Starting in 2005 from a small group of dedicated members who maintained the North Judson Trail, the Prairie Trails Club has grown to a membership of over 50 people that continues to maintain the trail and has expanded their work. All funds to maintain the trail comes from member dues and donations.

The Erie trail is a non-motorized, walking, biking and equestrian trail that extended 9.2 miles, until recently when it was extended 2.1 miles through Club’s efforts. Additional efforts include maintaining the bridges, removing invasive plants, overgrown weeds and tree roots. This takes a dedicated group who actively work on the trail in their spare time.

The volunteers of the Prairie Trails Club come from all walks of life. Some of them live by the trail while others are from out of state, summer residents who look forward to using and working on the trail. They enthusiastically organize bike rides, and equestrian outings to experience the beauty and relaxation that comes with being on a trail.

The Club helped the Erie Trail gain national recognition as being a part of the American Discovery Trail (ADT) and the United States Bicycle Route #35. As the Vision came closer to reality and revisions were made, the trail also was recognized as a part of the Great American Rail Trail.

In October of 2021 the Club opened the 2.1-mile extension after applying for and receiving a grant from Next Level Trails program. This grant required a 20% match, and although it seemed insurmountable for a small little community, it was obtained through though the Club’s outreach. There were many collaborations that were required to complete the effort, and the Club came through.

In recognition of their successes, the Greenways Foundation is proud to award The Prairie Trails Club as our Outstanding Trail Group for 2022.