

2021 Recreational Trails Program Grant Workshop

Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation
Division of Planning & Recreation Resources

April 28, 2021

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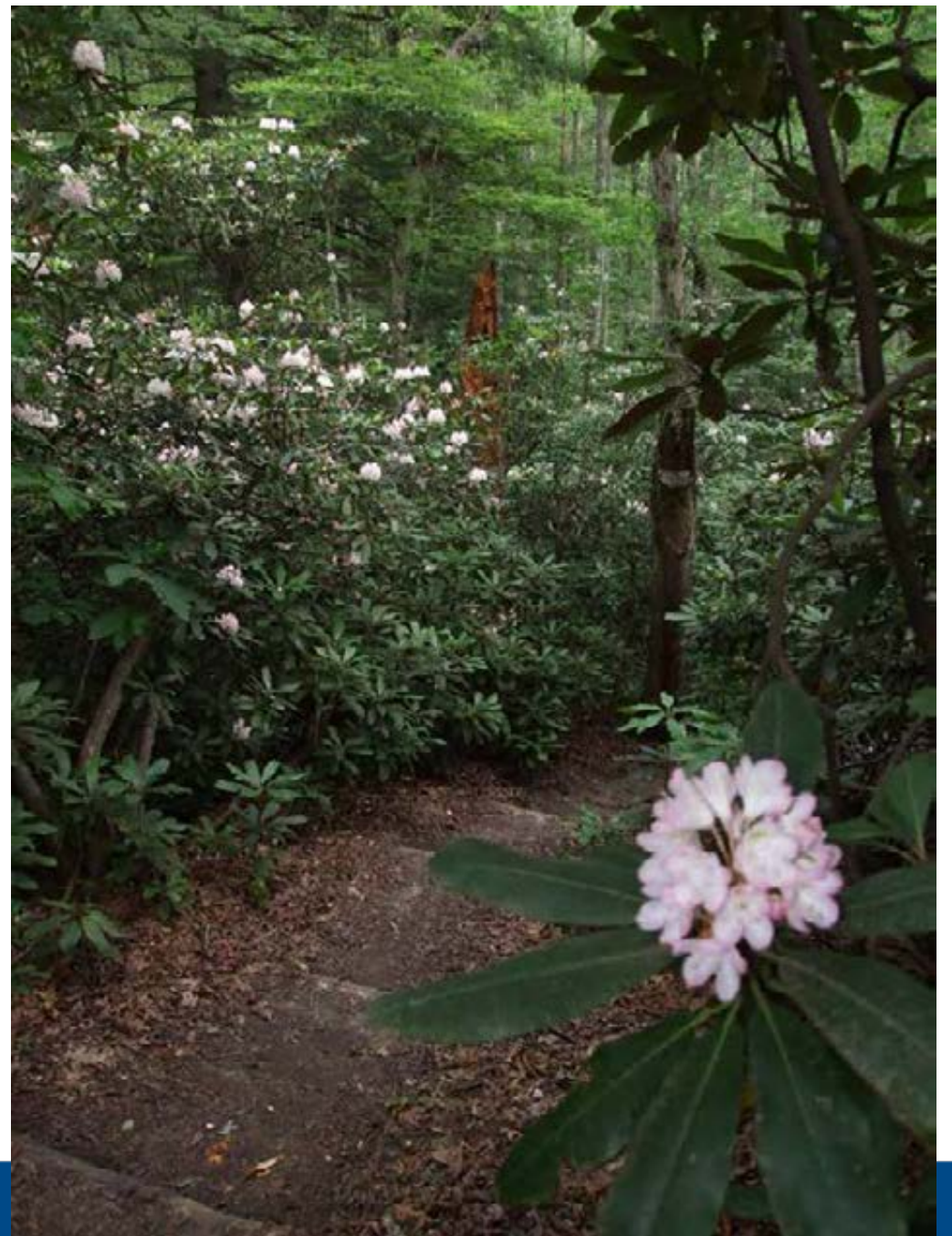
RecreationGrants@DCR.Virginia.gov

Agenda

- RTP Overview & Funding
- Eligibility
- Application Process
- Project Administration
- Reimbursement Procedures

Webinar Information:

- Meeting is being recorded. Video will be posted.
- We will stop periodically for questions.
- Feel free to use chat box feature any time.



RTP Overview

Purpose:

To provide, expand, and improve public recreational trail opportunities for motorized and non-motorized use.

Funding:

U.S. Department of Transportation – **Federal Highway Administration** – FAST Act

RTP in Virginia:

Since 1993, over 300 projects totaling more than \$300 million in RTP Funding



Grant Requests and Award Amounts for 2021 grant round

**\$1.4 million
RTP Funding
available**

Three Separate Categories:

- 40% **diverse** use = \$400,000 max request
((\$500K minimum total project cost))
- 30% **non-motorized** single use = \$300,000 max
((\$375K minimum total project cost))
- 30% **motorized** use = can request up to \$423,000

Minimum funding request: \$50,000
((\$62,500 minimum total project cost))

Funding Basics

- Funding is competitive
 - Expect to award 1-3 grants in motorized, 2-4 each in non-motorized single use and diversified
- Payments made on reimbursement basis
 - Must be able to fund project fully with periodic reimbursements
- Share/ match requirement is minimum 20% of project cost

Eligible Share/ Match = 20% Project Cost

- Cash
- Force account labor
- Grants*
- In-kind labor, materials, equipment
- Donations
- Volunteer Labor

All volunteer labor, in-kind items, donations, and force account labor must be clearly outlined in **application and proposed budget** and must also be **written into the grant agreement**.

These items cannot be added after the grant agreement is authorized.

2021 Schedule

- **April 1** – Applications opened
- **June 30** – **Applications due** via email by 4pm
- **Early July** – Applications reviewed by DCR and Advisory Committee
- **Mid July** – Advisory Committee Meeting
- **Late July** – Applicants of projects recommended for funding are contacted
- **Early – mid August** – Site inspections and preparing FHWA documents
- **September** – Project authorizations and grant agreements (do not begin work until these are released)

Applicant Eligibility

- Local Governments
- State Agencies
- Federal Government Agencies
- Tribal Governments
- Public Recreation Government Entities (Park Authorities, etc)
- Non-Profits – MUST be partnered with a governmental entity



Eligible Project Types

Preliminary Engineering and Construction of:

- New Recreation Trails
- Restoration/rehabilitation of existing trails
- Trailhead Facilities
- Water Trail Facilities
- Acquisition*



Conditional Project Elements

- NOT for sidewalks or bike paths strictly for transportation
 - Unless necessary to complete missing link between other recreational trails
- NOT for just planning/scoping – must result in a completed trail element
 - Final reimbursement will be processed after a site visit
 - Must fulfill the agreed upon scope of work



Ineligible Project Elements

Not eligible for grant reimbursement or as match:

- Feasibility studies
- Food
- Gifts
- Legal Fees*
- Items that were not initially agreed or outside of scope of work



Application

Application File

- Application is a fillable .pdf. Download free version of Adobe Acrobat Reader at: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
- Newly revised this year
- Add requested attachments by using “insert pages” function
- The boxes will auto-size text to fit. But please still be concise.
- Contact us to obtain an alternative format if you are unable to access or use the fillable .pdf file
- Please reference Appendices in manual for resources



Section A: Applicant Information

- Organization Name = Grant Recipient if selected
- Please list contact person who will be the main coordinator for the project
- District numbers and FIPS code are required for our internal databases.



Section B: Project Details

- **Project Category:** If unsure, we can help determine
- **Project Summary and Scope:** Answer these questions specifically about the RTP fund-requested section
- **Property Address:** Address DCR staff could use to visit the site
- **Location Maps:** as detailed as possible for within the park, include trail layout and features if available



Section C: Project Need...

- **Virginia Outdoors Plan:** <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/vop>
- **Recreation Access Model and ConserveVirginia:** <https://vanhde.org/>



Recreation Access Model and ConserveVirginia Demonstration

DCR | Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Home Map Species/Communities Search Terms & Conditions About Us Contact Us Help

Switch Basemap Add Resources Richmond, VA, USA

Layers Make a Map Feature Search

- Managed Conservation Lands
 - Managed Conservation Lands
- ConserveVirginia
 - ConserveVirginia
- Conservation Planning
 - Potential Rare Species Richness
 - Ecological Cores
 - Natural Land Network
 - Forest Conservation Values
 - Watershed Model
 - Recreation Access Model
 - Aquatic Recreation Access
 - Terrestrial Recreation Access
 - Terrestrial Recreation Score
 - Benchmark Status: Regional Parks
 - Avg. Drive Time to Park of 1000+ Acres
 - Benchmark Status: Regional Trails
 - Avg. Drive Time to Trail System of 10+ Mile
 - Benchmark Status: Local Parks
 - Avg. Walk Time to Local Park
 - Benchmark Status: Local Trails

Richmond, VA, USA

Scale: 1 : 144,448

Latitude: 37.5152, Longitude: -77.5332

National Geographic, Esri, Garmin, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, MCTI, ...

...Section C: Project Need, continued

- **Local and/or Regional Plans:** County, City, Town Master Plans, Park and Recreation Master Plans, master planning surveys
 - Attach just the pages from these documents that reference your project
- **Uniqueness and Economic Impact:** be detailed and cite sources
- **Critical Gaps and Lengthening:** helpful to provide links to websites or other information on the existing trails



Section D: Population Served

- **10 minute walk/ 10 mile drive:** Will this be the first trail opportunity within these distances for a community? If no, can still receive points if you explain how area is underserved
- **Equitable experiences:** Consider users with different types of disabilities
- **Income and health disparities:** Provide other source citations
- **Public involvement:** What feedback has been received? What was the outcome?
 - Consultation
 - Public outreach
 - Public presentations
 - Board or Council Meetings



Section E: Project Readiness

- **Right of Way:** Must attach documentation. We especially need additional detail if you do not have direct ownership.
- **Life expectancy:** Preference is at least 20 years but be realistic
- **Public access period:** Preference for longer periods
- **Schedule:** Be as detailed as possible for both phases, 3 yrs
- **Construction drawings:** PE phase can fund these design or engineering plans

Section E continued

Environmental Analysis



- Does not have to be complete, this can be done in PE phase.
- Please describe any correspondence already completed.
- **Permits:** do not need to be in place until construction, but please be thorough in showing you have considered the permitting needs and incorporated them into your schedule & budget

Section F: Management, Operations, and Maintenance

- **Grant administration:** Who will be managing the project and coordinating documentation with DCR?
 - If awarded, let DCR know right away if manager changes
- **Administration costs:** Must be documented in project agreement to be eligible
 - Also will need proper documentation during grant process.
- **Long-term maintenance:** Please be specific and indicate how you will protect the RTP's investment

Section G: Budget and Grant Match

- **Preliminary Engineering** (not feasibility)
 - Design work
 - Environmental Analysis
 - Permitting
 - Bid Process
- **Construction** – ITEMIZED
 - Detailed – consider source and cost of necessary components and labor
 - Best estimate possible
 - Application must show TOTAL project cost
- **Include narrative**

Funding Sources and Financing

- How will entity cover minimum 20% share/ match?
 - Grants – provide agreement if confirmed
 - Donation must be described prior to authorization
 - Please identify funding gaps or likely fund sources that have not been secured yet.
- How will entity finance the project?
 - Pay for all project invoices and expenses as they arise while seeking periodic reimbursement (do not necessarily have to have other 80% available)
 - Attach proof of financing (ex: Board resolution, department budget, etc)

Section H: Attachments

- The items on this list are also called out within the application
 - Except letters of support: you may attach these if you feel they will help explain your project or provide evidence towards different scoring criteria.
- Some items only need attached if they apply to your situation
- Add as additional pages to the end of your application .pdf file

Section I: Certification

- **Official with signatory rights for your entity:** mayor, town manager, director, etc.
- Submit via email only (new for this year) – recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov
- File size limit 25MB, contact us if your file with attachments will exceed this size

Evaluation and Scoring

- Revised this year – please review.
- All applications are reviewed by DCR Recreation Grants staff for eligibility and completeness
- All eligible and complete applications are sent to the RTP Advisory Committee for scoring
- Advisory Committee meets to review the compiled scores and recommend projects for funding

VA Department of Transportation Recreation Grants Administration		VA RTP Scoring Worksheet		DCR Department of Conservation and Recreation	
Applicant - Project Title: [insert]		Date scored: [insert]	Scored by: [insert]		
1 Project Need (local, Regional, and State)		25 possible			
1A Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP) Needs (add all that apply)		Points	Score		
Project provides a needed outdoor recreation opportunity or helps meet a goal identified in the current VOP		1			
Project is listed as a feature project in the most recent VOP		2			
		3			
		Max. points	7		
1B Recreation Access Model Need (select one)		Points	Score		
This project falls within "Moderate," "High," or "Very High" Recreation Need according to the Recreation Access Model		3			
This project falls within "Low" Recreation Need according to the Recreation Access Model		2			
This project falls within "Very Low" Recreation Need according to the Recreation Access Model		1			
This project falls within "All Benchmarks Met" Recreation Need according to the Recreation Access Model		0			
		Max. points	7		
1C ConserveVirginia (select one)		Points	Score		
50-100% of project falls within ConserveVirginia		3			
1-49% of project falls within ConserveVirginia		2			
The project does not fall within ConserveVirginia		0			
		Max. points	7		
1D Alignment with needs or goals of local or regional plan or survey (add all that apply)		Points	Score		
Project fulfills a need or meets goal of local or regional plan		2			
Project is specifically referenced by name and location in a local or regional plan		3			
Project need is demonstrated by a reputable local public survey		2			
		Max. points	7		
1E Project uniqueness (select one or neither)		Points	Score		
Project will be the first of that trail type in the VOP region (3 pts), county (2 pts), or locality (1 pt) (based on user group, trail surface, access for people with disabilities, etc.)		3, 2, or 1			
		Max. points	3		
1F Economic Impact (add all that apply)		Points	Score		
Trail will bring in out-of-area visitors who are likely to patronize local businesses		3			
Trail will host events that will generate revenue for local businesses		1			
		Max. points	7		
1G Critical gaps (select one or neither)		Points	Score		
Project completes a critical gap in an existing trail system or is part of a proposed state-wide trail (3 pts) or lengthens an existing trail (1 pt)		3 or 1			
		Max. points	3		
2 Recreational Trail Access for All		22 possible			
2A Close to home (select one)		Points	Score		
Project will create a new close to home trail for a community within a city, urban area, or tribal land that does not currently have access to public trails within a 10 minute (1/2 mile) walk		5			
Project will create a new close to home trail for a non-city or rural community that does not currently have access to public outdoor recreation opportunities within an 10 mile drive		5			
Project doesn't meet either condition above but is still underserved by public trail opportunities		3			
Project area is already served by public trail opportunities		0			
		Max. points	22		

Application and Evaluation Questions?



Project Administration

Project Administration

- Grant Terms
- Preliminary Engineering Phase
- Environmental Review
- Construction Phase
- Reimbursements
- Project Closeout



Project Agreement

- You will be notified of Committee results
- DCR Staff will perform an on-site pre-inspection and go over the Project Agreement in person
- Finalize Scope of Work statement
- DCR will submit the project information to FHWA for authorization
- Do NOT begin billable work until Agreement is signed



Grant Terms

Three Year Project Period

- 18 months **Preliminary Engineering**
 - NEPA/Enviro Review & acquire permits
 - Completion of design plans
- 18 months **Construction**
 - Do not begin build without a Construction Agreement signed and all PE complete
 - DCR will review bid documents prior to posting

*PE grants that are unable to move to construction within 2 years,
must return RTP funding to DCR to return to FHWA.*

PE – Environmental Analysis

- Appendix E – instructions for completing each section per NEPA standards; CE Form
- Goal: to complete a **Categorical Exclusion**, Environmental Assessment, or Enviro Impact Statement
- Process- contact state and federal agencies with project details, save all correspondence, fill out forms
 - See manual Appendix E for agency contact info.
 - Most projects qualify for a Categorical Exclusion (CE)
- Public Comment
- Must be completed, reviewed, and approved by FHWA prior to Construction



PE – Scoping, Design, etc.

- When applying, make sure to include what needs to be completed in the PE Scope of Work
- Permits if applicable
- ROW secured and/or acquisition final
- Engineering if needed
- If contracted, Bid documentation and final reports/billing will be needed

Construction Phase

- Must have an executed Construction Project Agreement
 - PE Phase must be closed out
- Permits obtained
- DCR to review plans and bid documents prior to construction beginning
- 18 Months to complete



Project Admin: Federal Funding

- Bid Documentation MUST contain notice that: *partial funding is provided by FHWA – VA DCR – RTP and 2, 23, 49 CFR*
- Procurement procedures – FHWA 1273, Buy America, & Virginia Standards
- Must submit all pertinent documentation and keep files

Reimbursement Documentation

- **Bid Documentation** – proof of DBE and SWaM efforts
- Work Completed Report
- Expenses (truly spent – cleared checks & full invoices)
- Matching fund proof (20%)
- For all iron and steel – Buy America certification (\$2500 strict threshold)



Reimbursements

- Minimum once every 3 months to keep project active with FHWA
- Please make clear when it is the final reimbursement for the Phase
- Federal Regs: 2, 23, and 49 CFR
- Will be reviewed internally and through FHWA
- Funds will pass from FHWA, to DCR, to subgrantee
- W9 and remittance information; register on SAM.gov

Project Closeout

- All deliverables complete
- Site inspection and/or photos
- Report of final accomplishments
 - Percent and dollar value of volunteer, donated, and cash contributions
 - DBE & SWaM involvement if applicable



Project Administration

In Summary...

- MUST be completed to Federal standards
- Any delays or amendments – please keep us informed
- Extensions are possible if justifiable (at least 90 days prior to agreement expiration)

Open communication is KEY!
We are here to help make your project successful!

Project Administration Questions?

Other DCR Grant Opportunities:

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/grants>

- **Trail Access Grants**, *open now* closes June 30, 2021
 - For ready to build/install projects on *existing* trails
 - Informational webinar Thursday 4/29 at 10am.
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**, planned for fall 2021
 - Development *and* acquisition this year
- **Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF)**, Summer 2021
 - Fund protection of open spaces and parklands, lands of historic or cultural significance, farmlands and forests, and natural areas
 - Suzan Bulbulkaya, Land Conservation Manager,
at suzan.bulbulkaya@dcr.virginia.gov or 804-371-5218.

Contact Information

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