



Rails-with-trails as Transportation in Urban Settings

Steve Schweigerdt
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Western Region Office
April 22, 2010



Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Creating a nationwide network of trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors to build healthier places for healthier people.

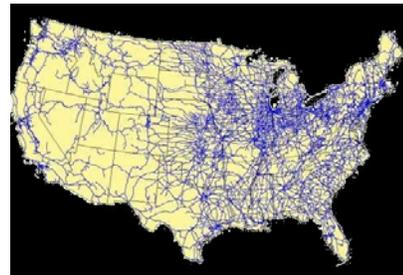


Rails-to-Trails Conservancy: What We Do

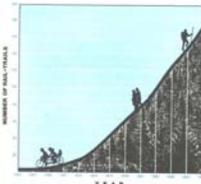
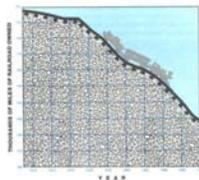
- Trail Advocates – shaping policy, creating funding
- Trail Planning technical assistance – Trail DART
- Track abandonments & notifying local partners
- Develop information resources, create learning networks



National Railroad System



Recycling Railroads



- 1667 Open rail-trails
- Over 22,000 miles of trail open
- Over 16,000 miles on rail right-of-way

Rail-with-trail

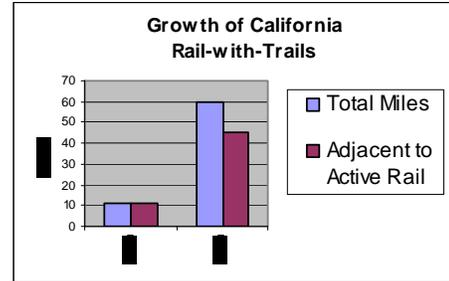


Reasons for Rails-with-trails

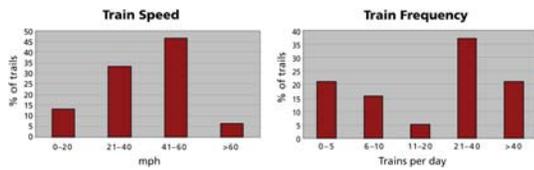
- Available space
- Natural linear corridor
- Destinations
- Safety
- Efficiency
- Improve access to transit



Rails-with-Trails



Characteristics of adjacent rail



Safety Record

- No incidents directly attributable to trail
- Key challenge to the rails-with-trails movement
- Concerns – debris, derailments
- 140 existing trails nationwide with 1,154 miles of trail



Benefits for Railroads

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



Key factors

- Which railroad owns the corridor
- Corridor width
- Environmental concerns
- Alternatives (Road ROW)



Design issues

- Fencing
- Setbacks
- Street crossings – often not at intersections
- Lighting
- Drainage
- Access during railroad maintenance

Working with Railroads

- Do your research
- Understand the RR's perspective
- Coordinated approach
- Pinpoint their concerns
- *Look for leverage* with RR needs
- Railroads can benefit too - make the case



Expanding the network

- State policies (Virginia)
- Transit District policies
- Indemnity arrangements
- Bike plans



Existing projects

- Metro Orange Line
- Inland Rail Trail
- Folsom Parkway
- San Clemente
- San Fernando
- SLO Railroad Safety Trail



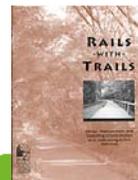
Major Future Projects

- San Diego Coastal
- SMART
- Santa Cruz
- Expo Line
- East Bay Greenway
- Whittier



Completed research

- RTC Nationwide reports 1996 and 2000
- FHWA/Alta report 2002
- RTC NE office Crossings Study 2005
- RTC California Survey 2009

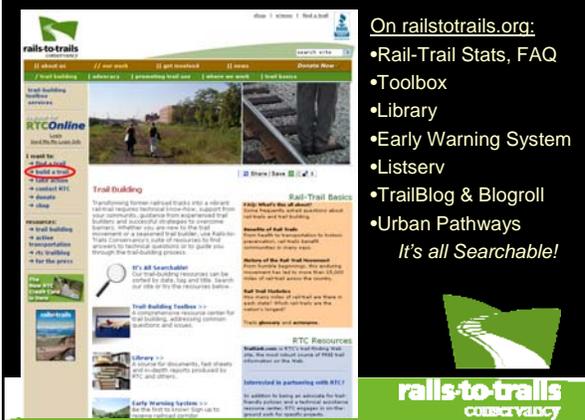


Rails-with-Trails:
Lessons Learned
Literature Review, Current Practices, Conclusions



Research opportunities

- Effect of trails on trespassing (before and after study)
- Benefits to transit
- Indemnity models
- Cost studies
- Updated Guidelines/Best Practices
- Info on potential expansion of rails



On railstotrails.org:

- Rail-Trail Stats, FAQ
- Toolbox
- Library
- Early Warning System
- Listserv
- TrailBlog & Blogroll
- Urban Pathways

It's all Searchable!

rails-to-trails
CONSERVANCY

New RTC Web Resources

RTC TrailBlog
Highlighting the latest and greatest in trails, walking and biking. View [all Urban Pathways content](#) on RTC TrailBlog.

Blogroll & Twitter
Use our [Blogroll](#) to follow trail-oriented blogs from across the web. On Twitter? Use #130path and follow RTC.

Forums
Connect with RTC staff and other urban pathways partners. Start by [introducing yourself](#) and finding all [Urban Pathways content](#) in the Forums.

Library
Start by viewing [all Urban Pathways content](#) in the Library and posting your own [images, documents and links](#).

It's All Searchable!
All of our urban pathways and trail-building resources can be sorted by date, tag and title.

Education/Research/Technical Assistance



ACQUIRING RAIL CORRIDORS
A How-To Manual

RAIL-TRAIL CONSTRUCTION OPERATIONS

THE GREAT MOUNTAIN RAIL-TRAIL

RAIL-TRAIL STATISTICS

RAIL-TRAIL TOOLBOX

RAIL-TRAIL LIBRARY

RAIL-TRAIL FORUMS

RAIL-TRAIL BLOG

RAIL-TRAIL TWITTER

RAIL-TRAIL BLOGROLL

RAIL-TRAIL EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

RAIL-TRAIL IT'S ALL SEARCHABLE!

RAIL-TRAIL URBAN PATHWAYS

RAIL-TRAIL MONTANA RAILROAD

RAIL-TRAIL SUCCESSFUL RAIL-TRAILS

RTC Western Region

Steve Schweigerdt, Trail Development Manager – steve@railstotrails.org

Phone: (415)814-1102