

# 2022 Recreational Trails Program Grant Workshop

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

**April 20, 2022**

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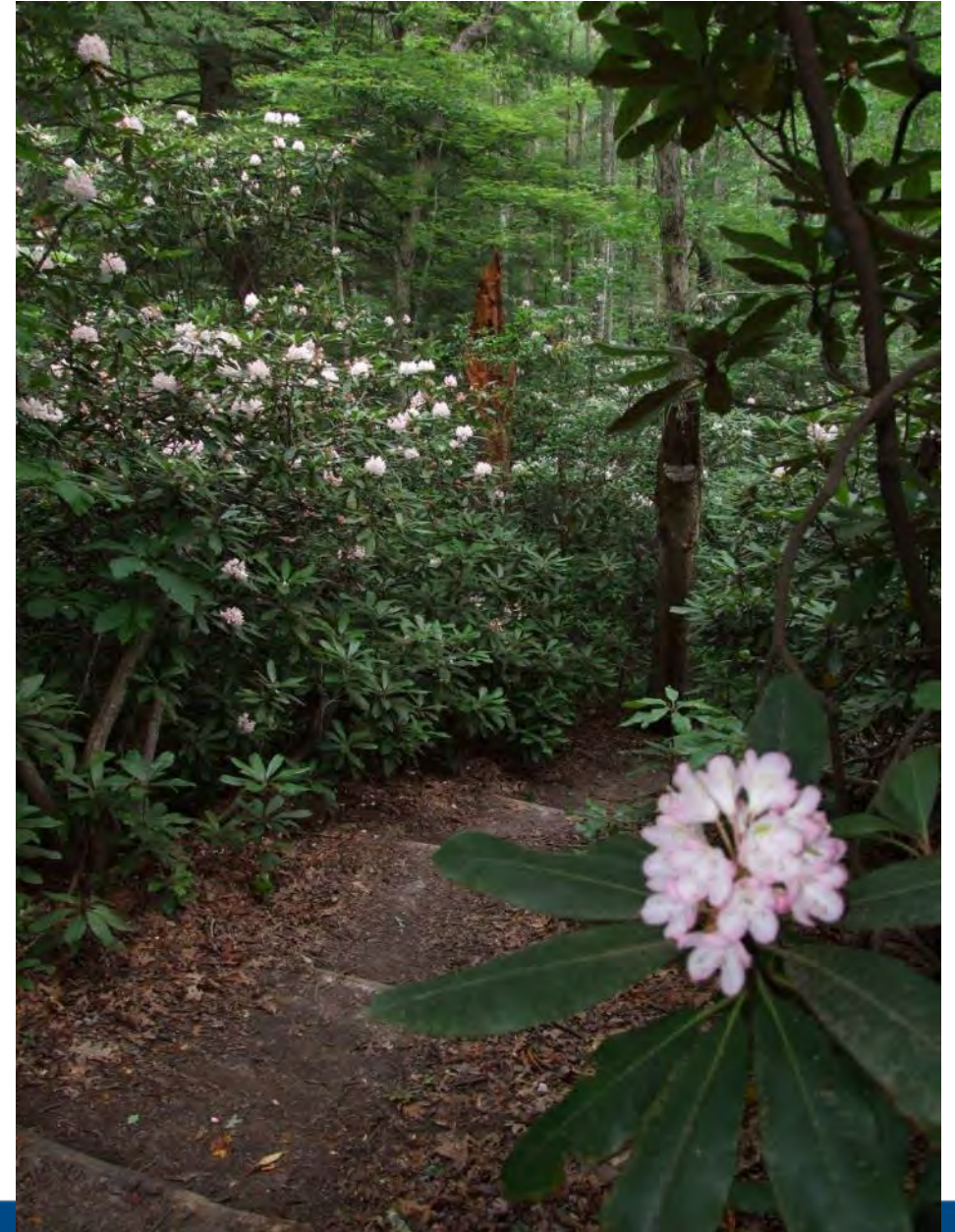
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# Agenda

- 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 & IIJA

## RTP in Virginia:

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

# 2022 Grant Requests and Award Amounts

**\$1.5 million  
RTP funding  
available**

**80/20% Match  
Reimbursement  
Federal Grant**

## **Three Separate Categories:**

- **40% diverse** use = \$350,000 max request  
((\$437,500 minimum total project cost)
- **30% non-motorized** single use = \$300,000 max  
((\$375K minimum total project cost)
- **30% motorized** use = can request up to \$453,567

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

# Funding Basics

- Funding is competitive
  - Expect to award 1-3 grants in motorized, 2-3 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.

# 2022 Schedule

- **March 28** – Applications opened
- **May 26** – **Applications due** via email by 4pm
- **June** – Applications reviewed by DCR and Advisory Committee
- **Late June** – Advisory Committee Meeting
- **July** – Applicants of projects recommended for funding are contacted
- **July-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 — (updated for 2022)
  - Must have letter of support from local government body AND property owner
- *Note for existing RTP grant holders —*
  - *Entities with active RTP grants awarded in previous grant rounds must be on track to complete by end of 2022 for non-motorized single use and diversified categories*





# Eligible Project Types

## Preliminary Engineering

- NEPA Review
- Public Comment Ad
- Permitting
- Design
- Engineering
- Bidding

## 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
- **Boat Launches – Motorized or Non-Motorized**
  - eligible if along a water trail
  - Must obtain all necessary JPA permits





# 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 MS Word document + Certification form
- Create PDF of completed application and insert attachments between each section
- Minimum 10pt font, maximum 45 pages including attachments, 25MB
- Contact us to obtain an alternative format if you are unable to access or use the fillable document
- Please reference Appendix A: Application Resources in Manual



# Application Certification Form

- Organization Name = Grant Recipient if selected
- Please list contact person who will be the main coordinator for the project, can insert additional emails to be notified of award status
- District numbers, FIPS code, and Tax parcel are required for our internal databases.



# Section A: Project Details

- **Project Title** – Descriptive but not too long, ideally 4-7 words
- **Project category** – review manual, contact DCR if unsure
- **Attachments**
  - Location maps
  - Trail layout - focus on elements seeking funding for
  - Photos - combine multiple photos into two pages
  - Appraisal – acquisition only, UASFLA appraisal and review must be complete at time of application



# Section B: Project Need

- **Virginia Outdoors Plan:** <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/vop>
- **Nature-based Recreation Access Model and ConserveVirginia:** <https://vanhde.org/>
  - ConserveVirginia only required if property previously not open to the public





# Nature-based Recreation Access Model and ConserveVirginia Demonstration

The screenshot displays the web interface for the ConserveVirginia v3.0 application. At the top left is the DCR logo (Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation) and a "Login" button. Below this is a navigation menu with links for Home, Map, Species/Communities Search, Terms & Conditions, About Us, Contact Us, and Help. The main interface includes a search bar, a "Switch Basemap" button, and an "Add Resources" button. The central map shows a geographic area around Richmond, Virginia, with various colored overlays representing different conservation categories. A legend on the left side of the map is organized into two sections: "ConserveVirginia v3.0" and "Conservation Planning".

**ConserveVirginia v3.0 Legend:**

- ConserveVirginia v3.0
- ConserveVirginia Map
- Agriculture & Forestry Category
- Natural Habitat & Ecosystem Diversity Category
- Floodplains & Flooding Resilience Category
- Cultural & Historic Preservation Category
- Scenic Preservation Category
- Protected Landscapes Resilience Category
- Water Quality Improvement Category

**Conservation Planning Legend:**

- Potential Rare Species Richness
- Ecological Cores
- Natural Land Network
- Forest Conservation Values
- Watershed Model
- Nature-based Recreation Access Model
  - Land-based Recreation Need
  - Water-based Recreation Need
- Cultural Resource Preservation Index

The map includes a scale bar (6km / 4mi), a scale of 1:288,895, and coordinates (Latitude: 37.5973, Longitude: -77.0121). A search bar at the top right contains the text "Find address or place". The bottom right corner of the map area contains attribution text: "National Geographic, Esri, Garmin, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, ...".

# ...Section B: Project Need, continued

- **Local and/or Regional Plans:** County, City, Town Master Plans, Park and Recreation Master Plans, master planning surveys
  - Attach ONLY the pages (up to 4) from these documents that reference your project.. provide web link if available
- **Uniqueness, Economic Impact, and Community Income:** be detailed and cite sources



# Section C: 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
- **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
  - Letters of public support



# Section D: Project Readiness

- **Right of Way Control:** Must attach documentation. We especially need additional detail if you do not have direct ownership.
  - Non-profit applicants must include letter of support from local government AND landowner
- **Schedule:** Be as detailed as possible for both phases
- **Construction drawings:** PE phase can fund these design or engineering plans, but please attach pages if available



# Section D continued

## Environmental Analysis



- Does not have to be complete, this can be done in PE phase.
- Please describe any correspondence already completed.
- See **Environmental Review Guidance** document on website
- **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 E: Management, Operations, and Maintenance

- **Long-term maintenance:** Please be specific and indicate how you will protect the RTP's investment

# Section F: 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)



# 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

Criteria		Points	Score
<b>1 Project Need (Local, Regional, and State)</b>		<b>34 possible</b>	
<b>1A Virginia Outdoors Plan (SCORP) Needs (add all that apply)</b>			
Project is listed as a regional feature project in the most recent VOP (2018)		2	
Trail networks		0 - 3	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project is part of a proposed state-wide trail or state connecting trail identified in the Trails chapter of the most recent VOP/ VOP Mapper (3 pts)</li> <li>Project not a state-wide or state connecting trail but completes a critical gap in a trail system (3 pts), lengthens an existing trail (2 pts), or would be a new standalone trail (1 pt)</li> </ul>		0 - 3	
Project needed to address critical (3 pts), serious (2 pts) or significant (1 pt) safety issues on existing trail		0 - 3	
		<b>Max. points</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1B Nature-based Recreation Access Model/ParkServe or Water-based Recreation Access Model Need (select one)</b>			
Project area has demonstrated need for new recreation based on the DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model or Trust for Public Land ParkServe Model (land trails) OR Water-based Recreation Access Model (water trails)		0 - 4	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very High (4 pts)</li> <li>High (3 pts)</li> <li>Moderate (2 pts)</li> <li>Low (1 pt)</li> <li>Very Low or None (0 pts)</li> </ul>		0 - 4	
		<b>Max. points</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1C New Public Access and ConserveVirginia (select one or none)</b>			
Project will provide public access to a property that was not previously open to the public		0, 1, 3, 4	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes, and project area intersects at least one ConserveVirginia layer (4 pts)</li> <li>Yes, but project area not within ConserveVirginia (3 pts)</li> <li>No (property previously open to the public), but project provides new public access to a significant feature (1 pt)</li> </ul>		0, 1, 3, 4	
		<b>Max. points</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1D Alignment with needs or goals of local or regional plan or survey (add all that apply)</b>			
Project need demonstrated in local and/or regional plans		1, 2, or 4	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project fulfills a general need or meets a general goal of a local or regional plan (1 pt) [for example, "increase access to natural areas" or "develop new trails"]</li> <li>Project fulfills a specific need or specific goal of a local or regional plan (2 pts) [for example, "develop multi-use trails at Riverside Park"]</li> <li>Project is specifically identified by location, layout, and features in a local or regional plan (4 pts) [for example, "complete section IV of Riverside Greenway from Main Street to River Ave."]</li> </ul>		1, 2, or 4	
Project need is demonstrated by a reputable local public survey		2	
		<b>Max. points</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1E Innovation and project uniqueness (select one or none)</b>			
Project uniqueness (based on user group, trail surface, access for people with disabilities, features, etc.) (0-2 pts)		0-2	
Project innovativeness (based on funding, community involvement, design, etc.) (0-2 pts)		0-2	
		<b>Max. points</b>	<b>4</b>



# 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 details 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 FHWA approval of NEPA documentation and final PE reimbursement submitted
  - 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

- Resources on website – instructions for completing each section per NEPA standards; CE Determination 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 Environmental Review Guidance document 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

- PE Phase must be closed out prior to beginning
- Permits obtained
- DCR to review plans and bid documents prior to construction beginning



# 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
  - See **Procurement Procedures** document on website
  - DBE & SWaM outreach
- Must submit all pertinent documentation and keep files

# Reimbursement Documentation

- Expenses (truly spent – cleared checks & full invoices) – specific to the project
- Matching fund proof (20%)
- For all iron and steel – Buy America certification (\$2500 strict threshold)



# Documents and Forms for Grant Recipients

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

- **01 RTP - VA RTP Manual** (PDF) - Contains general information on the RTP program. **Updated March 2022.**
- **02 RTP - Preliminary Engineering (PE) Phase Project Checklist** (Word) - Items that must be complete and submitted prior to construction authorization.
- **03 RTP - Reimbursement Request Guide** (PDF) - Guide for submitting reimbursement requests to DCR, includes lists of required documentation.
- **04 RTP - Example Reimbursement Package** (PDF) - Example reimbursement submission.
- **05 RTP - Categorical Exclusion Determination Form** (Word) - The summary form DCR submits to FHWA, along with all NEPA documentation, for FHWA review and approval. Recipients fill out the form in conjunction with other NEPA procedures outlined in Environmental Review Guidance document. **Updated March 2022.**
- **06 RTP - Quarterly Report Template** (PDF) - Project update due every three months.
- **07 RTP - Reimbursement Certification Form** (Excel) - Form that must be completed, signed and included with every reimbursement request, provided in two formats.



# 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>

- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

- Spring 2022 grant round closed March 15
- Acquisition and development of outdoor recreation sites/amenities
- <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf>
- Kristal McKelvey, Recreation Grants Manager, 804-786-4379

- **Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF)**

- 2022 grant round to be announced
- 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](mailto:suzan.bulbulkaya@dcr.virginia.gov) or 804-371-5218.



# Contact Information

**Email:** [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov)

**Website:** <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/trailfnd>

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