



# Recreational Trails Program

## SEE Grant Application Guidance

Grants and Community Recreation Program  
124 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333  
(207) 624-6090

*Please read the application guidance document prior to filling out this application.*

## PREFACE

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a federal assistance program to help states provide and maintain recreational trails for both motorized and non-motorized use. It provides funds for a variety of trails including those for hikers, bikers, in-line skating, water trails, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicles, four-wheel driving, and other off-road vehicle use.

For more detailed information about this program please follow this link:

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/overview/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/overview/)

Administered at the federal level by the Federal Highway Administration and at the state level by the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry; Bureau of Parks and Lands, with assistance from the Maine Trails Advisory Committee, RTP grants can provide up to \$120,000 for large scale acquisition or development projects or up to \$50,000 of allowable costs for all other construction projects. (Subject to change depending on funding levels). **For Safety & Environmental Protection projects there is a maximum grant amount of \$5,000.00.**

Category G, *operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection*, permits a State to use up to 5 percent of its apportionment each fiscal year **for the operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection as those objectives relate to the use of recreational trails.**

Typical projects may include:

- Development and operation of trail safety education programs.
- Development and operation of trail-related environmental protection programs.
- Production of trail-related educational materials, whether on information displays, in print, video, audio, interactive computer displays, as they relate to safety and environmental protection of that trail resource.

(Note that any type of construction is not an eligible SEE expense. Items such as trailhead kiosks should be pursued through the regular RTP application process.)

This guidance document is intended to provide perspective on the elements within the application on a point-by-point basis to increase the ability of the applicant to highlight the merits of their proposed initiative and therefor to increase the likelihood of project funding.

Qualified sponsors that are interested in submitting a proposal should contact the Grants and Community Recreation Division of the Bureau of Parks and Lands at the phone number or email address below for assistance and guidance in the application process.

Doug Beck, State Trail Administrator  
Phone: (207) 624-6090  
E-mail address: [doug.beck@maine.gov](mailto:doug.beck@maine.gov)

**COMPLETE APPLICATION MUST BE SUMITTED BY 5:00pm on the  
LAST FRIDAY IN SEPTEMBER**

**LATE OR INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

*Refer to application checklist (appendix) for what is needed in a complete application.*

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# OVERVIEW

## 1) Structure

- a) This application is divided into three sections
  - i) Applicant information
  - ii) Applicant eligibility / authority
  - iii) Project information
    - (1) Required information must be entered directly into the application form where spaces are made available for this purpose.
- b) This application is a simple Word document for your convenience. You can save your work as you progress through the application toward completion.
- c) Supplemental Information
  - i) At various points within the application additional supplemental and supporting documentation is requested. These documents must be saved according to defined file naming protocol and included with your completed application.

## 2) Application Submission

**All applications will be submitted digitally. Please follow this guidance precisely in order to complete and submit your application.**

- a) Application Process
  - i) Download, store and compile all of your documents electronically on your local hard drive, agency server or other site as appropriate
- b) Application Submission
  - i) Create a cloud based folder on any of the various available storage services such as [DropBox](#), [Google Drive](#), [iCloud](#), [One Drive](#), etc. We don't care which one as long as we will be able to access the completed documents.
    - (1) Most of these provide free accounts with more than enough storage space for your complete suite of application documents.
  - ii) Create a folder within this cloud based drive titled as follows: "agency/sponsor name" "grant year" RTP SEE Application
    - (1) ex: Town of E.Gish\_2020SEP\_Docs
  - iii) If you are also submitting a regular RTP Development Grant, you should have a separate folder for each application.
  - iv) Save your application files in this folder according to the naming protocol below. Depending on the applicant, not all files below will be necessary. Applicant may also include additional supporting documents if desired (photos, press, letters of support, etc) and should follow the same naming protocol:
    - (1) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_application
    - (2) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_resolution
    - (3) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_lease
    - (4) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_permit
    - (5) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_MHPC\_clearance
    - (6) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_MIFW\_clearance
    - (7) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_MNAP\_clearance

Please abbreviate to facilitate better file saving and transfer.

Left example then would be  
Spnsrnm\_2020SEP\_ap  
Spnsrnm\_2020SEP\_res  
And so on...

- (8) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_map\_vicinity
- (9) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_map\_site
- (10) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_map\_linkages
- (11) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_map\_data
- (12) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_fee\_schedule
- (13) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_planning\_evidence
- (14) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_proximity\_docs
- (15) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_project\_budget

Optional additional information

- (16) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_project\_photos
- (17) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_project\_press
- (18) Sponsor name\_2020SEP\_project\_los

Etc.,

- v) When all of your documents are completed and compiled in your local drive, copy all of your application files into your shared drive application folder.
  - (1) Do not cut and paste, just copy and paste, so you are sure to maintain your files.
- vi) When you are certain that you have all the required documents in the shared folder do the following:
  - (1) Send an email with a link to the shared folder to [doug.beck@maine.gov](mailto:doug.beck@maine.gov).
    - (a) Copy the text of your transmittal letter (appendix) into the body of your email.**
    - (b) This email will serve as the time stamp for the date / time of submission**
  - (2) Upon receipt of the email your shared folder will be accessed, and the contents will be copied and pasted into a separate location.
    - (a) This will complete your application and files present at the time will determine the validity of your application.

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN ANY PART OF THE APPLICATION YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO READ THE ENTIRE APPLICATION AND GUIDANCE DOCUMENT SO YOU CAN FORMULATE YOUR RESPONSES ACCORDINGLY. THIS WILL RESULT IN AN APPLICATION THAT LIMITS REPETITIVE INFORMATION AND BETTER INFORMS REVIEWERS ABOUT THE MERITS OF YOUR PROJECT.**

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## **Part 1 – Applicant Information**

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### **Contact information –**

Executive officer is the one person in your agency / organization empowered to sign contracts.

Primary contact is the person who will be directly involved in managing this grant / project, if awarded, and therefore who will serve as the point person for all communications between the applicant and the State.

### **Applicant Type**

All Non-Government Organizations (NGO) need to provide documentation assuring that they are an eligible applicant.

### **Past RTP Grant Awards**

Has your agency receive previous RTP grants, if so, when was the most recent grant awarded?

### **If applicant had a previous project it was completed in:**

If the project was not completed you may submit a brief statement as to the reason for the lack of completion.

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## **Part 2 – Applicant Eligibility / Project Viability**

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### **1) Authorization to Apply**

- Municipalities / School Unions must show evidence that their governing body has formally granted authorization for the municipality's application. This is typically in the form of a resolution, but may take other forms. See appendix for examples
- Most other agencies empower the chief executive to pursue grant funding without special authorization, but if the applicant's agency does require board approval, please provide documentation of that action.

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## **Part 3 – Project Information**

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Be sure to focus here on project location, not sponsor agency location if different. If your proposed project is not tied to a specific trail or trail portion you do not need to complete this section. However, to the extent possible you should attempt to do so. If you are providing trail etiquette workshops for instance, and you know where the workshops will be held, you should list these sites.

- a) **GPS Coordinates:** If this project is related to a specific on the ground trail, please list coordinates for the project trailhead(s), main project area, or other significant location key to this grant application
- Latitude and Longitude Coordinates are preferred in Decimal Degrees.
    - For example: Latitude: 44.291519, Longitude: -69.797352
    - If you need to convert to decimal degrees, you can use the following website:  
<http://www.rcn.montana.edu/resources/converter.aspx>

### **1) Grant Amount Requested:**

- Maximum: \$5,000.00 for a Safety and Environmental Protection Project.

**2) Project description narrative summary.**

Be informative and concise. Include current conditions and your vision for the completed project. You have limited space here. Be sure you know what specific questions are asked later in the application so you don't repeat them in detail here. It may be helpful to write this section after you have completed the rest of the application as a summary of all your proposed work and therefore a good description of the work to be accomplished.

- Provide total project measurement in most appropriate unit of measure in provided area

**3) What is the scale of this project?**

What is the geographic context of the primary trail system or initiative? Does/will your project focus on a single municipality, two or three municipalities, the entire state or a significant portion of the state? Does it address the Maine portions of a nationally significant trail?

**4) User Fees**

If yes is selected the following points should be considered and a fee schedule must be included with your completed application.

- The facility must be open to the public, not only club members or municipal residents.
- The fee must be reasonable which would be determined in negotiation between the State and the project sponsor. The State Recreational Trail Advisory Committee would be a useful forum to discuss this issue. The fee should not be set so high as to restrict general public access.
- It may be appropriate for club members to receive a discount, since a portion of their membership may be counted toward use of the area, but the price differential should not be set so high as to restrict general public access.

**5) If trail related - what uses are this trail designed and managed for?**

Be honest about the purpose of your trail project and the uses you will actually manage the trail for. If you select Nordic skiing / snowshoeing for a hiking trail, but make no accommodations for winter parking for those users to access the trail, then it's not being managed for snowshoeing and Nordic skiing. You are not going to get extra points for each additional use you allow. You will get extra points for demonstrating a well thought out and justified project for the uses you do include.

**6) Why is this project needed?**

What gaps in service does this initiative fill? Include how it benefits your user base?

- Are there existing users who have expressed a desire for this initiative?
- How was this need identified?
- What problem is the being resolved?

**7) What process did you follow to identify this project as a priority?**

Is it part of a plan? Was there community input / demand? Provide evidence.

- Have other plans been formulated that have called for this project? Who was involved in this planning process and how inclusive was it of the greater community?
- Was this project part of any external plans, not directly related to your agency or organization?

**8) Who designed or will design your project?**

Describe qualifications and experience

- Have they done this kind of work before? Where & what kinds?

9) **How is the project designed to ensure longevity and sustainability?**

- In order to extend the benefits of this program to as many as possible, the Maine Trails Advisory Committee views this funding stream as a catalyst for creating something new, not as a sustaining revenue stream for an ongoing project.
- Can this work be replicated without future RTP funding? If so, what is your plan to accomplish this?

10) **Who will manage the project?**

What is the relationship between your agency/organization and the project manager? What are the project manager's qualifications?

- How is this person suited to the task of managing this effort to a successful and timely completion?
- Can you provide examples of other related work?
- How will this work be promoted?

11) **Who will do the work?**

- Identify qualifications for the work and the reasons for selection.

12) **Who will benefit from this project, and in what way/**

13) **How will you define success?**

- Success of the development process
- Success of the use and enjoyment of the final product

14) **Project Budget & Match Worksheet**

- RTP grant limited to maximum of 80% of overall project out of pocket costs
- Total Applicant cash and in-kind (donated) costs must be at least 20% of total project cost
  - To determine the minimum amount of match you need to provide to capture the grant amount requested, simply multiply the grant amount request by 25%. This is your minimum match amount
- Reimbursement for Design/Engineering is limited to maximum of 10% of the grant amount.
- Cost of donated materials, equipment, and/or labor must be verified.
- In-kind unskilled labor rate is based on current rates as set by the Independent Sector.
- Budget Category Definitions
  - **Design/Engineering** = graphic design
  - **Purchase of Services** = professional trades people typically to accomplish one element of the project.  
List type of special services required
  - **Contracts** = contract for services provided; instructors, etc.,
  - **Equipment Rental** = chainsaws for example, for a chainsaw training course.
  - **Supplies / Materials** = paper, ink, etc.,
  - **Labor** = typically labor is calculated as part of match as an "In-kind" expense
    - Volunteer labor rate is set at the current Independent Sector rate.
    - Calculate staff labor rate at fully burdened rate for work directly associated with project
    - Professionals – If a person is professionally skilled in the work being donated to the project (i.e., a welder working on a steel trail bridge), the wage rate this individual is normally paid for performing this service may be charged to the project. The rate cannot exceed prevailing wage (excluding common laborer) and/or equipment charges determined by the Maine Department of Transportation (DOT).
  - **Administration** = Fully burdened rate of project manager for direct project related work, not general overhead, clerical, office time.
  - **Acquisition** = N/A for SEP
  - **Purchase of Property Rights** = N/A for SEP
- Match Funding Status Worksheet – complete this simple form to characterize the status of the match you have and or anticipate having in support of this project.

**15) Application Certification**

- Do not fill out the signature field until you are ready to submit your application. When you complete the signature field, all fields will be locked from future edits.
- Once you click on the digital signature field and bypass the warning message, it will lead you through the process for signing the document. You can use an existing digital ID or create a new one.



## Appendix

# Application Checklist

Listed below is the documentation either specified as part of the application or suggested as support of elements within the application. It is helpful to organize your application by folders with groups of like files. Use this checklist to ensure you have submitted a complete application and include a copy of the checklist at the beginning of your application. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed and will not receive funding.

<b>RTP SEE Application</b>	
• Completed Application	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>RTP Application Part 2</b>	
<b>Authorization</b>	
• Transmittal Letter	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Resolution/Vote of Legislative body	<input type="checkbox"/>
• NGO Documentation (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>RTP Application Part 3</b>	
<b>Project Maps (if appropriate)</b>	
• Vicinity Map	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Site Location Map	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Linkages Map	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Project Planning</b>	
• Documentation of project plans (if appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Project Design/Management</b>	
• Evidence of designer qualifications	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Project manager qualifications	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Evidence of sustainability plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Letters of Support – Supplemental Information</b>	
• LOS from user groups / individuals	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Letters of commitment from partners	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Transmittal

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A Letter of Transmittal, or Cover Letter, on municipal or organization letterhead must accompany the RTP application. The letter must be signed and dated by the applicant’s Chief Executive Officer and serves as additional assurance that the application is authorized.

The letter must contain the following statement as modified to reflect the applicant’s identity:

“The **Project Applicant, (insert name of your organization here)**, has the capacity and intent to finance its share of costs for the proposed project, including long-term management and maintenance. No costs associated with this project will be incurred until the sponsor and the Bureau of Parks and Lands have signed a **project agreement**. The **Project Applicant** understands that this is a reimbursement grant. The project, if approved, will begin promptly and will be completed by the date indicated on the project agreement. If the project is approved, expenditure documentation submitted will reflect only those items listed in the project budget. The applicant understands that changes in project scope or budget must be approved by the State via a project agreement amendment.”

# Resolution

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## Sample Language: Resolution/Vote of Legislative Body of Membership:

**The language below must be incorporated into your respective municipal or school unit resolution authorizing the official to apply for RTP funding on behalf of the agency. A copy of the actual document passed by the council or board and entered into the record of that body needs to be included as documentation.**

“The Board of (*sponsor’s board*) voted on (*put in date of meeting*) in favor of applying for the Recreational Trail Development Grant from the Bureau of Parks and Lands for the construction of (*trail name*) trail project. The vote was (*fill in vote of board*) in favor of applying for the grant.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Name, Title)

# RTP SEE Application Scoring

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MTAC grant review action team members will score all submitted applications. Points listed are maximum allowable, and should be considered “up to” in all cases. Actual points awarded may be less than the maximum value per topic.

**RTP Grant History (0-10 points)**

**Points based on when applicant received most recent RTP grant.**

1-2 Years Ago	2
3-5 Years Ago	4
6+ Years Ago	7
New Applicant	10

**Most Recent Grant Completed (-4-0 points)**

Within 1 year	0
Within 2 years	-2
More than two years	-4

**Association of Project with specific Trail? 0-6 Points**

Local trail	2
Regional trail	4
Statewide trails	6

**Project need is well explained:**

*(Examples: population to benefit from the trail identified; how the project provides a new or enhanced experience)*

Benefits well-explained	15
Benefits partially explained	8
Benefits not explained	0

**Demonstrates outstanding planning process:**

*(Examples – project planning occurred with community meetings, specifically identified in comprehensive plan, SCORP referenced)*

Outstanding planning evident, strong community input, research cited	15
Adequate planning evident, some community input, anecdotal support	10
Minimal planning evident, partial documentation of planning process	5
Insufficient documentation of and or no planning process	0

**Demonstrates outstanding design for sustainability:**

*(Examples –professional designed the project, MCC consulted, universal design incorporated, trail designed with state-of-the-art principles in mind)*

Outstanding design with professional expertise and plans	15
Adequate design with professional expertise and plans	10
Partially adequate design and plans	5
Inadequate design	0

**Demonstrates capacity for project sustainability:**

*(Examples – RTP funding will leverage future non RTP fund;, product will last for 10+ years)*

Outstanding capacity for sustainability	15
Partial capacity for sustainability	8
No evidence of plan for sustainability	0

**Demonstrates capacity for a successful project management:**

*(Examples – professional agency engaged to perform the work; trained/skilled staff will do the work; examples of similar successful work provided )*

Outstanding capacity for construction management and execution.	15
Adequate capacity for construction management and execution.	10
Partial capacity for construction management and execution.	5
Insufficient capacity for construction management.	0

**Who benefits from the Project 0-6 points**

Evidence of limited beneficiaries	2
Evidence of good reach and many beneficiaries	4
Evidence of outstanding reach and significant beneficiaries	6

**Applicant provides a clear vision of success for the project:**

Reasonable vision for success presented	10
No vision of success presented	0

**Project maximizes matching funds:**

Cash in-hand is greater than 20% of total project (committed)	15
Cash is greater than 20% of total project (can be pending monies)	10
Cash and in-kind is greater than 20% of total project	5
Cash and in kinds is less than 20% of total project	0

**Penalty Points (-5 per infraction):**

Missing information