corridor Park Trail, Mass.)
- Slowest Trains: 5 MPH (West Orange Trail, Florida)
- Oldest Trail: 1966 (Illinois Prairie Path, Illinois)
- Widest Corridor: 1,500 Ft. (Rose Canyon Bike Path, California)
- Narrowest Corridor: 18 Ft. (Seattle Waterfront Trail and Duwamish Trail both in Washington)
- Closest to tracks: 2 Ft. (Railroad Trail, Michigan)

\$\$ One of the Most Expensive \$\$



**San Clemente Beach Trail
California**

Characteristics of Adjacent Rail (RTC California Study, 2009)



Rails-with-Trails: Safety and Liability

- Railroad company's main concerns
- Trails may reduce trespassing
- Liability safeguards: Recreation Use Statutes, Insurance, Indemnification



Rails-with-Trails: Design

- Design can address the majority of safety issues
- Key safety factors:
 - Adequate distance between track and trail
 - Fencing, barriers or grade separation between track and trail
 - Safe rail crossings
 - Long sight lines
 - Trail-user warning signs



Rails-with-Trails: Benefits to the Railroad

- Corridor beautification
- Improved community relations
- Improved safety
- Reduced crime and trespassing
- Improved access for police and maintenance vehicles



State Trends -- *RWT Legislation*

- **SB 546 Passes — Paving the Way for Virginia's Outdoor Future**
- **State of Maine Amends Recreational Use Statute**

Trolley Trail (Charlotte, NC)



Seattle, WA



Cal Park Tunnel – Marin County, CA

Resources

RAILS -WITH- TRAILS



Design, Management, and Operating Characteristics of 61 Trails Along Active Rail Lines



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Railroad Administration
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Federal Transit Administration

Rails-with-Trails: Lessons Learned

Literature Review, Current Practices, Conclusions



August 2002

FHWA/600/02-001

California Rails-with-Trails A Survey of Trails Along Active Rail Lines



SAN FRANCISCO BAY TRAIL (PHOTO: RAILS-TO-TRAILS CONSERVANCY)

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) serves as the national voice for more than 100,000 members and supporters. We're help develop more than 15,000 miles of rail-trail throughout the country, and thousands of miles of potential rail-trails waiting to be built. We have supported the tremendous growth and development of rail-trails since opening our doors on February 1, 1986, and we remain dedicated to the creation of a nationwide network of trails and connecting corridors. Further, RTC is committed to enhancing the health of America's environment, transportation, economy, neighborhoods and people—ensuring a better future made possible by trails and the connections they create.

NOVEMBER 2009



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→ build a trail
→ take action
→ contact RTC
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resources:
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Support rail-trails with every purchase



Rail-with-Trail: Tracks and Trails Can Share

RTC Trailblog > Rail-with-Trail: Tracks and Trails Can Share

As more communities seek to accommodate both active and rail transportation, rail-with-trail has become an increasingly popular concept. Many successful examples of rails-with-trails exist in North America, but it's not uncommon for local leaders and railroad companies to be apprehensive about developing multi-use paths within active railroad rights-of-way (ROW).

However, mounting evidence supports the claim that trails and trains can coexist, and more rail-with-trail projects are in development across the United States. Local and state groups that want to build rail-with-trails in existing and planned railroad ROW. Through the collection of resources that can help build the case for rail-with-trail issues and a comprehensive list of studies, research, and best practices, we've compiled the newest publication, **Rail-with-Trail: Tracks and Trails Can Share**. There are also numerous resources available elsewhere.

Photo Collections

- **Trails with Rails - John Luton's Flickr site:** Luton is a member of the British Columbia, Canada, and executive director of the Capital Bike and Walk Society. His impressive collection of rail-with-trail photos includes well as examples from other jurisdictions.
- **Capital Bike and Walk Society - Rails-with-Trails Photo Gallery:** photos can also be found in this photo gallery, which includes photos from Seattle and Portland.
- **American Trails - Cool Trail Solutions, Rails-with-Trails Photo Gallery:** photos from rails-with-trails in California, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin.
- **Schuylkill River Park Alliance - Trail Crossings Photo Gallery:** In 2007, the Schuylkill River Park Alliance (formerly Free to Ride) campaigned to provide better access to the Schuylkill River city of Philadelphia and CSX Transportation to allow safe and secure development of a connector bridge between the trail and the "original" trail. Their collection of photos illustrates dozens of safe trail and

Statewide Rail-with-Trail Advocacy Efforts

- The Virginia Bicycling Federation has garnered support from state organizations requesting a formal endorsement from the state of Virginia. [Read more about their effort](#) to implement innovative projects at the state level.

New Rail-with-Trail Projects

- **Capital Metro Transportation Authority of Austin, Texas, includes** the long-range transit plan and completed a feasibility study on how multi-use trails will be developed and integrated with transit.
- The **Metropolitan Branch Trail** in Washington, D.C., includes a trail directly adjacent to a large railroad ROW used by CSX Transpor



What's Your Story?





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