

Recreational Trails Program Florida Fact Sheet

2016 Grant Cycle

What is the Recreational Trails Program (RTP)?

The federally funded Recreational Trails Program of the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provides competitive-matching grant funds to renovate, develop or maintain recreational motorized, nonmotorized and mixed-use trails and trailside facilities.

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 included the National Recreational Trails Fund Act (NRTFA) established the National Recreational Trails Funding Program. The National Highway System Designation Act of 1995 (NHS Act) amended and revived the NRTFA. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) established the current Recreational Trails Program (RTP), and codified it in Federal statute (23 U.S.C. 206). In 2005 the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) revised the program, providing the current legislative text. In 2012, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) reauthorized funding for the RTP as a set-aside of Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds (extended through May 2015), but did not change the program.

The Florida RTP is administered by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Land and Recreation Grants section within the Office of Operations. *Florida Statute 260.016 and Rule 62S-2 Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) provides specific application requirements, processing and evaluation criteria.*

Project Proposals may address the Following Recreational Trail Interests: Non-Motorized Trails; Motorized Trails; Mixed-Use projects, which facilitate diverse recreational trail use within a recreational trail corridor, trailside, or trailhead.

Project Proposals may address the Following Recreational Trail Needs: Construction of new recreational trails (with restrictions for new trails on Federal lands); Maintenance and restoration or renovation of existing recreational trails; Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and recreational trail linkages; Purchase of trail construction or maintenance equipment.

What is a "Recreational Trail"?

A thoroughfare or track across land or water, used for recreational purposes such as bicycling, hiking/jogging/running or similar activities, equestrian activities, overnight and long distance backpacking, roller skating, in-line skating, non-motorized aquatic or water activities including canoeing and kayaking, and vehicular travel by motorcycle, four-wheel drive or all terrain, off-road vehicles, or dune buggies.

Who may apply for RTP Funds?

Municipal, county, state or federal governmental agencies; recognized state and federal Indian tribal governments; and organizations registered as active Florida nonprofit corporations, which have an agreement with a governmental agency to develop public lands and the project.

Note: Nonprofit corporations must provide documentation from the public landowner or manager stating that they support the project and will abide by compliance requirements.

The 2016 Submission Cycle is April 11, 2016 – April 29, 2016.

Completed applications must be postmarked no later than April 29, 2016.

Recreational Trails Program Florida Fact Sheet

2016 Grant Cycle

How Do I Apply?

During the submission period: Applicants must submit a completed RTP Grant Application. 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. Applications must involve only one project site. **A grantee with two incomplete RTP projects by the closing date of the application submission period shall not be eligible to apply.** The application is available at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/grants/>.

What is the Maximum Grant Amount?

The maximum permissible request for nonmotorized projects is \$200,000.

The maximum permissible request for mixed use projects is \$500,000.

The maximum permissible request for motorized single: 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.

What are the Match Requirements?

All grant awards must be matched. "Match" means the provision of cash or in-kind service costs to be added to RTP funds by the grantee for the project cost. *Value of real property or inmate labor are ineligible match sources.* The RTP grant is provided on a 50:50, 60:40, or 80:20 (Program:Grantee) matching basis. The more match provided, the more points awarded. For example, with a \$100,000 project, your match could be:

<u>Total Project Cost</u>	<u>RTP Grant</u>	<u>Local Match</u>	<u>Point Value</u>
\$100,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	5
\$100,000	\$60,000	\$40,000	3
\$100,000	\$80,000	\$20,000	1

Note: Federal agencies may match grant funds with federal funds up to 95% of total project cost.

How are RTP Grants Awarded?

Evaluation criteria is established pursuant to 62S-2, F.A.C. Each application is reviewed to determine eligibility. Following the initial review, applicants will be notified, in writing, of deficiencies. Applicants must submit the requested deficiency information within fifteen (15) working days from the date of the Department's written notification. Staff will score the applications based on the evaluation criteria in Rule 62S-2.073 and draft a recommended RTP priority-funding list based on project scores. The draft recommended RTP priority-funding list and related materials will be provided to the Florida Greenways and Trails Council, serving as the Advisory Committee for the program, for consideration. The Advisory Committee will review the draft recommended RTP priority-funding list and related materials, then submit recommendations for funding to the DEP Secretary. Once finalized by the Secretary or designee, the priority list will be submitted to FHWA for funding consideration. If funded, a two-year contract for the reimbursement grant will be executed between the Grantee and DEP.

For More Information, Whom Should I Contact?

Pam Lister, Recreational Trails Program
Office of Operations, Land & Recreational Grants Section
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS #585
Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000
Pamela.Lister@dep.state.fl.us or 850-245-2065