

EPTA Board

As you may or may not be aware:

Earlier this year, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) announced a new grant program, the Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund, which provides funding to support organizations and local governments that are implementing projects to build and improve trails. Applications are due Dec 6th and the call for applications specifically mentions signage.

<http://www.railstotrails.org/resource-library/resources/new-fund-launched-to-support-trail-development-projects/>

At next week's Board meeting, I would like to discuss applying for funds to buy signs and associated hardware to mark the entire trail. I believe that the cooperation of all the individual trails in a unifying project would have a good chance of success. Since each trail would bear some responsibility for the project, this should be discussed by the full Board.

Specific questions we should consider include

- Is this the right time for a unifying signage project?
- Should it be an EPTA initiative, or should each trail do it individually?
- In general, should EPTA be going after grants for multi-trail projects whenever opportunities come up?

Thoughts?

The relevant bit of the Doppelt call for proposals says:

"The Project Transformation Grant is intended to have a substantial impact in a trail/organization's ability to complete a significant trail development or improvement project."

"Activities may include, but are not limited to: ... trail signage, ..." "preference to: ... The project must advance corridor connections ...".

Here is an outline of a proposal for the Doppelt opportunity ...

## **Project Summary**

The Erie to Pittsburgh Trail has about 333 miles of trail, over 66% of which is open. There are over 100 trailheads. Currently less than 5% of the trail is signed with EPTA logo signs. If awarded this grant would purchase EPTA logo signs and hardware for each trailhead, and 100 PennDot approved EPTA logo signs for use on connecting road gaps.

The placement of these signs would make the Erie to Pittsburgh corridor of the IHTC more visible to the

public. By signing the gaps, it would enable individuals to plan and execute multi-day trips on the IHTC corridor.

Internally the signs and the work involved in placing the signs (1000 to 1500 volunteer man hours) would strengthen the ties of the individual trail groups and their volunteers to the corridor.

## **Preliminary Plan**

The cost and effort would probably be spread over a 3 year period. An initial purchase of the signs would be made and distributed to the various trail groups within 2 months of notification to proceed. Additional purchases would be made as signs are placed, so that a group did not run out of signs, before running out of places and volunteers to place them.

## **Budget**

Very rough estimate of the costs which will need to be refined with actual quotes:

200 EPTA Logo signs @ \$40  
200 EPTA PennDot Logo signs @ \$30  
150 Arrows @ \$10  
550 Miscellaneous Hardware @ \$15

Total Project Cost \$19,250 materials, \$31,250 volunteer labor.

Roy