

Frequently Asked Questions

Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP) Recreational Trails Program (Up to \$1.2 Million)

WHO MAY APPLY?

Not-for-profit organizations, municipalities, state and federal agencies, and other government entities may apply. If the applicant is not the owner of the property, a legal land use agreement will be required.

Not-for-profit corporations are subject to New York State's Not-For-Profit Corporation Law. In order to apply under this program, a not-for-profit corporation must provide Documentation of Registration and Pre-Qualification with the Grants Gateway to include: Document Vault Identified (i.e., GDV-XXXX-XXXX) and the State Pre-Qualification Application Status Report. Information on this process is available at <http://www.grantsreform.ny.gov/Grantees>.

IS THERE A MINIMUM/MAXIMUM GRANT AMOUNT?

Each year, the Commissioner establishes minimum and maximum award amounts. For 2015-16, the minimum grant award is \$5,000 and the maximum grant award is \$200,000. There is no statutory limit on the number of grants one property or one applicant may receive, but in the interest of equity and fairness and in consideration of applicant capacity, applicants that have more than three open grants with OPRHP should not receive additional awards.

ARE THESE MATCHING GRANTS?

Yes. The Federal share under the RTP shall not exceed 80% of the approved total project cost. The reimbursement rate for awarded grants will be determined by the grant award/total cost ratio, which may be lower than 80%. Note: If the applicant is another federal agency, the total federal share may not exceed 95%. After the grant award is made, the applicant is responsible for any increases in the total cost of the project.

WHAT TYPES OF COSTS ARE ALLOWABLE?

In general, costs are allowable if they are necessary, reasonable, and support the grant project. These include, e.g., professional services, labor, equipment, supplies, materials and real property related to trail maintenance, development or acquisition. Matching Share is the applicant's portion of the cost used to match the grant. PLEASE NOTE: If other federal funds are anticipated, please contact your Regional Grants Administrator (RGA), since some federal funds are not eligible as match. A list of the RGAs can be found at <http://nysparks.com/grants/contact.aspx>.

WHEN MUST MY SHARE BE AVAILABLE?

The immediate availability of funds is a critical factor when evaluating grant applications. This assures that approved projects can begin quickly.

WHEN ARE THE GRANT MONIES AVAILABLE?

This is a reimbursement program. **Successful applicants must be prepared to fund the cost of the project** then submit for reimbursement of the applicable percentage of documented expenditures. Reimbursements can only be made once all contract payment requirements have been met. Grant recipients must plan their financial arrangements accordingly.

WHAT IS MY FIRST STEP?

All Recreational Trails Program (RTP) applicants must use the Regional Economic Development Councils online application process, the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA). The CFA is available through our website <http://www.nysparks.com/grants> and the Governor's Regional Economic Development Councils website <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/>. Technical assistance is available through the Regional Economic Development Councils and through the OPRHP RGA. Please go to our website for more information on the CFA and how to contact our regional grant administrators.

ARE THERE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS GRANT PROGRAM?

Yes. Projects funded under Section 1101(b) of TEA-21 place significant emphasis on increasing opportunities for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE). RTP is included within title I of TEA-21, therefore the DBE requirements applies to RTP projects. The objective of the DBE requirement is to provide disadvantaged business enterprises with opportunities to compete for government contracts.

In New York State, DBE goals and thresholds are set by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). Projects that are funded in whole or in part with federal-aid funds, are required to comply with DBE regulations. Projects will be assigned a DBE goal based on the NYSDOT region in which it is located. Other Affirmative Action requirements may apply including good faith employment efforts, and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO).

ARE THERE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS PROGRAM?

Yes. Funding from the Federal Highway Administration is subject to review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In addition, the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) must also be met. Municipalities who receive grant awards will be considered lead agency for SEQR compliance. OPRHP will be considered lead agency under SEQR for not-for-profit organization projects selected for funding.

HOW ARE GRANT AWARDS SELECTED?

Each application will be reviewed for eligibility and, if determined eligible, will be rated according to the Grant Selection Criteria. Within each region, applications are ranked according to funding category. In selecting which top-ranked projects will get funded, the Commissioner factors in conformance to the mandated spending requirements (Program Mandates). It is not expected that all categories will be funded in all regions.

When award recommendations are finalized, OPRHP submits recommended projects to the Federal Highway Administration for approval. Grant awards are contingent upon federal approval.

WHEN CAN I START WORK?

The federal approval date is the official project start date. No costs incurred or services rendered prior to that date will be eligible for reimbursement, except that, upon approval, certain pre-development costs incurred up to 18 months prior to federal approval may be credited to the non-Federal share. Once the project has received federal approval, a project contract (including a budget, scope of work and performance timeline) is formalized between OPRHP and the applicant.

DO CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS REQUIRE AGENCY REVIEW?

All projects that involve construction require the completion of a Design Report and Right of Way Certificate. NYSDOT concurrence on Design Report documents is required before projects can go out for bid, and/or before construction can begin. Some contracts must be publicly bid following applicable guidelines. **Projects that involve construction or alteration to any building or structure will require stamped plans and specifications by a licensed professional.**

Please contact your RGA before any project work is undertaken. For projects that involve properties listed on or eligible for the State/National Register, all work undertaken as part of a grant-assisted project must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation. See <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>.

WHEN MUST WORK BE ACCOMPLISHED?

Once a contract is executed, all projects must be completed within five (5) years from date of federal approval. Successful grantees are expected to submit a payment request within ten months of the federal approval date and at least annually thereafter until the project is completed. Grantees who do not meet this deadline are at risk for withdrawal/de-obligation of funds. OPRHP will monitor the progress of project work and will recapture awarded funds if significant progress is not being made, lacking compelling justification. Significant progress includes such tasks as retaining consultants, purchasing equipment, executing contracts, initiating construction, submitting payment requests or other tasks required to complete project work pursuant to timeframes established in the grant contract. Any work accomplished and paid for will be subject to all provisions of the contract.

DO THESE GRANTS COME WITH PROVISIONS FOR LONG TERM PROTECTION?

Yes. All trails/trail facilities utilizing these funds will be expected to be available to the general public for a specified period of time, ranging from 10-25 years, depending on the amount of federal funds awarded. In addition, any equipment purchased with these funds will be subject to specific terms and conditions as specified in the project contract. Any not-for-profit acquiring land for recreation or conservation purposes must grant the State a permanent conservation easement to the property. Any municipal parkland acquired or developed for trail purposes may be subject to the "6f" requirements of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which forbid conversion to a use other than recreational. The specific timeframe for any particular grant will be determined by OPRHP and the project contract will be conditioned to reflect this requirement.

ARE THERE RESTRICTIONS ON MATERIALS USED FOR CONSTRUCTION?

Buy America requirements apply to all steel and iron permanently incorporated in a project funded by RTP funding. Trail grooming vehicles and mechanized equipment primarily

constructed with steel or iron must comply with Buy America requirements or must request a waiver. See FHWA's Notice of Buy America Waiver Request webpage for information: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/construction/contracts/waivers.cfm>

WHAT OTHER REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET?

Compliance with several Federal, State and OPRHP mandates is required, including, but are not limited to: SEQR and NEPA environmental reviews, appropriate building codes, the Americans with Disabilities Act, State Labor Law (including prevailing wage), General Municipal Law, Workers Compensation Law, Single Audit Act, Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act, Buy America, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Recreational Trails Program prohibits the use of grant funds to accommodate motorized use on trails that have been predominantly used by non-motorized trail users prior to May 1, 1991. All applicable requirements will be specified in the project contract for an awarded grant project. Please contact your RGA for information on how these and other applicable statutes may impact your project.

IS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE?

Yes. The list of regional grant administrators for OPRHP grant programs follows. If you have any questions about your application, please contact your regional grant administrator. Your representative can notify you regarding pre-application workshops and/or schedule an appointment with you to discuss your application. Pre-application workshops and meetings will provide important detailed information to help you submit a more competitive application.

OPRHP Regional Grant Administrators

Western New York Region

Noelle Kardos
 Beaver Island State Park
 2136 West Oakfield
 Grand Island, NY 14072
 (716) 773-5292, FAX (716) 773-4150
 COUNTIES: Allegany, Cattaraugus,
 Chautauqua, Erie and Niagara

Central New York Region

Jean Egenhofer
 Clark Reservation State Park
 6105 East Seneca Turnpike
 Jamesville, NY 13078-9516
 (315) 492-1756, FAX (315) 492-3277
 COUNTIES: Cayuga, Cortland, Madison,
 Onondaga and Oswego

Finger Lakes Region

Tom Livak
 Allegany State Park
 ASP Rte 1, Salamanca, NY 14779
 (716) 354-9101, FAX (716) 354-2255
 COUNTIES: Genesee, Livingston, Monroe,
 Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming
 and Yates

Mohawk Valley Region

Jean Egenhofer
 Clark Reservation State Park
 6105 East Seneca Turnpike
 Jamesville, NY 13078-9516
 (315) 492-1756, FAX (315) 492-3277
 COUNTIES: Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery,
 Oneida, Otsego and Schoharie

Long Island Region

Traci Christian

Southern Tier Region

Laurie Moore

Belmont Lake State Park
PO Box 247
Babylon, NY 11702
(631) 321-3543, FAX (631) 321-3721
COUNTIES: Nassau and Suffolk

2221 Taughannock Park Road
Trumansburg, NY 14886
(607) 387-7041, FAX (607) 387-3390
COUNTIES: Broome, Chemung, Chenango,
Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga and
Tompkins

New York City Region

Merrill Hesch
NYS OPRHP
Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. State Office Building
163 West 125th Street, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10027
(212) 866-2599, FAX (212) 866-3186
COUNTIES: Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens
and Richmond

Mid-Hudson Region

Erin O'Neil
NYS OPRHP
Taconic Regional Office
9 Old Post Road
Staatsburg, NY 12580
(845) 889-3866, FAX (845) 889-8321
COUNTIES: Dutchess, Orange, Putnam,
Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster and Westchester

Capital Region

Danielle Dwyer
Saratoga Spa State Park
19 Roosevelt Drive
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-6214
(518) 584-2000, FAX (518) 584-5694
COUNTIES: Albany, Columbia, Greene,
Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren
and Washington

North Country Region

Sunshine Jenkins
Keewaydin State Park
Alexandria Bay, NY 13607
(315) 482-2593, FAX (315) 482-9413
COUNTIES: Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton,
Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence