

## Be Active WV Mini-Grant Program 2020 Success Story

# MON RIVER TRAILS CONSERVANCY Reedsville Trail Connector Project

### What Public Health Problem Was Addressed?

Physical activity can help control weight and lower the risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers. The 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend that adults get 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity and 2 or more days of muscle-building activity each week to improve their health. Reedsville is a small, rural town in Preston County, West Virginia with a population of approximately 600 residents. According to recent County Health Rankings, approximately 1 in 3 residents of Preston County is sedentary, meaning they engage in little or no physical activity. Trail Connectors are critical for creating opportunities for the community to access trails and for welcoming people off of a trail and into a community. This connection will promote healthy habits and improve the trail experience, encouraging users to return.

### What Approach Did They Take?

The Mon River Trails Conservancy worked with the Reedsville Town Council and Preston County Parks and Recreation Commission to plan and build the connector from the Deckers Creek Rail-Trail to downtown Reedsville. The Reedsville Trail Connector is a ½ mile link from the Deckers Creek Rail-Trail to the Reedsville Park and downtown businesses. A small section of this connector is trail, but most of the connector uses back neighborhood roads that have minimal traffic. Connectors, such as this one, make it easier for all people to access the trail by walking, biking, or adaptive equipment on a combined route of a non-motorized trail and fairly flat, low trafficked road. The route will be signed to direct trail users to the Reedsville community park and several town businesses.

### What Were The Results?

The new trail connector can serve the rural community of Reedsville with a place to launch walking, running, and biking events or meet-ups. This connection creates an easy walking and biking route to the rail-trail for the adjacent Reedsville neighborhood. It also creates a safe route for trail users to get to park amenities and Reedsville businesses rather than the current option of using a roadway that is heavily trafficked with a steep grade and blind curves.

### What's Next?

The Mon River Trails Conservancy continues to work with the Town of Reedsville and the Preston County Parks and Recreation Commission to improve the amenities along the Reedsville Trail Connector and Reedsville Community Park. Mon River Trail Conservancy will encourage established community groups like the Country Road Cyclists and area running groups to use this route and help promote it on their outings schedule. MRTC is working with the Town of Reedsville to secure and formalize trailhead parking and continue on projects to improve trail access.



“ It is wonderful to see Reedsville as a now connected Trail Town community and the excitement generated by these simple infrastructure changes that create new places to explore by walking or by biking. ”

-Ella Belling, Executive Director, Mon River Trails Conservancy

### Contact

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