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**Topic:** Mendota Trail Project receives \$25,000 Grant

**Sample Headline:** Mendota Trail Project Receives \$25,000 Grant for Engineering Studies and Stabilization of Former Trestle

Bristol, VA—Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) today announced the recipients of its 2019 Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund grants, with an emphasis on strategic investments that provide necessary financial support for regional and community trail-development goals. The organization invested \$132,000 in ten regional and community trail projects across the country. The Mendota Trail is one of the ten recipients.

Bob Mueller, a volunteer spokesperson for the Mendota Trail Project stated, “This award is huge. It allows us to continue the advancement of the trail toward Benhams. Restoration of this trestle is truly a challenge since it is 193 feet long and 40 feet above ground. We are humbled and honored that our project was deemed worthy of the grant, as we know many worthwhile projects were considered.”

The funds will be used to complete preliminary engineering studies and begin initial stabilization work on the trestle’s infrastructure. Mueller added, “We ultimately plan to place repurposed shipping containers, linked end to end, on the trestle’s stringers. Windows will be cut in the containers, resulting in a ‘covered bridge’ configuration. We anticipate this innovative approach will considerably reduce our construction costs.”

The Mendota Trail is a 12.5 mile recreational trail under active development linking Bristol, VA to Mendota, VA on a former railroad bed that last saw locomotive traffic in the 1980s. Mountain Heritage, Inc., a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization that has an established record of trail development in the region, acquired the property in 2016.

Currently, one mile of the trail is open to the public on the Mendota end. It is anticipated that a segment of the trail on the Bristol end will be opened this summer. For safety reasons, Mountain Heritage, Inc. requests that users remain off of trail segments that have not been officially opened.