

# State of New Hampshire Recreational Trails Program Guidelines

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All grant applicants are required to read this supplement.





# State of New Hampshire Recreational Trails Program Guidelines

## What is the New Hampshire Recreational Trail Program (RTP)?

The RTP is a federally funded competitive grant program to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related activities for motorized and nonmotorized recreational trail uses. Funding for the NH RTP grant is administered by the [Federal Highway Administration](#) (FHWA). Funds for this program are derived from federal gas taxes paid on the non-highway recreation fuel used in off-highway vehicles, including snowmobiles, ATV's, off-highway motorcycles and four-wheel drive light utility vehicles. This grant program is reimbursement based and requires a 20% local match by the grantee. The grant program is administered by the [Bureau of Trails](#) (BOT) part of the [NH Division of Parks & Recreation](#).

### Eligible Projects: FHWA Categories

RTP funds may be used for:

- A: **Maintenance and Restoration of Existing Trails**
- B: **Development and Rehabilitation of Trailside and Trailhead Facilities/linkages**
- C: **Purchase and Lease of Trail Construction and Maintenance Equipment**
  - *"Buy America" provisions must be followed (or Federal waiver required: waivers unavailable until further notice)*
  - Projects that include equipment purchases will be required to retain the equipment *indefinitely* and provide *yearly accounting* of the equipment to the RTP coordinator at the BOT for *4 consecutive years* after purchase year.
- D: **Construction of New Trails**
- ~~E: **Acquisition of Easements or Property for Trails** must meet Federal requirements with deed standards & land values (unavailable until further notice)~~
- G: **Educational projects for trail safety and/or environmental education**

### Ineligible Projects

RTP funds may *not* be used for:

- Feasibility Studies
- Project Planning\* (\*some planning allowed: must be less than 10% of *total* project cost)
- Construction of Paths or Sidewalks along or adjacent to Public Roads
- Paving of Trails\*\* (\*\*aprons at trail crossings would qualify)
- Purchase of Equipment not directly needed for Trail Projects
- Purchase of Small Power Tools such as Chainsaws, Drills, Hand tools, etc.
- Projects already Completed or in Progress
- For-Profit Trail Systems and Trail Systems that Charge a User Fee

### Project Sponsors: Who can Apply?

Grantee organization contact information will be public on BOT website for solicitation.

- **Private Organizations** ([registered with the NH Secretary of State](#))
- **Non-Profit Organizations** (registered with the NH Secretary of State)
- **Educational Institutions/Universities** (registered with the NH Secretary of State)
- **Municipalities**
- **State Agencies**
- **Federal Agencies**

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The program is community-based and partnerships are recommended. Sponsors are encouraged to use youth conservation or service corps as well as [Disadvantaged Business Enterprises](#) to accomplish trail projects.

Sponsors shall designate one **project administrator** (project administrator cannot be same person giving authorization) who will be responsible for coordinating the submission and receipt of all grant documents and who will be the primary contact for any questions or issues related to the grant.

## **Program Funding**

Each grant year's appropriated program funds are divided between three trail categories:

- **30% for Motorized** trail projects including, but not limited to, snowmobiles, trail bikes, ATVs, UTVs and 4X4 vehicles.
- **30% for Non-motorized** trail projects including, but is not limited to, pedestrians, hikers, skiers, bicyclists, equestrians, snowshoes & mushers.
- **40% for Diversified** trail include projects shared by one or more users in both the Motorized and Non-motorized categories.

All applications will be placed within one of the above categories based on trail users served. Applicants compete against other projects *within* their designated category. Applicants should indicate the primary permitted users of the trail for both summer and winter. Projects may be awarded partial grants based on available RTP funds.

## **Grant Limits and Requirements**

Applicants may submit a request for grants between **\$8,000-\$80,000** for A, B, C, D, E projects. For G projects the grant amount is between **\$3,000-\$10,000**. Each sponsoring organization may submit up to 2 applications, but may not request more than **\$80,000** total per grant year. No more than one sponsor may request a grant for a single project.

The RTP requires that a **matching** contribution be pledged. Applicants must first consider the total value of the project before determining what the requested grant and pledged match amounts will be. For each individual project the *maximum* RTP share is **\$80,000**, or **80%** of the total project value (whichever comes first). The applicant must pledge a *minimum* of 20% of the total project value (**NOT 20% OF THE GRANT REQUEST**).

*For example if the total project value is \$10,000, the project maximum RTP funding request is \$8,000 and the minimum match requirement is \$2,000.*

Items and services that are not eligible for grant funding, are also not eligible as part of the match pledge. The match pledge may consist of any funds or the fair market value of materials and services provided in-kind at the sponsors expense or donated by a third party. The value of volunteer labor may be counted towards the match portion. For the **2018 grant** year unskilled volunteer labor is rated at \$24.90/hour and skilled volunteer labor is at fair market value. **Grantees must be able to document and justify skilled labor value. This includes hourly rate of labor from actual employer.** Labor provided from town or government employees may be credited at their wage plus benefits, however this still must be documented that the employee receives benefits. Inmate labor may be used at the actual cost incurred by the administering agency only. All match must be stated in application. If you are applying for other grants as match, **have alternatives in case you are denied said grant.**

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## Procurement and Disposal Procedure Requirements of Equipment and Goods

Grantees are required to follow and provide documentation of procedures for the purchase and/or rental of materials, equipment, and contract services associated with any awarded grant. Proper documentation of these will be required in order to receive grant funds. **This includes 3 vendor quotes for equipment & goods/materials ≥ \$2000. Service agreements ≥ \$10,000/total contract require 3 quotes from competitive services.**

**Equipment, steel and iron purchased for a project must meet Buy America requirements** in accordance with Title 23 U.S.C. 313. **A certificate of Buy America compliance along with mill certificates** are required from the manufacturer of the product for documentation of domestically sourced products containing steel & iron. **Recycled** steel & iron is ok to be foreign made but project sponsor must provide documentation of where the materials come from. If project requires recycled steel or iron to be melted down, the process must be done in U.S. and needs to be documented.

*Federal waivers* can be applied for in special circumstances for foreign equipment. However, the **final assembly of that product must be in the U.S.** A certificate from the vendor is required to document this.

**NOTE: If there is an American alternative to the equipment you wish to purchase, you will be denied the federal waiver.**



**\*NOTE: as of May 2017 all Buy America waivers are on hold indefinitely.**

Equipment purchased through the Recreational Trails Program shall be maintained in good mechanical condition. The *FHWA, through the State of New Hampshire, shall retain a permanent interest in the form of a lien* on any and all equipment purchased through the Recreational Trails Program, *for the life of the equipment.*

**A receipt from the vendor indicating the equipment has been delivered**, which shall include make and model, serial number, year of manufacture, accessories received, odometer reading and price from seller. Proof of payment (such as cancelled checks including front & back) must be submitted to the State as soon as received.

Equipment purchased through the Recreational Trails Program shall be required to display (at locations designated by the Bureau) at least one (1), but not more than two (2), decals indicating that the equipment has been partially funded by this program. Decals shall be provided by the Bureau.

An **annual equipment report** on the condition and location of trail equipment purchased with grant funds shall be submitted annually by **November 30** for four consecutive years following the purchase year. The Grantee agrees to retain and use any acquired equipment for intended recreational trail maintenance purposes only in perpetuity.

The disposal (sale or trade) of any equipment purchased with RTP funds requires written authorization from the Trails Bureau & approval from FHWA. Sale of any piece of equipment purchased with RTP funds with a fair market value over \$5,000 will require that the percentage of the sale price equal to the percentage of the contribution from the RTP for the original purchase, shall be returned to the RTP program.

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## Project Description

Applicants should provide complete, concise and quality information regarding proposed project work. **All necessary labor, materials, equipment, methods and costs must be clearly described.** Items and expenses that are omitted from the project description (and budget) may not be considered for reimbursement without prior approval. **Answer all questions on application. Failure to do so will result in point loss.**

## Environmental and Historical Analysis

All organizations are required to submit a [N.H. Natural Heritage Bureau](#) (NHB) review (not landowner request) of the project area for rare and endangered plant and animal species with their application (unless category C: purchasing equipment or category G: producing educational materials). If this review has a “hit” there is a \$25 fee which is not eligible for reimbursement by RTP funds. **If any rare or endangered species are identified by the NHB review, it is the organization’s responsibility to contact [NH Fish and Game](#) for consultation on animals or [Natural Heritage Bureau](#) for consultation on plants.** These agencies will provide instructions on how to minimize impact if present. BOT will submit each project to the **New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources** (SHPO) to review for significant historic, prehistoric, cultural, and environmental resources. Any findings by SHPO may require additional action by the Grantee before a grant contract is issued.

Any project with impacts to wetlands, streams, or rivers will require the appropriate **permit** or **notification form** to be filed with the [New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services: Wetlands Bureau](#). If necessary, this should be detailed in the environmental analysis section of the application. It is the Grantee’s responsibility to obtain permits or a notification form. A link to DES: Wetlands Bureau is on the BOT website.

Equipment or safety/education projects may not require SHPO or NHB reviews however the relationship of the project to environmental and historical resources should be described in the application in the environmental section. **Answer all questions on application. Failure to do so will result in point loss.**

## Additional Requirements

The following must be included in the organization’s Recreational Trails Program grant application:

- **Letter of acknowledgement from organization with signature** – (All Projects) A letter on an organization’s letterhead stating the organization is aware they are applying for a RTP grant with the signature of the head of the organization.
- **Project Administrator Authorization** – (All projects) Person appointed from organization whom will be the primary contact for RTP specialist and sign all forms necessary for compliance with the application, contract or agreement. The Project Administrator is the only person authorized to submit billing requests for reimbursement of funds and is responsible for compliance with all aspects of the Recreational Trails Program grant. **Project administrator cannot be the same person giving authorization.** This form is on the BOT website.
- **Landowner Permission** – (ABDE projects) Grants may not be awarded without proper permission from the any and all property owner(s). This form is on the BOT website.
- **New Hampshire Natural Heritage Review** – (ABDEG\* projects) The N.H. Natural Heritage Bureau will review the project area for rare and endangered plant and animal species. **It is the organization’s responsibility to contact [New Hampshire Fish and Game](#) or [Natural Heritage](#)**

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**Bureau if any rare or endangered species have been identified for consultation. Email documentation showing this consultation must be submitted with application.**

- A link is provided on the BOT website to NHB website.
- A “hit” on this review will have a \$25 fee which is *not* eligible for reimbursement
- \*only necessary for “G” projects if installing structures such as kiosks or signs
- **Topographic Map(s) of Project Area(s)** – (ABD projects) full color topographical maps should detail the project site drawn in but should also display geographical landmarks to be able to determine project location. You can download topo maps for free on the [USGS website](#) & [My Topo](#).
  - Include on your map: any bridge work locations, possible reroute as well as the original trail, any historical structures, possible culvert locations, start and end points to the trail work, label trail names that are part of the project, and any other relevant information.
- **1 Official Trail System Map** – (all projects) 1 official trail system map that highlights the project area or area where equipment purchases will be used.
- **LABELLED Photos of Project Site or Equipment to be Purchased** – (all projects) Hard copy (printed) color photos are required with application (may include digital media *additionally*). Equipment applications provide pictures of requested equipment.
  - **LABEL YOUR PHOTOS!** We are not familiar with your project area, please label all photos.
- ~~Property Tax Map with Sale or Easement Detail and Copy of Deed.~~ – (E projects only)
- **Letters of Support** (recommended) – Letters from municipalities, federal agencies, and other organizations describing the proposed project benefits.

The following must be submitted in the organization’s Recreational Trails Program grant application *after grant approval*:

- **Certificate of Good Standing** – (all projects) A copy of a New Hampshire Secretary of State issued Certificate of Good Standing *when the grant is approved*.
  - Directions to obtain this are provided on the BOT website.
  - This must be obtained for EACH fiscal year of grants (even if previous are still valid)
  - The \$5 fee for this certificate is *not* eligible for reimbursement
- **Procurement Requirements** – (C project) 3 different contractor or vendor quotes for goods/materials or equipment purchases \$2,000 or greater and service contracts \$10,000 or greater. **This must accompany first billing.** However these may be submitted with application. Youth service corps are exempt from the 3 vendor quotes greater than \$10,000.

## **Budget**

A summary of request and match expenses for your project must be completed. The following are basic descriptions of what may be included in each category total. Individual items and expenses may be adjusted or denied at the discretion of the Trails Bureau.

- **Unskilled Labor** is work performed outside of the workers/volunteers professional capacity.
  - **The rate for unskilled labor is \$24.90/hour**
  - **Unskilled volunteer labor is for MATCH only.** RTP will not reimburse volunteer labor.
- **Skilled Labor** is work performed within the workers/volunteers professional capacity.
  - **Skilled labor rate is at market value and the grantee must provide documentation of this hourly rate in order to receive reimbursement funds or match benefits.**

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- **Service contracts** are contracted services for any combination of labor, equipment rental and operation, and/or materials.
  - If service agreement is  $\geq$  **\$10,000 for total contract**: 3 different vendor quotes are required
  - If skilled labor/equipment is in a service contract: it is the grantee's responsibility to obtain documentation for this skilled labor rate if requested by RTP coordinator.
  - If the service contract includes materials: the **Buy American** CFR applies for iron & steel (larger items such as gates or I-beams). It is the grantee's responsibility to obtain proof that materials are Buy America compliant. Invoices are still required to show material costs.
  - **Youth service corps** are exempt from the 3 vendor quotes: however every youth service corps contract must be submitted to the Bureau of Trails for approval before the grantee signs the contract. RTP is not obligated to pay the grantee if the youth service corps has charges within the contract not covered by RTP reimbursement.
  - **See below for additional guidelines on contracting trail work to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party.**
- **Materials** include but are not limited to: lumber, steel, concrete, stone, aggregates, fasteners, culverts, mulch, and seed
  - **NOTE: iron & steel must meet Buy America requirements: mill certificate required**
- **Equipment Rental** includes heavy and light equipment used specifically for the trail project.
  - Personal ATV use for hauling materials on trails may be listed here in budget for \$14.30/hour as MATCH only.
  - Personal machine use (ex: excavators/backhoes/ATVs/UTVs/etc.) is considered a donation and can only be used as match to the project.
- **Trail Tools & Equipment** includes but is not limited to: purchase or donation of items such as groomers, drags, snowmobiles, tractors, OHRVs
  - Equipment purchased through RTP may only be used for trail construction/maintenance tasks
  - All equipment purchases  $\geq$  **\$2000 must have 3 different vendor quotes**
  - All equipment purchases must comply with **Buy America** requirements
- **Design & Engineering** may be included, only through use of a professionally licensed and registered engineer or trail design planner. Should only be a relatively small portion of the grant request (no more than 10% of grant request).
- **Permits and Reviews** may include the actual costs incurred for any required state or local permit or review requirements. (Except any cost incurred with Natural Heritage Bureau review or State Historical Preservation Office)
- ~~**Land Acquisition** may include the actual costs for the purchase of land and/or easements for the protection of recreational trail corridors. (not available for FY-18)~~
- **Trail signs** may include materials for or pre-fabricated signs for trail information, guidance, or restrictions.
- **Brochures and Maps** may include printed materials for trail information and guidance.

### Billing to RTP for reimbursement using own work forces must contain:

- **Work logs** for every member of the crew by day containing number of hours worked in a day, what tasks were worked on & what equipment was used. This includes specialized training for the project.
  - NOTE: training to be received for this project must be included in the application.

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- Copies of **paystubs showing rate & benefits** for all employees associated with the project.
  - **The paid employee rate needs to be broken down to an hourly rate.** This will then be used with the work log to calculate associated work cost.
- **Direct expenses** associated with the project including building materials require invoices and proof of payment.
  - **Vehicles rentals** – This is *only approved if the project is in a remote location and employees are carpoled together.* This must be stated in the application as part of the budget. A rental invoice and paid in full receipt must accompany billing.
  - **Gas reimbursement** – This will only be approved *if the project is in a remote location & grantee is renting a vehicle to carpool employees to and from location.* Personal vehicles will not be covered for mileage expenses. The Bureau of Trails mileage log will be provided to grantee if justified need for gas reimbursement is approved. This must be stated in the application as part of the budget. The federal reimbursement rate for gas is **\$0.525/mile.**
  - **Meal costs** – This will only be approved *if location is remote and employees will be staying/camping at the remote location.* This must be stated in the application as part of the budget. Receipts for all food must be submitted or a per diem price/person/day is established in the budget section of the application.

### Service Contract with Youth Service Corps:

- It is the grantee's responsibility to obtain a clear, precise contract with the youth corps they wish to hire. A copy of this contract must be submitted to the RTP coordinator for review prior to the grantee signing the contract with the 3<sup>rd</sup> party. If the contract scope does not fall into the project scope, then the grant funds may be held pending another contract within the project's scope is obtained by the grantee. Understand if the grantee signs a contract with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party, RTP is not obligated to reimburse you to pay the 3<sup>rd</sup> party if the contract is deemed to have charges not covered by RTP.
- Contracts are usually an estimate of costs for a project to be completed. If any costs within are billed as a direct cost to the project then receipts and invoices must be provided in order to be approved for RTP reimbursement. Direct costs may adjust within reason in order to complete the project.
- The contract with the youth corps must/may contain:
  - Contract Scope: must align with the application's project scope.
  - Pay rates & benefits for each member of the field/hitch/crew including field supervisors
  - Training for crew members.
    - This may be included as a separate line item with logs of time spent training for individual crew members or divided and added to hourly rate for individual crew members who received training. **However: sponsors must provide a calculated hourly rate demonstrating value of training costs.**
  - Insurance costs for field crew members
  - Overhead/administrative costs associated with the projects.
    - Attach your organization's federal indirect cost allocation plan (ICAP) if you wish to add it to your budget.
  - Materials/supplies needed for project. Consumable supplies only. Must be listed out.
  - Tools required to complete the project



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- NOTE: RTP does not reimburse for tool purchases that will be kept and reused by the youth corps or grantee.
- NOTE: RTP does not allow for the depreciation of tools from use.
- Lodging costs for field crew members
  - NOTE: the value of the lodging must be provided for the time the youth corps is residing there. This must be documented with rental rates/receipts.
- Meal costs for field crew members
  - NOTE: the value of the meals must be provided. This may be documented with receipts/invoices. Or if there is an established per diem/crew member/day within contract.
- Mileage/gas costs for transportation to and from the worksite.
  - NOTE: mileage charts must be submitted with the current federal rate of reimbursement per mile (changes yearly). Mileage charts must have starting destination and end destination and # of miles travelled per day. This only applies to group transportation. Personal vehicles will not be covered for mileage.
- Passenger vehicle rental for transportation of youth corps for duration of hitch
  - NOTE: this must be documented with rental receipts/invoices.

Items not eligible for reimbursement or match include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Administration time (communications/evaluations/paperwork/meetings)
- Any preparatory work performed before the RTP funds are allocated from the Federal Highway Administration
- Travel time for permanent employees
- Passenger vehicle rental – this will only be accepted if the project is in a remote location and the organization is renting a vehicle to carpool employees to and from the location. This must be stated in the application as part of the budget.
- Gas/mileage – unless approved and deemed necessary as part of the project.
- Food items – unless approved and deemed necessary as part of the project.

### **Application Submission and Deadline**

**A total of 2 complete applications must be submitted (original plus one electronic or hard copy).** All applications must be stamped in and received at DNCR by the close of business **@ 4:00pm on June 22, 2018.** Applications received after the due date will not be included in the current years' Recreational Trails Grant Program review.

### **Notification and Grant Term**

Applicants will be notified in Fall 2018 if their projects were selected or denied. For granted projects, work is ***anticipated*** to be approved to begin early spring 2019 (pending FHWA approval). **Any match must wait to be incurred until after FHWA approval.** All work **must be completed by November 30, 2019.** **Any work/purchases occurring after 11/30/19 will not be eligible for reimbursement or match.** Contract extensions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. **Should a project agreement expire without an extension request and funding remaining, the project can be considered complete with no further funding available.** Properly justified requests for extension of the project expiration date may be granted through an **amendment to the Project Agreement.** Expenses incurred after the Project Agreement expiration date will NOT be eligible for reimbursement. Therefore, a written request for a time extension must be

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received by the NH BOT a minimum of **sixty (60) days prior to the project's expiration date**. Extension requests must contain information as to why project can't be completed within the agreement time, a new budget summary sheet, any scope changes, and a completion timeline. It is the responsibility of the Project Administrator to be aware of the Project Agreement expiration date and to assure that all requests for extension are **submitted prior to the sixty (60) day deadline**.

## Grant Payments

RTP grantees are **reimbursed by the State of New Hampshire**. Grantees must incur cost for work actually completed then submit requests for reimbursement with cancelled checks (front and back) and/or paid-in-full receipts attached and all invoices. Grantees must also submit documentation of completed match with every billing until match is met for total project. Final reimbursement will be withheld until all match is met. As mentioned above, expenses and items may not be reimbursed if not included in within the original project proposal and budget.

Bills & match shall be submitted within 30 days of incurring cost. With each submission bill & match, grantees must include a progress report (form located on BOT website) on the project in order to receive their reimbursement check. **Final billing will include a final progress report with color photos** documenting the completed project or equipment purchase. A site inspection may be performed by NH BOT staff.

Working **capital advances** may be approved on a case-by-case basis. It must be noted in the application that you intend to apply for a cash advanced. Invoices & proof of payments must be submitted to RTP coordinator before any additional billings from sponsor will be approved for reimbursement. The organization must submit at the time of the cash advance request:

- 1) A formal letter requesting a cash advance (On organization letterhead)
- 2) A copy of the organization's bank **CURRENT** financial statement showing *need* for advance
- 3) Completed billing form signed by project administrator in the amount of the cash advance
- 4) Completed (anticipated) match form signed by project administrator

## Penalties for Non-compliance with Contract

RTP grantees agree by signing contract to accept any and all penalties for failure to comply with contract agreement. These penalties include:

1. Termination of Grant: Any failure by the Grantee to abide by or carry out any of the terms or conditions of this grant shall, at the discretion of the State, result in termination of this grant, if, after notice to the Grantee, said default is not remedied within ten (10) days. In the event of termination, no further payments shall be made by the State.
2. Denial of future RTP funds: failure to comply with any and all terms or conditions of this grant may result in denial of future RTP funds for no less than 2 years from current grant year.

## Contact Info:

Any questions regarding NH RTP grants please contact Alexis Rudko @ Bureau of Trails  
By phone: (603) 271-3254 or by email: [alexis.rudko@dncr.nh.gov](mailto:alexis.rudko@dncr.nh.gov)

Thank you for applying and good luck!