Application Guidelines & Form

About Us

The National Park Service – Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program (RTCA) supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the nation. Our conservation and recreation planning professionals partner with community groups, nonprofit organizations, tribes, and government agencies. This partnership assists local communities in realizing their conservation and outdoor recreation vision and goals by providing a broad range of services and skills. National Park Service (NPS) staff share their expertise to help your team turn an idea into reality. We offer this assistance on an annual basis with extensions based on mutual agreement. *No monetary grants are made.*

National Park Service Mission

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

Our Focus Areas

Our projects typically fall within five focus areas, although we consider other projects that fall outside of these categories:

- **Build healthy communities through parks, trails, and outdoor opportunities:**
  Improve access to outdoor recreation and park amenties on land and water that support healthy lifestyles for all users
- **Conserve natural lands, rivers, and watersheds:**
  Strengthen the conservation and stewardship of public lands, waterways, and wildlife habitat
- **Engage youth in outdoor recreation and stewardship:**
  Connect young people to the outdoors to develop a lifelong appreciation of recreation and nature
- **Strengthen the organizational capacity of project partners:**
  Develop and strengthen effective and sustainable community organizations and partner groups
- **Support National Park Service and community networks:**
  Facilitate strategic planning and collaboration between national parks and communities to achieve shared goals

Our Services

Our assistance is tailored to your needs. Examples of the types of assistance we provide are listed below. Visit our website to learn about current projects: https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/community-projects.htm

- Define project vision and goals
- Inventory and map community resources
- Identify and analyze key issues and opportunities
- Engage collaborative partners and stakeholders
- Design community outreach and participation strategies
- Develop concept plans for trails, parks, and natural areas
- Set priorities and build consensus
- Identify funding strategies
- Develop a sustainable organizational framework to support the project
- Create project management and strategic action plans
- Coach teams, groups, and partnership networks

Application Process and Timeline

The application deadline is March 1, 2021. Consulting a program manager prior to the application deadline is ***a requirement*** to help identify how our expertise can complement your project and to answer questions regarding the application. Please see the contact list at the end of this application to identify the program manager who serves your state.

- Please contact the program manager for your state to discuss the proposed project and current application timeline.
- Email completed applications to the program manager who serves your state or contact them for guidance on mailing a printed version (*see list at the end of the application*)
- Please include the following in your Application Package:
  1. Completed application form
  2. Site location map
  3. A minimum of three commitment letters that describe each partner's role, responsibility, and contribution to the project
  4. Optional supplemental information that can help us learn more about your project (for example, background documents, media coverage, additional maps, list of links to resources, project photos, etc.)
- Project start times will be coordinated with applicants who have been selected for assistance.

Project Selection Criteria

Applications for support from the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program are competitively evaluated based on the following criteria:

- The project is expected to accomplish noticeable results that promote natural resource conservation or outdoor recreation in the near future.
- Roles and contributions of project partners are significant and well-defined.
- There is evidence of broad community support for the project.
- The project fits with our focus areas (although proposals falling outside these areas are considered).

Application Form

Date:

Project Name:

City and State:

Congressional District(s) Number(s):

Primary Applicant Organization(s):

Primary Contact: Title:

Street Address:

City: State/Territory: Zip Code:

Email: Daytime Phone:

Website (if applicable):

Please review focus area descriptions (on page 1) and project selection criteria (on page 2) for guidance on addressing the following questions. If additional space is needed for your responses, please use the extra pages at the end of this document. Contact the program manager for your state with questions or for additional information.

1. Project Summary

Address the following points concisely:

a. Summary of project - Tell us about your project idea and the specific outcomes you would like to achieve:

1. Project Summary (continued)

b. Describe any specific results anticipated within 5 years of project start-up (for example, greenway plan development or implementation, community events, land acquisition, sustainable organization formed, miles of trails developed, acres of land preserved/conserved, etc.).

c. Describe any major project accomplishments to date:

d. Describe anticipated benefits to the community (for example, recreational, social, environmental, economic, health, etc.):

2. Roles

a. Describe your organization, its role in the project, and the time and resources that will be contributed:

b. In the chart below, describe each partner's role, responsibility, and contribution to the project (please include partners providing letters of commitment):

Organization Name	Partner's Role, Responsibility, and Contribution

3. Community Support & Engagement

a. Describe project support to date, including support from the general public, organizations, coalitions, government agencies, and elected officials. Share any relevant news media articles, sections of plans that propose the project, and/or government resolutions that illustrate this support:

b. Describe plans for future public outreach and engagement:

4. NPS Support Requested

a. What are the major project challenges your organization faces?

4. NPS Support Requested (continued)

b. Describe the types of assistance and specific deliverables you are seeking from the NPS staff that would complement your team. *For examples, see the description of "Our Services" on page 2.*

5. How Did You Hear About Us?

Have you worked with Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance in the past? If not, how did you hear about our program (for example, from a colleague, online search, NPS website, grants.gov, social media, email, or other)?

6. Attachments

Please include the following attachments with this completed application:

- Site location map
- Commitment letters from 3 or more project partners
- Optional supplemental information that can help us learn more about your project (background documents, examples of media coverage, additional maps, list of links to resources, project photos, etc.)

Reminder: Ensure you have initiated contact with your individual state program manager for guidance prior to submittal (see below for contact information - for a list of current program managers, please visit: www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/contactus.htm).

Submitting Your Application

After the application is completed, email your application materials to the program manager for your state, or contact them for guidance on mailing a printed version.

American Samoa – pwr_rtca@nps.gov
Alabama – ser_rtca@nps.gov
Alaska – akr_rtca@nps.gov
Arizona – rtca_apps_imr@nps.gov
Arkansas – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
California – pwr_rtca@nps.gov
Colorado – rtca_apps_imr@nps.gov
Connecticut – ner_rtca@nps.gov
Delaware – ner_rtca@nps.gov
District of Columbia (and metropolitan area) – ncr_rtca@nps.gov
Florida – ser_rtca@nps.gov
Georgia – ser_rtca@nps.gov
Guam – pwr_rtca@nps.gov
Hawaii – pwr_rtca@nps.gov
Idaho – pwr_rtca@nps.gov
Illinois – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Indiana – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Iowa – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Kansas – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Kentucky – ser_rtca@nps.gov
Louisiana – ser_rtca@nps.gov
Maine – ner_rtca@nps.gov
Maryland – ner_rtca@nps.gov
Massachusetts – ner_rtca@nps.gov
Michigan – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Minnesota – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Mississippi – ser_rtca@nps.gov
Missouri – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Montana – rtca_apps_imr@nps.gov
Nebraska – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Nevada – pwr_rtca@nps.gov
New Hampshire – ner_rtca@nps.gov
New Jersey – ner_rtca@nps.gov
New Mexico – rtca_apps_imr@nps.gov
New York – ner_rtca@nps.gov
North Carolina – ser_rtca@nps.gov
North Dakota – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Northern Mariana Islands - pwr_rtca@nps.gov
Ohio – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Oklahoma – rtca_apps_imr@nps.gov
Oregon – pwr_rtca@nps.gov
Pennsylvania – ner_rtca@nps.gov
Puerto Rico – ser_rtca@nps.gov
Rhode Island – ner_rtca@nps.gov
South Carolina – ser_rtca@nps.gov
South Dakota – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Tennessee – ser_rtca@nps.gov
Texas – rtca_apps_imr@nps.gov
Utah – rtca_apps_imr@nps.gov
Vermont – ner_rtca@nps.gov
U.S. Virgin Islands – ser_rtca@nps.gov
Virginia – ner_rtca@nps.gov
Washington – pwr_rtca@nps.gov
West Virginia – ner_rtca@nps.gov
Wisconsin – mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Wyoming – rtca_apps_imr@nps.gov

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