



Nevada Recreational Trails Grant Application FAQ's

The Nevada Recreational Trails Grant program, administered by Nevada State Parks, is requesting applications for the 2009 grant cycle. The following information is intended to answer frequently asked questions regarding the Recreational Trails Program in Nevada. The application packet is designed to contain the information needed to submit an application. If you are applying for educational funding, you are required to complete the **2009 RTP Educational Grant Application**, in lieu of the 2009 Nevada Recreational Trails Grant Application. Recreational Trails Grant Manuals will only be distributed to applicants approved for funding.

For questions about information in this packet, or other questions about the Nevada Recreational Trails Program, please contact Randy Moore, Recreation Program Manager (775) 684-2775.

What is the Recreational Trails Program? What does it do?

The Recreational Trails Program was authorized in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) in 1998 and reauthorized in 2005 by the Safe, Affordable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The Recreational Trails Program is a Federal-aid assistance program to help States provide and maintain recreational trails for both the motorized and non-motorized recreational trail user. The program provides funds for a variety of recreational trail uses, such as pedestrian (hiking, backpacking, running, and wheelchair use), bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or using other off-road motorized vehicles.

Nevada has established a 9-member Recreational Trails Advisory Committee whose members represent both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail users. The Committee reviews, evaluates, and scores all Recreational Trails grant applications, and then meets two times each year to develop funding recommendations for Nevada State Parks and the Federal Highway Administration.

How Much Money is Available?

Each year Nevada receives funding from the Federal Highway Administration to administer the Recreational Trails Program. Nevada State Parks distributes 93% of the funds each year, in the form of grant awards, for Recreational Trail projects. In federal FY 2008, U.S. Congress appropriated \$1,106,141 for general trail projects in Nevada. The FY 2009 funding will be announced in the fall of 2008. It is expected that the amount will meet or exceed that of 2008. The U.S. Congress or the Nevada Department of Transportation Director may authorize spending limits less than the apportionment to the state of Nevada. The Recreational Trails Program is a competitive grant program; those applications receiving the highest scores will be funded first.

Who is Eligible?

Almost anyone is eligible to apply for Recreational Trails funding. Eligible entities include: private individuals and organizations, nonprofit and for-profit organizations, youth conservation or service corps groups, Indian tribal governments, federal, state, county and city governments, and other government entities (general improvement districts, conservation districts). NOTE: All trails, products, and programs funded with Recreational Trails funds must be accessible to the public and available free of charge.

When are applications due?

Eleven (11) double-sided copies of each application must be received by **5PM, Monday, December 1, 2008**. Submit all applications to:

Nevada State Parks
Recreational Trails Program Manager
901 S. Stewart Street Suite 5005
Carson City, Nevada 89701-5248

What kinds of projects are eligible?

Projects that fit into the following permissible use categories are eligible to receive funding from the Nevada Recreational Trails Program:

- A) *Maintenance and restoration of existing trails*
Includes any kind of trail maintenance, restoration, rehabilitation, or relocation. This category may include maintenance and restoration of trail bridges, or providing signage along a trail.
- B) *Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages*
Includes development or rehabilitation of any trailside or trailhead facility. The definition of “rehabilitation” refers to extensive repair needed to bring a facility up to standards suitable for public use (not routine maintenance). Trailside and trailhead facilities should have a direct relationship with a recreational trail. Trailside and trailhead facilities refer to trail components or associated facilities which serve the purpose and safe use of the recreational trail and may include but not be limited to the following: 1) drainage, 2) crossings, 3) stabilization, 4) parking, 5) signage, 6) controls, 7) shelters, and 8) water, sanitary, and access facilities.
- C) *Purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment*
Includes purchase and lease of any trail construction and maintenance equipment, including lawn mowers and trail grooming machines, provided the equipment is used primarily to construct and maintain recreational trails. This provision does not include the purchase of equipment to be used for purposes unrelated to trails.
- D) *Construction of new recreational trails*
This category is self-explanatory for projects not located on federal lands. For those projects on Federal land, the most important requirement is that the Federal agency land manager must approve of the project in accordance with other applicable Federal agency regulations. This category may include construction of new trail bridges, and providing signage along a trail.
- E) *Acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property*
This category may include acquisition of old road or railroad bridges to be used as recreational trail bridges. Condemnation of any kind of interest in property is prohibited and acquisition of any kind of interest in property must be from a willing landowner or seller.
- F) *Operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection*
Includes development and operation of trail safety education programs, development and operation of trail-related environmental education programs, training on how to conduct trail assessments (for ADA access), production of trail-related educational materials (displays, print, video, audio, etc.) **Educational Applications require use of educational grant application form.**

How much money can I apply for?

The maximum grant award is \$100,000 for non-motorized and diverse project; the minimum grant award is \$4,000. The maximum grant award for motorized projects in FY 2009 can be more than \$100,000 and is dependant on the amount of funds available; the minimum grant award is \$4,000. FY 2008 Educational awards cannot exceed 7% of the allocation and there should be over \$50,000 available in 2009. Applicants may submit applications for more than one project.

How much match is required?

The Nevada Recreational Trails Program is an 80/20 matching grant program. Applicants must provide a minimum match of 20% for each project. Additional match is encouraged and applications demonstrating higher matching ratios will receive extra points in the scoring process. Matching share can include paid labor, volunteer labor, donations, cash, equipment, and more. Volunteer labor should be calculated at \$15 per hour for non-skilled labor and \$22 per hour for skilled labor. NOTE: Convict labor and crews cannot be used on construction projects within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway. Projects may include other sources of federal funds as match, up to 95% of the total project cost. A minimum of 5% of the total project cost must come from a non-federal source.

How are funds disbursed?

The Nevada Recreational Trails Program is a **reimbursement** program. Applicants must have the financial means to incur the costs of construction and request reimbursement at a later date. Reimbursement is requested quarterly, and normally, reimbursement can take 3-5 weeks depending on time of year. Cash advances are not allowed.

What types of projects/items are NOT eligible?

Hand tools are not eligible items (shovels, rakes, pry bars and more). Small office equipment such as computers and powerpt projectors, GPS units and digital cameras are not eligible for funding. Other items not eligible for Recreational Trails funding include using condemned land as match, feasibility studies, law enforcement, planning, projects within the right of way of a railroad where tracks are existing, improvements to roads or bridges accessible by regular passenger cars, sidewalks, and Wilderness area projects subject to restrictions of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131).

Can we use funds for administration?

The Recreational Trails Program allows project sponsors to use up to 7% of the federal grant share for RTP grant administrative services ONLY, not including project management. Your administration costs can be used as match, up to 7% of the total cost of the project.

When are funds available?

Funds are expected to be available to successful applicants by March/April 2009. Projects may begin only after the Recreational Trails Program issues successful applicants a "Notice to Proceed." Work performed on a project prior to the issuance of a "Notice to Proceed" is not eligible for reimbursement or as a project sponsor's match without special approval.

What policies and procedures will I be required to follow?

All grantees are required to follow the policies and procedures of the Nevada Recreational Trails Program. This includes completing Recreational Trails projects in a timely manner as agreed upon in the Project Agreement, submitting quarterly progress reports, submitting requests for reimbursement (either quarterly or one lump-sum), and maintaining contact with the Recreational Trails Program Manager.

Additionally, all grantees must follow their own organizational, local, or state purchasing policies and procedures. State agencies must follow all state printing, personnel, and purchasing policies and procedures. The Recreational Trails Program encourages grantees to follow the guidelines of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program. The Davis-Bacon Act (prevailing wage rate) applies when the Recreational Trails project takes place within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway. "Buy America" provisions may apply to Recreational Trails projects. If the value of steel or iron products on a project exceeds \$2,500 (this includes trail signs), the grantee must submit certification from the supplier that the steel was manufactured and processed in the USA.

What else will I be required to do?

All grantees of trail projects funded through the Recreational Trails Program are required to commit to long-term maintenance of their project. **A separate letter of commitment must be attached to each application.**

What about permits and environmental compliance?

All applicants must demonstrate the proposed project meets requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Many Recreational Trails projects qualify as Categorical Exclusions under NEPA. For information about whether your project qualifies, refer to the definition of Categorical Exclusion on page VI of the application packet, or refer to Title 23 CFR 771.117 found on the Internet at www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/ce_clist.htm. State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) requires clearance for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Documentation for SHPO Section 106 evaluation will be included in the application packet. If your project is on Federal Lands, please coordinate with the landowner/manager and have their NEPA decision memo or FONSI letter attached to the application. Please give the RecTrails Manager a call to determine the level of NEPA to be completed for your project before submitting an application.

What standards are used for trail and trailhead construction?

All projects must be built, and will be inspected, using standards referenced on the Project Application. Bicycle projects must meet guidelines outlined in AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials). All trailhead facilities must be constructed to meet ADA guidelines. Trails that are ADA accessible must meet minimum guidelines outlined in "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation: A Design Guide". Pedestrian pathways must meet guidelines outlined in "Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access". Other specifications and design manuals may be used, as well. Applicants are responsible to determine which standards/guidelines apply to their project (see Item 10 on the Project Application.)

How many copies must I submit?

Applicants are required to submit eleven (11) double-sided copies of the application for each project. This may be 1 original and 10 copies. If there is color in the maps that is critical, submit color copies.

What happens after I submit my application?

Recreational Trails Program staff review all applications to determine if the applications are complete and the projects are eligible. Only complete and eligible applications are forwarded to the Recreational Trails Advisory Committee (the Committee). The Committee meets in January of 2009 in Las Vegas to hear presentations by applicants and develop scoring recommendations. **Each applicant is encouraged to give a 10-minute presentation to the review committee.** The presentation time gives applicants the opportunity to answer questions and enhance special features of trail projects. The Recreational Trails Program Manager contacts each eligible applicant to

schedule a presentation before the Committee. After hearing presentations, the Committee develops a list of projects recommended for funding. The Recreational Trails Program Manager forwards the Committee's recommendations to the Federal Highway Administration for final approval for funding. Recreational Trails Program staff usually receives final approval in June or July. When preparing your application, **follow all directions carefully!** Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted. If you have any questions, please contact Randy Moore, Recreational Trails Program Manager at (775) 684-2775 or via E-mail at rlmoore@parks.nv.gov.