

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

NOTICE OF GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION PERIOD FOR RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

The Department of Environmental Protection (the "Department") has established an application submission cycle and will accept grant applications for the Recreational Trails Program ("RTP") for Fiscal Year 2016-2017 under the following terms:

APPLICATION SUBMISSION PERIOD: The Department is accepting applications from April 11, 2016 through April 29, 2016. Completed applications must be postmarked on or before April 29, 2016.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Eligible applicants include all local governmental entities and state or federal agencies, federally or state recognized Indian tribal governments which have the legal responsibility for the provision of outdoor recreational sites and facilities for the use and benefit of the public, and active Florida nonprofit corporations which have an agreement with a governmental agency to develop public lands.

INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: **A grantee with two incomplete RTP projects by the closing date of the application submission period shall not be eligible to apply.**

APPLICATION LIMIT PER SUBMISSION CYCLE: The maximum number of applications an applicant may submit shall be as follows: local governments may submit **one**; consolidated city-county government may submit **two**; nonprofit corporations may submit **one**; state and federal agencies may submit **one** per district.

ELIGIBLE PROJECT SITES: The site of a proposed RTP project shall be on public lands. The site shall be owned by the applicant or government on or before the closing date of the application submission period. A site not owned by the applicant or government shall be under the applicant's or government's control by a 99-year lease or similar control, such that the applicant has the legal ability to dedicate and manage the site for public recreational trail use pursuant to subsections 62S-2.076(1) and (2), F.A.C. School board property used primarily for educational or school related purposes is not eligible. In addition, nonprofit corporations must provide a letter from the land owner or managing agency stating that it supports the project and will abide by the compliance requirements of this rule, and the Guidance.

The federal requirements for funding 30% motorized trails has not been met in recent years due to low application submissions for motorized projects and federal funding has been reduced for not meeting this threshold. Therefore, staff encourages submittal of applications for motorized trail and motorized recreational projects.

ELIGIBLE PROJECT TYPES: The primary purpose of the project must be for providing recreational trails for the public and may include Motorized Trail, Nonmotorized Trail, and Mixed-Use Trail projects which facilitate recreational trail use. Recreational Trail means a thoroughfare or track across land or water, used for recreational purposes such as bicycling, day hiking, equestrian activities, jogging or similar fitness activities, trail biking, overnight and long distance backpacking, roller skating, in-line skating, running, aquatic or water activity and vehicular travel by motorcycle, four-wheel drive, all terrain off-road vehicles or dune buggies per 62S-2.070 (39), F.A.C..Projects may include facilities such as boat launches, docks, and related facilities to create or enhance recreational trail opportunities.

PERMISSIBLE USES OF RTP GRANT FUNDS: Maintenance or renovation of existing trails; Development or renovation of trailside or trailhead facilities or trail linkages; Purchase of trail construction or maintenance equipment; Construction of new trails on local and state lands; Construction of new trails crossing federal lands; Operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection which specifically relate to the uses of recreational trails, to the extent the Department has not chosen to use the educational funds in whole or in part, to further a statewide goal of the Greenways and Trails Plan.

MAXIMUM GRANT REQUEST: The maximum grant amount per project type is as follows: Nonmotorized Trail: \$200,000; Mixed Use Trail: \$500,000; Motorized Trail: No Cap. Grant awards are distributed on a reimbursement basis and are contingent upon an apportionment from the Federal Highway Administration and expenditure authorization by the Florida Legislature.

Due to previous lack of **motorized** projects applications, the funding cap is currently removed for qualified **motorized** projects, not to exceed \$1.5 million. Match requirements still apply.

MATCH REQUIREMENTS: The RTP grant is provided on a 50:50, 60:40, or 80:20 matching ratio (program: grantee).

APPLICATION PACKETS AND ADDITIONAL DETAILS: RTP grant application packets and additional grant details may be obtained by visiting the website: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/grants/>. Applications are also available from the Department's Office of Operations, 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, Mail Station 585, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000. *See also*, Fla. Stat. § 260.016, and F.A.C. Rule 62S-2 for specific application requirements, processing and evaluation criteria.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Telephone (850) 245-2065, or email: Pamela.Lister@dep.state.fl.us or Linda.Reeves@dep.state.fl.us.