



January 1, 2021

## Mon River Trails Conservancy

### Goodbye 2020, Hello 2021

#### We wish you all a happy and healthy 2021!

Despite all the challenges that this year brought, the Mon River Trail system is in better condition and more welcoming due to some big accomplishments in 2020. We saw our trail communities embrace the rail-trail as an essential space even as MRTC learned to work, plan, and celebrate in new, smaller, and stranger (virtual) ways.

We could not have been so successful without the support of generous members and donors, energized partners, active Monongalia County voters (passing the 2020 Parks and Trails Levy), and dedicated volunteers. THANK YOU and HAPPY TRAILS!

#### Trail Improvements

Big improvements to the trail drainage system and surface on a two mile stretch of Mon River Rail-Trail closest to the WV/PA state line. Two Recreational Trail Grants progressed to the construction phase, resulting in new surfacing on over 12 miles of the 19.5 mile Deckers Creek Rail-Trail.



#### Reedsville Connection

A new community connection was established at the Town of Reedsville and mile 17.5 of the Deckers Creek Rail-Trail that provides a safer, easier route to downtown businesses and the Reedsville Town Park. It also makes it easy for residents in a Reedsville neighborhood to access the rail-trail on foot or by bike.



#### Parks and Trail Levy



A successful renewal of the Monongalia County Parks and Trails Levy that provides upkeep on our maintenance equipment and salary for our trail crew who clear hundreds of downed trees, clean culverts and ditches, and mow the entire 48 miles of rail-trail, keeping it open and welcoming to trail users.



## New and Restored

Adding to our amenities, new art went in at three rail-trail weather shelters and two water trail kayak launches. A whistle stop post and railroad telephone booth were restored to trailside locations, enriching our cultural landscape. A new weather shelter and more trail benches were added to give us places to rest and enjoy the beauty of West Virginia. Hazel Ruby McQuain Riverfront Park was reopened with new restrooms, partially covered amphitheater, and new kayak launch to enjoy recreation on the Monongahela River.



## Innovation and Imagination

Needing to adapt to ways to stay safe, the Blue Jean Ball went virtual with many thanks to our amazing partners at the WV Land Trust. A new fundraiser was born, the Imagination Running Wild Challenge, nurturing individual exploration of the entire 48-mile trail with games to stretch and inspire the imagination. With a sense of humor, the Mon Python returned to the rail-trail to demand of us the practice of 6ft physical distancing.



## Rail-Trail Hall of Fame

The Mon River Rail-Trails were inducted into the Rails to Trails Conservancy's Rail-Trail Hall of Fame as the 34th rail-trail in the nation to receive this honor. Our rail-trails were recognized for merits of scenic value, high use, trail and trailside amenities, historical significance, excellence in management and maintenance of facility, community connections and geographic distribution. We hope to set a high bar with this new status!



Connect with us



**Mon River Trails Coservancy**

Ella Belling, Executive Director, [ella@montrails.org](mailto:ella@montrails.org)

Website- [montrails.org](http://montrails.org)

The Board meets on the 1st Thursday of every month at 5:15 in the Morgantown Public Library. We are currently holding Zoom Meetings until we can gather again in person- contact Ella if you would like to join in.