

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 network of conservation and recreation planning professionals can partner with community groups, nonprofit organizations, tribes, and government agencies to realize your conservation and outdoor recreation vision by providing a range of services. National Park Service (NPS) staff can 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.*

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

- Build healthy communities through parks, trails, and outdoor opportunities
- Conserve natural lands, rivers, and watersheds
- Engage youth in outdoor recreation and stewardship
- Strengthen the organizational capacity of project partners

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
- Coaching teams, groups, and partnership networks

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.



Application Process and Timeline

We recommend consulting an NPS RTCA staff member prior to the application deadline 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 document to identify the Program Manager who serves your state.

- Application deadline: June 30
- Email completed applications to the Program Manager who serves your state (*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. Support letters from 3 or more project partners
 4. 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.)
- Applicants will be notified of decisions before November 1.
- Project start times will be coordinated with you.

Project Selection Criteria

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

- The project has specific goals and results for conservation and outdoor recreation expected 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 areas of focus (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):

1. Project Summary

Address the following points in a concise project description:

a. Summary of project goal(s):

b. Project area (ex. location, geography, demographics, etc.):

1. Project Summary (continued)

c. Any major project accomplishments to date:

d. Desired outcomes from NPS assistance:

e. Anticipated final project outcomes:

f. Project benefits (ex. social, environmental, 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, list the key partners involved with the project and their anticipated role and impact:

Organization Name	Project Role 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, participation, and community inclusion.

4. NPS Support Requested

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

4. NPS Support Requested (continued)

- b. What types of assistance are you seeking from the NPS staff that would complement your team?

5. How Did You Hear About Us?

How did you hear about our program (i.e. from a colleague, online search, NPS website, Facebook, email, grants.gov, or other)?

6. Attachments

Please include the following attachments with this completed application by June 30:

- Site location map
- Support 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.)

Submitting Your Application

Please email your completed application to the Program Manager for your region and state:

Pacific West Region
Barbara Rice, Program Manager
pwr_rtca@nps.gov
California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, American Samoa, Guam

Midwest Region
David Thomson, Program Manager
mwr_rtca@nps.gov
Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin

Northeast Region
Helen Mahan, Program Manager
ner_rtca@nps.gov
Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia

