

# Manual 16

# Recreational Trails Program

---

October 2016





# Table of Contents

<b>At A Glance</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Recreational Trails Program.....	1
<b>Section 1: Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Recreational Trails Program.....	2
About the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.....	3
Where to Get Information.....	5
Grant Process and Timeline.....	6
<b>Section 2: Policies</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Eligible Applicants.....	10
Eligible Project Types.....	11
Other Types of Projects.....	16
Eligible Costs.....	17
Ineligible Projects and Costs.....	18
Control of the Land.....	20
Environmental Requirements.....	22
Requirements and Other Things to Know.....	24
Capital Equipment Policies.....	26
Project Area Stewardship and Ongoing Obligations.....	28
<b>Section 3: Money Matters</b> .....	<b>30</b>
Matching Resources.....	30
Match Requirements.....	31
Types of Match.....	33
Grant Limits.....	34
User Fees and Charges.....	35
Records and Reimbursement.....	35
Funding Priorities.....	35
<b>Section 4: Project Selection</b> .....	<b>40</b>
How Project Evaluation Works.....	40
Advisory Committee.....	41
Evaluation Criteria.....	42
<b>Appendix 1: RTP Category Decision Tree</b> .....	<b>56</b>

# At A Glance

## Recreational Trails Program

<b>Purpose</b>	Provides grants to rehabilitate and maintain recreational trails and facilities that provide a backcountry experience for motorized and non-motorized uses.
<b>Who may Apply?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities and towns</li> <li>• Counties</li> <li>• Federal agencies</li> <li>• Native American tribes</li> <li>• Nonprofit trail organizations</li> <li>• Special purpose districts</li> <li>• State agencies</li> </ul>
<b>Is a Plan Required?</b>	No
<b>What Types of Projects are Eligible?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Maintenance</li> </ul>
<b>What are the Grant Limits?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and maintenance: \$5,000-\$150,000</li> <li>• Education: \$5,000-\$20,000</li> </ul>
<b>What Must I Contribute?</b>	20 percent minimum. However, project scores are weighted to reward projects that include a matching share made up of non-government contributions.
<b>How is my Project Evaluated?</b>	An advisory committee reviews your written materials and scores your project.
<b>When are Applications Due</b>	November 1, 2016
<b>When are Grants Awarded?</b>	July 2017 (pending federal approval of funding)
<b>What's New This Year?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modified the page limits for the evaluation packets</li> <li>• Removed bonus point from the cost efficiencies evaluation criterion</li> <li>• Added a requirement for RCO's Fiscal Data Collection Sheet</li> <li>• Allow indirect costs</li> </ul>

# Section 1: Introduction

---

## In this section, you'll learn about:

- ✓ The program goals
- ✓ The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
- ✓ Where to get more information
- ✓ Grant process and timeline

## Recreational Trails Program

Every 6 years, Congress schedules passage of the nation's surface transportation bill. Since 1991, this massive funding authorization law has included provisions for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP).

### Program Goals

RTP is a federal assistance program to help states provide and maintain recreational trails for both motorized and nonmotorized uses, including walking, hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and off-road motorized vehicle driving, including off-road motorcycling, and all-terrain and four-wheel vehicle riding.

Each state develops its own procedures to solicit and select projects for funding in response to their recreational trail needs. In Washington State, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board has chosen to use RTP money to reduce the backlog of deferred maintenance on recreational trails that provide a backcountry experience.

To determine the presence of a "backcountry experience," consider:

- The project's setting, which does not need to be pristine, but should be predominately natural. A backcountry experience can be found in an urban area.
- The extent to which the user will experience the natural environment as opposed to seeing or hearing evidence of human development and activity.

RTP supports trails used for:

- 4x4 and light truck driving
- All-terrain vehicle and utility task vehicle riding
- Cycling
- Horseback riding and pack animal activities
- Hiking and pedestrians<sup>1</sup>
- Motorcycling
- Mountain biking
- Non-motorized snow trail activities
- Snowmobiling
- Water trails

### About the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board was created in 1964 by a vote of the citizens of the state of Washington. The board is a governor-appointed board composed of five citizens and the directors (or designees) of three state agencies – Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources, and Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission.

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) supports the board. RCO is a state agency that manages multiple grant programs to create outdoor recreation opportunities, protect the best of the state's wildlife habitat, farmland, and forest; help return salmon from near extinction. In Washington, the board administers RTP grants in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration. Many of the regulations governing this program are prescribed by the federal government.

### Not a Hearings Board

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board's role is to award grants and *not* to act as a hearings board that rules on land use issues. The board's intent is that all proposals, to the extent possible meet the following criteria:

- Are the outcome of a public process in which all interests have had an opportunity to be heard.
- Have resulted from a community-supported decision to submit the application.
- Are ready for implementation.
- Will ensure that maximum benefit is gained from the grant.

---

<sup>1</sup>Note: Wheelchair use by mobility-impaired people, whether operated manually or powered, constitutes pedestrian, non-motorized trail use.

The board's grant allocation meeting must not be the first public meeting in which interested parties have a chance to express views on a project.

## Who Makes Decisions

The board makes the final decisions although some decisions it has delegated to the agency director.

## Board Decisions

The following list summarizes many project decisions that are made by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board in a public meeting or by a subcommittee of the board. Each is in accord with statutes, rules, and board policies.

- Initial grant approval.
- A project cost increase of more than 10 percent of the project total in the project agreement for board-funded projects. Cost increases are allowed only in certain grant programs. Review the cost increase information in this manual for more details.
- A "conversion" that changes the project site or how the site is used from that described in the project agreement and "Deed of Right" or "Assignment of Rights." See *Manual 7, Long-Term Obligations* for more information about conversions.
- A significant reduction in the project's scope after receiving a grant. Typically, the board will make decisions about scope reductions if the RCO director thinks the project's evaluation score would have been different with the reduced scope. Not included are changes that do not modify significantly the way the public uses a facility, the intended opportunity, or restoration objective funded.
- Changes in policy; for example, establishing new grant limits or eligible expenditures.
- Time extensions beyond 4 years of the initial grant award. Maintenance and education projects are limited to 2 years.

## Director Decisions

The RCO director, or designee, makes many project decisions based on rules and board policies. The range of decisions includes authorizing payments to approving cost increases to terminating projects.

A project sponsor may request that the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board reconsider a decision made by the director. To request reconsideration, the project

sponsor must send a letter to the board chair at least 60 calendar days before a board meeting. The request is added to the board's meeting agenda and the project sponsor then may address the board at the meeting. The board's decision is final.

## Manual Authority

Authority for this program is found in the federal Recreational Trails Program Guidance, the Revised Code of Washington 42.56.040 of the Public Records Act and Washington Administrative Code Chapter 286.

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board adopted these policies in a public meeting and the RCO director approved the manual under the authority granted in Washington Administrative Code 286-04-060.

This manual provides basic information on procedures and policies used by RCO to administer this program. Authority for the policies was provided by the Governor of Washington and federal legislation.<sup>2</sup>

## Where to Get Information

Recreation and Conservation Office  
Natural Resources Building  
1111 Washington Street  
Olympia, WA 98501  
E-mail: [info@rco.wa.gov](mailto:info@rco.wa.gov)

Telephone: (360) 902-3000  
FAX: (360) 902-3026  
TTD: (360) 902-1996  
Web site: [www.rco.wa.gov](http://www.rco.wa.gov)

### *Mailing Address*

PO Box 40917  
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

RCO grant managers are available to answer questions about this manual and grant program. Please feel free to call.

## Other Grant Manuals You Will Need

These manuals are available on RCO's Web site, [www.rco.wa.gov](http://www.rco.wa.gov). Each can be made available in an alternative formats.

- *Manual 4, Development Projects* at [www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/Manual\\_4.pdf](http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/Manual_4.pdf)

---

<sup>2</sup>The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act ([www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/)) reauthorized the Recreational Trails Program for Federal fiscal years 2016 through 2020 as a set-aside of funds from the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside ([www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_alternatives/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/)) under Surface Transportation Block Grant Program ([www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/stp/160307.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/stp/160307.cfm)).

- *Manual 7, Long-term Obligations* at [www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/Manual\\_7.pdf](http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/Manual_7.pdf)
- *Manual 8, Reimbursements* at [www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/Manual\\_8-reimbursement.pdf](http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/Manual_8-reimbursement.pdf)

## Federal Program Information

Federal Highways Administration Recreational Trails Program Guidance at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/guidance/index.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/guidance/index.cfm)

## Federal Rules

For all projects funded with federal funds or other grants that are used as match to a federal source, grant administration is governed by Part 200—Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, which can be found online at [www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=6fe24c76004f565cdfd8cef80053ab59&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=6fe24c76004f565cdfd8cef80053ab59&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5).

RCO requires additional applicant and application information from applicants with grant proposals that may be awarded federal funds, or be subject to federal grant requirements

## Nondiscrimination

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board and RCO activities are intended to follow state and federal guidelines for nondiscrimination. If you believe that this goal is not being met, express concern to RCO, or the Office of Civil Rights, Federal Highway Administration, 400 7<sup>th</sup> Street S.W., Room 4132, Washington, D.C. 20590.

## Grant Process and Timeline

RCO offers grants in even-numbered years, in conjunction with the state budget. The grant process, from application to grant award, spans 7 months, and is outlined below. While the order of the steps in this process remains consistent, visit the RCO Web site for precise dates.

## Even-numbered Years

**Workshops.** RCO conducts workshops (usually as an online meeting) in the winter or early spring to provide information about the grant programs offered that year.

**Entering Applications.** Applicants log into PRISM Online and select the “Get Started/Start a New Application” button to enter grant application information. RCO uses this information to assign an outdoor grants manager. This manager guides applicants

through the process, reviews application materials, helps determine whether proposals are eligible, and may visit the project site to discuss site-specific details.

**Applications Due.** Applications are due in early November of even-numbered years. The application includes the data entered into PRISM and all required attachments. Applicants should “submit” the application before the deadline. The “Check Application for Errors” button on the “Submit Application” screen will indicate which pages are incomplete. Incomplete applications and applications received after the deadline will be disqualified unless RCO’s director has approved a late submission in advance. Applicants must follow the requirements in the “Applicant’s To-Do List” online at <http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/CheckLists/RTP.pdf>.

**Technical Reviews.** Grants managers review the applications to ensure they are eligible, identify any issues of concern, and provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal. Applicants must complete all modifications and resubmit the application by the technical completion deadline.

**Board Submits Biennial Budget Request.** The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board submits to the Governor a recommended funding amount for the next biennium.

## Odd-numbered Years

**Technical Completion Deadline.** RCO establishes a technical completion deadline by which applications must be in their final form. After this date, applicants will not be able to make any further changes. RCO will score applicable evaluation criteria as of this date.

**Project Evaluations – A Written Process.** The RTP Advisory Committee reviews each evaluation packet and the applicant’s written responses to the evaluation questions and scores each proposal against a set of criteria approved by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.

**Post-Evaluation Conference.** After project evaluations, RCO staff tabulates the scores and shares the results with the advisory committee. The committee discusses the preliminary ranked lists and the application and evaluation processes. The public may join this advisory committee conference call; however, to ensure a fair and equitable process; guests may not testify. Shortly after the conference call, staff posts the preliminary ranked lists on RCO’s Web site at [www.rco.wa.gov/grants/eval\\_results.shtml](http://www.rco.wa.gov/grants/eval_results.shtml). The resulting ranked lists of projects are the basis for the funding recommendations to the board.

**Legislature Approves the Capital Budget.** When it develops the state capital budget, the Legislature approves funding authority for RTP.

**Proof of Matching Funds.** Applicants must provide proof of the availability of matching funds by the match certification deadline, which is at least 1 calendar month before board approval of funding.<sup>3</sup>

**Board Approves Funding.** After the Legislature and Governor approve the capital budget, the board approves the lists of projects and the final grant awards,<sup>4</sup> in an open public meeting after considering the recommendations of the director, advisory committee, written public comments submitted before the meeting, and public testimony at the meeting. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to attend.

**Pre-agreement Materials.** After grant awards, applicants have 2 calendar months<sup>5</sup> to submit pre-agreement documents (checklist provided by grants managers.) RCO staff then prepares and issues the grant contracts, called project agreements. Applicants must return the signed agreements 3 calendar months.<sup>6</sup> Once the agreements are signed, the applicants, now referred to as project sponsors, may begin their projects, per the terms of the project agreements. Each agreement will be written and monitored for compliance by RCO staff. See *Manual 7, Long-term Obligations* for more information.

**Successful Applicants' Workshop.** After the board approves funding, RCO hosts a workshop for successful grant applicants. This workshop covers:

- Project sponsor responsibility for compliance with the terms of the project agreement.
- Amending the project agreement to address project changes, time extensions, scope modifications, special conditions, and cost increases.
- Development and restoration, including construction plans and specifications, barrier-free design requirements, cultural resources, and bid procedures.
- Project implementation, including meeting milestones, permitting, submitting progress reports, inspections, valuing donations, using RCO's online resources for understanding billing procedures, project close-out, and long-term compliance.

## Ongoing

**Project Implementation.** Grant recipients must complete projects promptly. To help ensure reasonable and timely project completion, accountability, and the proper use of funds, applicants will do the following:

---

<sup>3</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040(3)

<sup>4</sup>Pending Federal Highway Administration's approval of funds.

<sup>5</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040(1)(d)

<sup>6</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040(1)(e)

- Submit only projects that will be completed within the allowable time for grant awards:
  - Development grants: Up to 4 years
  - Maintenance grants and education grants: Up to 2 years
- Provide assurances that the project can be completed within a reasonable time frame, which does not exceed the implementation period approved by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.
- Develop milestones for project implementation that does not exceed the time allotted for each project type.
- Begin project implementation quickly and aggressively to show measurable progress towards meeting project milestones.
- Submit progress reports at intervals as designated by the RCO project agreement.

RCO may terminate projects that do not meet critical milestones established in the project agreements.

**Project Completion.** When a project is completed, sponsors have 90 days to submit the final bill, final report, and supporting documents needed to close the project. If the bill and documentation are not submitted within 6 months of the end date within the agreement, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board may terminate the project without payment.

# Section 2: Policies

---

## In this section, you'll learn about:

- ✓ Eligible applicants, project types, and costs
- ✓ Ineligible projects and costs
- ✓ Control of the Land
- ✓ Environmental Requirements
- ✓ Requirements and Other Things to Know
- ✓ Capital Equipment Policies
- ✓ Project Area Stewardship and Ongoing Obligations<sup>7</sup>

## Eligible Applicants

Grants may be made to:

- Local agencies (cities, towns, counties, port districts, park and recreation districts, etc.).
- Federal agencies.
- State agencies.
- Native American tribes.
- Nonprofit organizations meeting the following criteria:
  - Registered with the State of Washington as a nonprofit.
  - Name a successor at the time of any change in organizational status (for example, dissolution), as required by state law.
  - Has been active in trail related activities for at least 3 years.

---

<sup>7</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79A.25, Washington Administrative Code 286, RCO's project agreement standard terms and conditions, and *Manual 7, Funded Projects*.

- Does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, income, race, religion.

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board's intent is that nonprofits maintain nonprofit status. Because this is not always possible, a successor organization must agree in writing to assume any ongoing project responsibilities should the original organization's status change. The responsibilities are identified in RCO's grant agreement with the project sponsor. A qualified successor is any party eligible to apply for RTP funds and capable of complying with contract responsibilities. The board recommends, whenever possible, a government agency be sought as a successor. A successor need not be named for maintenance or education projects.

## **Legal Opinion for First-Time Applicants**

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board requires all organizations wishing to apply for a grant for the first time to submit a legal opinion that the applicant is eligible to do all of the activities below. The legal opinion is required only once to establish eligibility.

- Receive and expend public funds including funds from the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.
- Contract with the State of Washington and/or the United States of America.
- Meet any statutory definitions required for Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grant programs.
- Acquire and manage interests in real property for conservation or outdoor recreation purposes.
- Develop and/or provide stewardship for structures or facilities eligible under board rules or policies.
- Undertake planning activities incidental thereto.
- Commit the applicant to statements made in any grant proposal.

## **Eligible Project Types**

This section lists projects and costs that are eligible for funding. Regardless of whether or not a previous proposal was awarded an RTP grant, if there is a continuing need, the applicant may reapply for funding.

To be eligible, all project proposals must be directly associated with an existing recreational trail.

Category	Project Types	Examples
General	Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of short, new “linking” trails.</li> <li>• Construction of new trailside or trailhead facilities.</li> </ul>
	Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance, renovation, and restoration of existing trails that includes clearing, brushing, maintenance and restoration of trail bridges, minor re-routes, or providing signs along a trail.</li> <li>• State priority is reducing “backlogged” maintenance on trails that provide a backcountry experience.</li> </ul>
Education	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing education to trail users about safety and environmental protections.</li> <li>• Development and distribution of brochures, flyers, and kiosk information.</li> </ul>

## Development Projects

Development projects are those that result in the construction of or work resulting in new elements, including but not limited to structures, facilities, and/or materials to enhance outdoor recreation resources. Development projects are for the construction of *new* trailside and trailhead facilities<sup>8</sup> for recreational trails and the development of short “trail linkages” that connect two or more trail systems together. Trailside and trailhead facilities should have a direct relationship with an existing recreational trail; a highway rest area or visitor center is not an appropriate use of funds.

Development projects must conform to policies and procedures found in *RCO Manual 4, Development Projects*.

### Examples of Eligible Development Projects

- Construction of a new trailhead for an existing trail.
- Construction of a new trail linking two existing trails by constructing a new, 1-mile connecting trail.

### Examples of Ineligible Development Projects

- Building a new trail that departs from an existing trailhead.
- Feasibility, master or site planning studies.
- Stand-alone engineering and permitting projects.

<sup>8</sup>Trailside and trailhead facilities mean trail components or associated facilities that serve the purpose and safe use of a recreational trail and may include, but not be limited to, the following: Drainage, crossings, stabilization, parking, signs, controls, shelters, and water, sanitary, and access facilities.

- Maintenance to an existing trail.

## Eligible Development Costs

Work types are distinct scopes of work within a project. Costs for the following work types are eligible for reimbursement:

- Architecture and engineering
- Buildings and structures (such as warming hut, sand equipment storage)
- Campgrounds
- Environmental compliance
- Fencing and gates, including barrier rocks and bollards
- Park furniture (benches, bike racks, trash cans, etc.)
- Stock facilities (corrals, highlines, hitching posts, loading ramps, water troughs, etc.)
- Landscaping, including irrigation, trees, shrubs, etc.
- Parking
- Permits
- Restrooms
- Shelters
- Signs
- Site preparation
- Trails, including retaining walls, switchbacks, bridges, culverts, puncheon, replanting, trestle conversion, turnpikes, water bars, etc.
- Viewpoints
- Water access facilities

Information about reimbursement limits for architecture, engineering, and administrative costs is in *Manual 4, Development Projects*.

## Maintenance Projects

Maintenance projects are those that maintain existing areas and facilities through repairs and upkeep for the benefit of outdoor recreationists. The projects may be interpreted broadly to include any kind of maintenance, restoration, rehabilitation, or relocation of a trailside facility, trailhead, or trail. Except for snow-based winter recreation trails, maintenance projects shall be allowed only at trails, facilities and areas that are currently managed and in use.

“Rehabilitation” means extensive repair needed to bring a facility up to standards suitable for public use. “Relocations” and “re-routes” mean minor changes to the trail footprint to avoid wash-outs, landslides, or to improve environmental conditions.

Maintenance projects must also conform to the accessibility policies and procedures found in *RCO Manual 4, Development Projects*.

Applicants for maintenance projects may request a grant for up to 2 consecutive years.

### **Examples of Eligible Maintenance Activities**

- Rehabilitation, brushing, and clearing existing trails and trailhead facilities
- Re-grading within the footprints of existing trail and/or parking areas
- Striping or re-striping of existing trail facilities
- Replacement, renovation, or rehabilitation of existing signs, kiosks, and markers associated with a recreational trail
- Alterations to existing facilities in order to make them accessible to people of different abilities
- Winter snow trail grooming
- Repair or rehabilitation of existing drainage facilities
- Rehabilitation or replacement of bridges using existing footings, embankments, and piers
- Resurfacing or improving existing trail facility surfaces
- Installation of fencing, guardrails, retaining walls, and berms
- Minor trail reroutes on trails to ensure safe passage due to natural events such as wash-outs and slides
- Landscaping of existing facilities
- Permanent installation or rehabilitation of ancillary facilities (such as water fountains, restrooms, bike racks, lighting, public seating and picnic benches, tent platforms, bear-resistant lockers and trash receptacles)

### **Example of Ineligible Maintenance Activities**

- Re-opening a closed trail
- Projects to purchase supplies and equipment without performing trail maintenance
- Operational costs and activities such as litter pick up, cleaning restrooms, garbage service, septic service, etc.

## Eligible Maintenance Costs

When directly associated with an existing recreational trail, costs for the following activities *are* eligible for reimbursement. Information about reimbursement limits for administrative costs is in *Manual 4, Development Projects*.

- Communications (advertising, postage, printing, etc.)
- Equipment repair and maintenance
- Liability insurance to cover volunteers
- Labor, including salaries and benefits
- Materials
- Noxious weed removal and decontamination facilities to prevent the spread of noxious weeds
- Professional services
- Purchase, rental, and leasing trail construction and maintenance equipment<sup>9</sup>
- Supplies, including small maintenance tools and minor equipment<sup>10</sup> and personal protective equipment
- Transportation or travel (mileage, per diem)

## Education Projects

Education projects are those that provide information, education, and outreach programs for the benefit of outdoor recreationists. These grants may be used for the operation of educational programs to promote safety or environmental protection. Applicants for ongoing education projects may request funding for up to 2 consecutive years.

### Examples of Eligible Education Projects

- Development and operation of trail safety education programs

---

<sup>9</sup>Equipment can include such items as mowers and trail grooming machines provided the equipment is used primarily to construct and maintain recreational trails. This does not include the purchase of equipment to be used for purposes unrelated to trails. For example, a mower purchased under this program must be used primarily for trail and trailside maintenance, and not to maintain open lawn areas or sports fields.

<sup>10</sup>This covers individual items costing less than \$1,000 per item such as small maintenance tools, minor equipment, forms, maps, gravel, training, and other goods and services needed for the project.

- Development and operation of trail-related environmental education programs
- Production of trail-related education materials, whether on information displays, in print, video, audio, interactive computer displays, etc.

### Examples of Ineligible Education Projects

- Law enforcement
- Creating a small, roadside area (parking, fencing, restrooms, drinking fountain, etc.) where signs and an interpretive trail will convey a trail safety or environmental protection message. Only the signs are eligible. The other elements may qualify as a separate RTP development project.

### Eligible Education Costs

When closely associated with an existing trail, costs for the following activities are eligible for reimbursement. Information about reimbursement limits for administrative costs is in *Manual 4, Development Projects*. \*Costs must be less than \$1,000.

Eligible costs for education activities include:

- Communication
- Professional services such as graphic design, recording, production, etc.
- Salaries and benefits
- Supplies\*
- Training\*
- Travel and transportation\*

## Other Types of Projects

### Phased Projects

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board recommends that applicants discuss phasing very expensive or complex projects with RCO staff. Sponsors may phase larger proposals into two or more “stand alone” projects. Phased projects are subject to the following:

- Approval of any single phase is limited to that phase. No endorsement or approval is given or implied toward future phases.
- Each phase must be submitted as a separate application.

- Each phase must stand on its merits as a viable or complete recreation experience and is not dependent on the completion of future phases or work.

Progress and sponsor performance on earlier phases is considered by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board when making decisions on current project proposals.

## **Joint and Cooperative Projects**

Some projects may have two or more sponsors. For example, a joint project could be where one agency owns the property to be developed or maintained by another, or where two or more agencies team up to provide financial support for a project. Applicants with joint or cooperative projects are jointly responsible for implementing the project and in addition to the project agreement, must adhere to the policy for Joint and Cooperative Projects in *Manual 4, Development Projects*.

## **Eligible Costs**

Only allowable costs may be included in your project. A cost is allowable if it is reasonable, necessary to complete the approved scope of work, eligible in the grant program, and incurred during the period of performance set forth in the project agreement. Costs outside the period of performance may be allowed. See "Pre-agreement Costs" below. A cost is considered reasonable if the work or materials and the cost reflect what a prudent person would have spent under the circumstances.

## **Pre-agreement Costs**

RCO will pay only for work performed after project agreements have been signed by both RCO and project sponsors with one exception. Expenses, such as preliminary designs, environmental assessments, construction plans and specifications, cultural resource surveys, and permits may be eligible for reimbursement if approved in advance by the Federal Highway Administration.<sup>11</sup> For more details, see RCO Manual 4, available on RCO's Web site at [www.rco.wa.gov/doc\\_pages/manuals\\_by\\_number.shtml](http://www.rco.wa.gov/doc_pages/manuals_by_number.shtml).

If construction begins before the execution of a project agreement and before the adoption of required environmental decision documents, the entire project will be disqualified.

Note: There are no eligible pre-agreement costs for maintenance projects.

---

<sup>11</sup>Federal Highway Administration must provide written approval per 2 Code of Federal Regulations 200.458. Costs are limited to those incurred no more than 18 months before federal approval of the project.

## Indirect Costs

RCO allows agency indirect costs for all projects that receive federal funding. You are required to attach the RCO Fiscal Data Collection Sheet before you can submit your application. Start filling out this form early and work with your accounting staff to estimate your indirect costs.

## Capital Equipment Costs

Capital equipment purchases are eligible in maintenance and education projects and may include equipment used to maintain recreational trails and trailheads. Grant recipients must maintain records of all capital equipment purchased and comply with RCO's equipment management policies (see page 26).

All-terrain vehicle	Power wheelbarrow
Backhoe	Skid steer
Brush hog	String trimmer
Bulldozer	Tractor or trail builder
Chain saw	Trailer
Equipment attachments such as blades, bucket, loader backhoe, snowplow, stump grinder, or winch	Truck
Excavator	Utility task vehicle

## Ineligible Projects and Costs

### Ineligible Projects

- New trail development not directly related to an existing recreational trail
- Land acquisition or condemnation of any kind
- Those facilitating motorized use on national forest or Bureau of Land Management land unless:
  - The land is not designated "Wilderness."
  - Construction is consistent with the management direction in Forest Service or Bureau plans.

- Facilitating motorized use on, or access to, recreational trails on which motorized use was prohibited or had not occurred as of May 1, 1991.
- Planning projects, including feasibility studies, master plans, and wildlife impact studies
- Roads and bridges unless specifically designated for recreational trail use and not accessible to or maintained for regular passenger vehicles
- Trails, sidewalks, and other paths that provide an urban experience
- Law enforcement. Commissioned law enforcement officers or rangers may, however, perform certain education activities.
- Those on property bought under a conditional sales contract, unless the project sponsor has title to the property
- Those that severely restrict public use, such as on property with deed provisions that have a significant negative impact on public recreational use of the property. Projects may be on public or private land, but must provide written assurances of public access.

### **Ineligible Costs**

- Costs incurred before the Federal Highway Administration provides signed authorization to proceed.
- Costs incurred before execution of Recreation and Conservation Funding Board project agreement. Planning and environmental compliance costs may be allowed if incurred after the Federal Highway Administration's approval.
- Value of materials, equipment, and services donated to the project sponsor if unsubstantiated. See *Manual 8, Reimbursements* for information about what is needed for a verifiable audit trail.
- Indirect costs for federal agencies (organization operations costs not directly associated with implementing the approved project).
- Ceremonies and entertainment expenses.
- Publicity expenses, except legal requirements for public notice.
- Bonus payments of any kind.
- Taxes for which the organization involved would not have been liable to pay.

- Charges incurred contrary to the policies and practices of the organization involved or of the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.
- The cost of donated materials if their value is not substantiated.
- The value of personal properties, unless specifically approved in advance by RCO's director.
- The value of discounts not taken.
- Appliances, furniture, and utensils.
- Donations or contributions made by the participant, such as to a charitable organization.
- Losses arising from uncollected accounts.
- Charges in excess of the lowest acceptable bid when competitive bidding is required, unless RCO's director authorizes the higher costs, in writing, before the award of a contract.
- Damage judgments arising from developing a facility, whether determined by a judicial decision, arbitration, or otherwise.
- Fines, penalties, interest expenses, deficit and overdraft charges, and losses from uncollectible accounts.
- Costs associated with preparation of the grant application.
- Payments to an equipment replacement fund.
- Routine maintenance of vehicles.

### **Control of the Land**

To protect investments made by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board and to assure public access to those investments, sponsors must have adequate control of project sites to construct, operate, and maintain the areas for the term required by the grant program and project agreement. This "control and tenure" may be through land ownership, a lease, use agreement,<sup>12</sup> easement, or joint-cooperative project agreement approved by RCO. See *Manual 4, Development Projects* for more information. The type of instrument needed depends on the project type, scope of work, and underlying landowner. For example, RCO's landowner agreement for maintenance projects may be

---

<sup>12</sup>Use agreements may not be accepted in all situations. Contact an RCO grants manager for more information.

suitable for applicants with seasonal snow-grooming projects on public lands; however, RCO may require a longer compliance period for maintenance projects that restore or rehabilitate facilities and significantly extends a facilities useful life.

### **Project on Privately Owned Land**

Applicants that develop or restore trails or trail-related facilities on privately owned land must secure easements or other legally binding agreement that ensures public access to the recreational trail improvements funded with RTP assistance. An easement must authorize the recreational trail, assure that the owner of the land will allow or cooperate with activities of the proposed project, and ensure public access to the trail improvements for at least 25 years after project acceptance by RCO.

### **Projects on State-owned Aquatic Lands**

If a project will occur over or in a navigable body of water, an authorization to use state-owned aquatic lands may be needed.

All marine waters are, by definition, navigable, as are portions of rivers influenced by tides. Navigable rivers and lakes are those determined by the judiciary, those bounded by meander lines, or those that could have been used for commerce at the time of statehood. The Department of Natural Resources' aquatic land managers will help the grant applicant determine if the project will fall on state-owned aquatic lands and provide more information on its authorization process. See the land manager coverage map online at [www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/aqr\\_land\\_manager\\_map.pdf](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/aqr_land_manager_map.pdf) for contact information for the Department of Natural Resources aquatic land managers.

If the project is on state-owned aquatic lands, the grant applicant will need to secure a lease or easement to use those lands from the Washington Department of Natural Resources. The lease or easement may take up to a year to receive. RCO requires the executed lease or easement within 60 days after board funding approval to show control and tenure for the site. The lease or easement is required before the project will be placed under agreement, unless RCO's director approves in advance.

The following online resources may be helpful to review:

- *Grant Projects on State-owned Aquatic Lands* at [www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/em\\_fs11\\_018.pdf](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/em_fs11_018.pdf)
- *Leasing State-owned Aquatic Lands* at [www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/em\\_fs11\\_019\\_leasing\\_soal.pdf](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/em_fs11_019_leasing_soal.pdf)
- *Boundaries of State-owned Aquatic Lands* at [www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/aqr\\_aquatic\\_land\\_boundaries.pdf](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/aqr_aquatic_land_boundaries.pdf)

- *Caring for Washington's Nearshore Environments*  
[www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/em\\_fs10\\_001.pdf](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/em_fs10_001.pdf)

## Environmental Requirements

Applicants applying for development or maintenance grants must review and document compliance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other federal environmental laws, regulations, and executive orders. Each project must be reviewed to assure that it does not have a significant impact on the environment. Proof of environmental clearance must be submitted to RCO within 2 months of funding approval and before RCO will issue a project agreement.

## National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Most RTP projects will be classified as categorically excluded from National Environmental Policy Act documentation.<sup>13</sup> However, before beginning any work, applicants and sponsors still are required to obtain all necessary permits, satisfy the State Environmental Policy Act, and comply with all applicable federal environmental regulations, including the National Historic Preservation Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and other state and local environmental requirements.

Projects that 1) have a significant environmental impact; 2) have substantial controversy on environmental grounds; 3) have significant impact on properties protected by Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act or Section 106 of the National Historical Preservation Act; or are inconsistent with any federal, state, or local law, requirement, or administrative determination relating to the environmental aspects of the action are not exempt and are subject to further environmental review. Such projects may not qualify for categorical exclusion and in most instances, are not good candidates for RTP funding.

The Federal Highway Administration will accept federal management agency determinations for National Environmental Policy Act, Section 106, and the Endangered Species Act compliance for projects on lands under the control of that federal agency or requiring an approval action by that agency. RCO's landowner agreement for maintenance projects incorporates that certification for applicants working on federal lands.

## Cultural Resources and the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 USC 470), the Federal Highway Administration must take into account the effects of projects

---

<sup>13</sup>RCO Memorandum of Agreement with Federal Highway Administration  
Page 22

on historic properties and cultural resources. RCO will coordinate with the Federal Highway Administration to review background information on projects and ensure compliance with Section 106. The results of this consultation may require applicants to conduct additional archeological studies as necessary. See the Cultural Resources section in *Manual 4, Development Projects*. This section applies to maintenance projects involving renovation, rehabilitation, restoration, or relocation of trails.

## **Invasive Species**

The Washington Invasive Species Council developed protocols for preventing the spread of invasive species while working in the field. The protocols are on the council's Web site at [www.invasivespecies.wa.gov/council\\_projects/prevention\\_protocols.shtml](http://www.invasivespecies.wa.gov/council_projects/prevention_protocols.shtml)). The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board and the Federal Highway Administration encourage grant recipients to consider how their projects may spread invasive species, and work to reduce that possibility. Invasive species can be spread unintentionally during construction, maintenance, and restoration activities. Here is how it could happen:

- Driving a car or truck to a field site and moving soil embedded with seeds or fragments of invasive plants in the vehicle's tires to another site. New infestations can begin miles away as the seeds and fragments drop off the tires and the undercarriage of the vehicle.
- Moving water or sediment infested with invasive plants, animals, or pathogens via your boots, nets, sampling equipment, or boats from one stream to another.
- Moving weed-infested hay, gravel or dirt to a new site, carrying the weed seeds along with it, during restoration and construction activities. Before long, the seeds germinate, and infest the new site.

The key to preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species on restoration project is twofold: Use materials that are known to be uninfested with invasive plants or animals in the restoration project and ensure equipment is cleaned both before and after construction and restoration. Equipment to clean should include, but not be limited to, footwear, gloves, tools and equipment, and vehicles, trailers, and tires.

## **Sustainability**

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board encourages greater use of sustainable design, practices, and elements in projects. To the board, "sustainability" means to help fund a recreation or conservation project that minimizes impact to the natural environment while maximizing the project's service life.

Sponsors are encouraged to incorporate sustainable design, practices, and elements into the scope of a project. Examples may include use of on-site or recycled materials; native

plants in landscaping; pervious surfacing material for pathways, trails, and parking areas; energy-efficient fixtures; onsite recycling stations; and composting.

## **Requirements and Other Things to Know**

### **Project Agreement**

After approval by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board and Federal Highway Administration, RCO provides the applicant with a project agreement. Once the applicant has signed the agreement, that applicant becomes a sponsor and may begin the project consistent with the agreement and all other RCO policies and procedures.

### **Accessibility**

Facilities or elements<sup>14</sup> constructed with RCO grants and sponsor match are required by law to be accessible regardless of whether there are specific standards adopted in the State Building Code, Americans with Disabilities Act, or Architectural Barriers Act, as amended. Other federal laws, guidelines, and best practices also may apply to achieve accessibility.

RCO encourages sponsors to exceed the minimum accessibility standards and use a design principle that maximizes universal accessibility for all. See *Manual 4, Development Projects* and the RCO Web site for detailed information about how to make your facility meet accessibility requirements. Plans, project applications, cost estimates, and construction drawings must reflect compliance with facility access and signing requirements.

### **Competitive Bid Requirements<sup>15</sup>**

Grant recipients shall follow current state procurement procedures or write their own. When buying things, grant recipients shall provide open and free competition, to the maximum extent practical. Be aware of organizational conflicts of interest. Contractors that develop specifications, requirements, statements of work, invitations for bids, or requests for proposals cannot be hired for the resulting work. Grant recipients receiving federal money also must follow federal laws and regulations. See "Federal Program Requirements" on page 6.

---

<sup>14</sup>A facility is all or any portion of buildings, structures, site improvements, elements, and pedestrian routes or vehicular ways located on site. An element is an architectural or mechanical component of a building, facility, space, or site (2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, Department of Justice, September 15, 2010).

<sup>15</sup>RCO's project agreement standard terms and conditions, Section 16 or 18 (U.S. Forest Service agreement) Revised Code of Washington 46.09.530(2)

## **Buy America**

Buy America requirements apply to all steel and iron permanently incorporated in a funded project. This includes the purchase of capital equipment such as trail grooming vehicles and mechanized maintenance equipment primarily constructed with steel or iron. For more information, see the Federal Highway Administration's Buy America Construction Program Guide at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/construction/cqit/buyam.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/construction/cqit/buyam.cfm).

## **Youth Crews**

RCO encourages all sponsors to use qualified, youth conservation or service corps for construction and maintenance of recreational trails in this program. For RTP<sup>16</sup> "qualified youth service or conservation corps" are those that are defined at 42 U.S.C. 12572(a)(2), which refers to the "Healthy Futures Corps," which is designed to identify and meet unmet health needs in communities, and 42 U.S.C. 12656(c)(3), which refers to "qualified urban youth corps," which means any program established by a state or local government or by a nonprofit organization that meets all the following criteria:

- Is capable of offering meaningful, full-time, productive work for individuals between the ages of 16 and 25, inclusive, in an urban or public works or transportation setting.
- Gives participants a mix of work experience, basic and life skills, education, training, and support services.
- Provides participants with the opportunity to develop citizenship values and skills through service to their communities and the United States.

## **Fees and Income**

User or other fees may be charged for areas and facilities developed with RTP grants. See *Manual 4, Development Projects* and Washington Administrative Code 286-13-110 for more information.

## **You Have to Pay First**

RCO pays grants through reimbursement. You may request reimbursement only after you have paid your employees and vendors. RCO does not provide money before expenses are paid.

---

<sup>16</sup>MAP-21 § 1524

## **Audits**

All records relevant to projects funded by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board must be on file with the grant recipient and are subject to audit by the state and inspection by RCO. If the auditor's inspection of the records discloses any charges incorrectly claimed and reimbursed, cash restitution of the incorrect amount must be made to the board.

## **Capital Equipment Policies**

The sponsor shall use the capital equipment in the maintenance or education project or program for which it was acquired for as long as needed, whether or not support continues through other grants or from the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.

## **Equipment Management**

A sponsor must maintain a record of all capital equipment purchased under a Recreation and Conservation Funding Board agreement. The sponsor, not the board or RCO, always takes title. This inventory record begins with the list of any capital equipment purchases proposed in the project application. Upon board approval of the project, this listing is entered into the project agreement.

The sponsor's capital equipment records shall include the following:

- A description of the equipment.
- Manufacturer's serial number (model, stock, vehicle identification, or other unique number securely affixed to the equipment).
- Source of the equipment, including grant or other agreement number.
- Acquisition date and cost.
- Percentage of sponsor participation in the cost of the project or program for which the equipment was acquired as specified in the project agreement.
- Location, use, and condition of the equipment and the date the information was reported.
- Ultimate disposition data, including date of disposal and sale price, including the method used to determine current fair market value when a sponsor compensates the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board for its share, if sold.

The sponsor shall conduct a physical inventory of equipment and reconcile the results with previous records at least once every 2 years. This should continue until final

liquidation has been made, and inventory records must be maintained just as other records for audit purposes. Any differences in this physical inspection and those shown in the accounting records shall be investigated by the sponsor to determine the causes of the difference. In connection with the inventory, the sponsor shall verify the existence, current use, and continued need for the equipment. A detailed written report on the results of this inventory shall be provided to RCO upon request.

The sponsor shall institute a control system to ensure adequate safeguards to prevent loss, damage, or theft of the equipment. Any loss, damage, or theft shall be investigated and fully documented. The sponsor shall promptly notify RCO of any such occurrence.

The sponsor shall establish adequate maintenance procedures to keep the equipment in good condition.

When the sponsor disposes of the capital equipment (see below), procedures that provide for fair competition, to the extent practicable, and result in the highest possible return, shall be established.

In an ongoing maintenance program, grant recipients may trade-in or sell equipment and use the proceeds to offset the cost of purchasing new equipment used for allowable RTP program activities. In this situation, the equipment becomes part of the sponsor's reportable equipment inventory and the sponsor must continue to follow the equipment management procedures in this manual for the new equipment, until liquidated.

## Equipment Liquidation

When the sponsor discontinues use of the capital equipment (assets) for the purpose for which it was funded, the following liquidation procedures shall apply:

- **The sponsor wishes to retain the equipment.** When the sponsor no longer needs the equipment as provided above but wishes to retain it in the inventory, it may be used for other activities as follows:
  - A) Original cost of \$1,000 or less: The sponsor may use the capital equipment for other activities without reimbursement to RCO, or sell the capital equipment and return the proceeds to RCO.
  - B) Original cost of more than \$1,000: The sponsor compensates RCO the amount computed by applying the percentage of board participation in the cost of the original project, as specified in the project agreement, to the current fair market value of the equipment.
- **The sponsor does not wish to retain the equipment.** If the sponsor has no need for the equipment but it still has value, the sponsor shall request disposition instructions from RCO.

- A) If so instructed, the sponsor shall sell the equipment and reimburse RCO an amount computed by applying to the sales proceeds the percentage of Recreation and Conservation Funding Board participation in the cost of the original project as recorded in the signed project agreement. The sponsor may retain from the board share an amount that accurately reflects any selling or handling expenses, so long as these expenses do not exceed \$100 or 10 percent of the sale amount, whichever is less.
  - B) RCO may instruct the sponsor to transfer title to a third party named by RCO who is eligible under existing statutes. In such cases, the sponsor will be compensated in the amount equal to its share of the current fair market value of the equipment.
- **The equipment has no value.** This occurs when the equipment has lost value or has out lived its useful life, not due to lack of maintenance. The sponsor may notify RCO and if RCO concurs, the equipment will be removed from equipment inventory reporting requirements.

### Project Area Stewardship and Ongoing Obligations<sup>17</sup>

An RCO grant comes with long-term obligations to maintain and protect the project area<sup>18</sup> after a project is complete. The long-term obligations are in RCO's project agreement standard terms and conditions, the project agreement, and *Manual 7, Long-Term Obligations*. A template of the project agreement can be found on RCO's Web site at [www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/SampleProjAgreement.pdf](http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/SampleProjAgreement.pdf). The ongoing obligation for RTP development projects is at least 25 years from the date RCO accepts the project as complete.

RCO recognizes that changes occur over time and that some facilities may become obsolete or the land needed for something else. The law discourages casual discards of land and facilities by ensuring that grant recipients replace the lost value when changes or conversions of use take place.

In general, the project area funded with an RCO grant must remain dedicated to the use as originally funded, such as outdoor recreation, habitat protection, farmland preservation, or salmon recovery purposes, for as long as defined in the project agreement. For development and restoration projects, the period is determined by the type of control and tenure provided for the project.

---

<sup>17</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79A.25, Washington Administrative Code 286, RCO's project agreement standard terms and conditions, and *Manual 7, Funded Projects*.

<sup>18</sup>Project area is the defined geographic area where the project occurs and is described in the project's boundary map.

A conversion occurs when the project area acquired, developed, or restored with RCO grant funding is used for purposes other than what it was funded for originally. See RCO *Manual 7, Long-Term Obligations* for a discussion of conversions and the process required for replacement of the public investment. Non-compliance with the long-term obligations for an RCO grant may jeopardize an organization's ability to obtain future RCO grants.

After a project is complete (that is, after RCO's final reimbursement and acceptance of the project), RCO documents that were signed by the sponsor continue to govern the project area described in the boundary map for which funds have been granted.

Changes may be made only with the prior approval of the board. If a compliance issue arises, RCO staff works with sponsors to resolve the issue. Unresolved, identified issues could result in restrictions on applying for or receiving future grants.

### **Public Disclosure Rules**

RCO records and files are public records that are subject to the Public Records Act.<sup>19</sup> More information about the RCO's disclosure practices is available on the Web site at [www.rco.wa.gov/about/public\\_records.shtml](http://www.rco.wa.gov/about/public_records.shtml).

---

<sup>19</sup>Revised Code of Washington 42.56

# Section 3: Money Matters

---

## In this section, you'll learn about:

- ✓ Matching resources
- ✓ Match requirements
- ✓ Types of match
- ✓ Grant limits
- ✓ User fees and charges
- ✓ Records and reimbursement
- ✓ Funding priorities

## Matching Resources

Match is the project sponsor's contribution to a project. Most Recreation and Conservation Funding Board programs require sponsors to match grants to meet statutory requirements, demonstrate a local commitment to the project, and make funds available to a greater number of projects.

Match requirement: 20% minimum match required for all RTP projects.

## Eligible Match

A sponsor's matching share may include one or a combination of the following:

- Appropriations and cash
- Bonds – council or voter
- Corrections labor (see "Types of Match" section below)
- Donations – the value of using cash, equipment, labor, materials, or services (see "Types of Match" section below)
- Force account – the value of using sponsor's equipment, labor, or materials (see "Types of Match" section below)

- Grants – federal,<sup>20</sup> state, local, and private (see “Types of Match” section below)
- Local impact and mitigation fees (see “Types of Match” section below)
- Proceeds of a letter of credit or binding loan commitment
- Other Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grants that meet the requirements outlined below.

### **Not Allowed as Match**

- Costs that are not eligible for grant assistance or included in the project agreement.
- Costs that are not necessary or an integral part of the project scope.
- Costs that are double counted. A cost incurred by a project sponsor on a previous project that already has been paid cannot be used as a match or expenditure on another RCO project.
- A donation toward a project for one federal program cannot be double counted for another federal program.
- Existing sponsor assets such as real property or developments.
- Costs associated with meeting a mitigation requirement for another project or action (e.g., permit requirement, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing, Habitat Conservation Plan, legal settlement, etc.).

### **Match Requirements**

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grants are intended to be the last source of funding for a project. In other words, before the board awards the grant, the required match must be secured so the project can move forward. Board grants also are intended to supplement the existing capacity of a sponsor, not to replace existing funding that would have been used for a project without grant funding.

All matching resources must be all of the following:

- An integral and necessary part of the approved project.
- Part of the work identified in the application and project agreement.

---

<sup>20</sup>Sometimes, funds from other federal programs may be credited as a non-federal share. See Title 23 United States Code, §206. Recreational trails program f. (Federal Share).

- For eligible work types or elements.
- Committed to the project.

RCO rules governing projects apply to the grant applicant's match.

In many grant programs, particularly those where match is not required, the Recreation and Conservation Funding board adopted evaluation criteria to encourage applicants to contribute matching shares. This typically is reflected in the criteria when points are given for non-governmental contributions or for exceeding the minimum match requirements. Applicants should carefully review the evaluation instrument to determine if this applies to their projects.

Except for grant applications submitted within the same biennium, matching resources or board grant funds committed in one board-funded project must not be used as match in another board-funded project.

### **Minimum Match Amount: All Applicants**

Applicants must provide a minimum match of 20 percent for each RTP project.

Except for federal or state agencies or Native American tribes, at least 10 percent of the total project cost must be provided in the form of a non-state, non-federal contribution.

### **Match Requirements for Federal Agencies**

- For federal match requirements, see Title 23, United States Code.<sup>21</sup>
- For each federal project, support from the Secretary of Transportation (includes RTP), will not exceed 80 percent of the total cost.
- The share attributable to the Secretary *and* a federal agency shall not exceed 95 percent of the cost.

### **Match Availability and Certification**

To help ensure Recreation and Conservation Funding Board projects are ready for implementation upon approval, applicants must have matching funds available for expenditure before the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board approves funding. All applicants are required to sign and submit a certification of match form to ensure their project is included in the funding recommendation. Applicants are advised to plan ahead for projects whose match depends on citizen votes or passage of ballot measures.

---

<sup>21</sup>Title 23 United States Code, §206. Recreational trails program, f. (Federal Share)

This certification is due at least 30 days before Recreation and Conservation Funding Board action.<sup>22</sup> The forms and deadlines for certifying match are on the RCO Web site.

RCO may declare projects ineligible if there is no guarantee that matching funds are available and those projects may be passed over in favor of projects with the match in place. Such decisions are based on the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board's confidence in the applicant's ability to have the match in place when required.

When another Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grant is used as match, the "certification of match" will be tentative, conditioned on receipt of the other grant or on the sponsor providing the match from other resources. The applicant will have 6 months from the time of the first grant award to certify the match requirements of that grant. To prevent a backlog of unspent grants, the sponsor must finish the project by the earliest completion date of the two grants.

## **Types of Match**

### **Donations and Force Account**

Donations are eligible only as matching funds and are not reimbursable. This means RCO will not pay more than the sponsor's out of pocket expenses. Valuing donations of equipment, labor, and material is discussed in *Manual 8, Reimbursements*. RCO strongly encourages applicants to secure written confirmation of all donations you plan to use as match and attach the donation letters to your PRISM Online application.

Force account refers to use of a sponsor's staff (labor), equipment, or materials. These contributions are treated as expenditures.

### **Corrections Labor**

In determining the value of corrections or convict labor for a project, only the actual out-of-pocket cost of paid labor is allowable. Corrections or convict labor is not volunteer labor or donated labor that may be valued at fair market value.

### **Other Grants**

In some cases, a sponsor may use funds awarded from a separate grant program as its match. Other grants are eligible as long as the purposes are similar and grant sources do not restrict or diminish the recreational use, availability, or value of the project area.

The eligibility of other federal funds used as a match is governed by federal requirements.

---

<sup>22</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040 (3)

Applicants must clearly identify in the grant application all grants to be used as match. RCO will help you determine if the source is compatible with Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grants.

## RCO Grants as Match

Another Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grant may be used to help meet the match requirements if all of the following criteria are met:

- The grants are not from the same Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grant program.
- Only activities or work types eligible in both grant programs are counted as the match.
- Each grant is evaluated independently and on its own merits, as if the match were coming from elsewhere.
- The sponsor (except federal or state agencies or Native American tribes) provides at 10 percent of the total project cost in the form of a non-state, non-federal contribution.

For evaluation scoring purpose, an RCO grant used as match will not count toward the award of matching share points.<sup>23</sup>

## Mitigation Funds as Match

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board allows use of impact fees and mitigation cash payments, such as money from a fund established as a mitigation requirement, as match if the money has been passed from the mitigating entity to an eligible applicant, and the board's grant does not replace mitigation money, repay the mitigation fund, or in any way supplant the obligation of the mitigating entity.

### Grant Limits

- General projects      \$5,000-\$150,000 per project
- Education projects    \$5,000-\$20,000 per project

Architecture and engineering limit for development projects is 20 percent of the estimated development costs. Allowable architecture and engineering costs are described in *Manual 4, Development Projects*.

---

<sup>23</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2014-06

## User Fees and Charges

User or other fees may be charged for areas and facilities developed or maintained with RTP grants. See *Manual 4, Development Projects* and the project agreement for more information.

## Records and Reimbursement

Force account values and the value of donated contributions must be recorded on a separate project financial ledger maintained by the sponsor in a way that readily is identifiable in federal and state audits. Refer to *Manual 8, Reimbursements* for details and instructions regarding audits, record retention, and documents required for reimbursement.

## Funding Priorities

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board gives preference to projects that further specific goals of the following statewide strategic plans,<sup>24</sup> which can be found on RCO's Web site.

- *2013-2018 Washington State Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities Plan*  
[www.rco.wa.gov/documents/rcfb/nova/2013-2018NOVA\\_Plan&Appendices.pdf](http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/rcfb/nova/2013-2018NOVA_Plan&Appendices.pdf)
- *2013-2018 Washington State Trails Plan*  
[www.rco.wa.gov/documents/rcfb/2013-2018Trails\\_Plan&Appendices.pdf](http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/rcfb/2013-2018Trails_Plan&Appendices.pdf)
- *Outdoor Recreation in Washington, The 2013 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*  
[www.rco.wa.gov/documents/rec\\_trends/2013-2018SCORP-FullRpt.pdf](http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/rec_trends/2013-2018SCORP-FullRpt.pdf)

This preference is shown in evaluation criteria that place a high priority on projects that excel by doing the following:

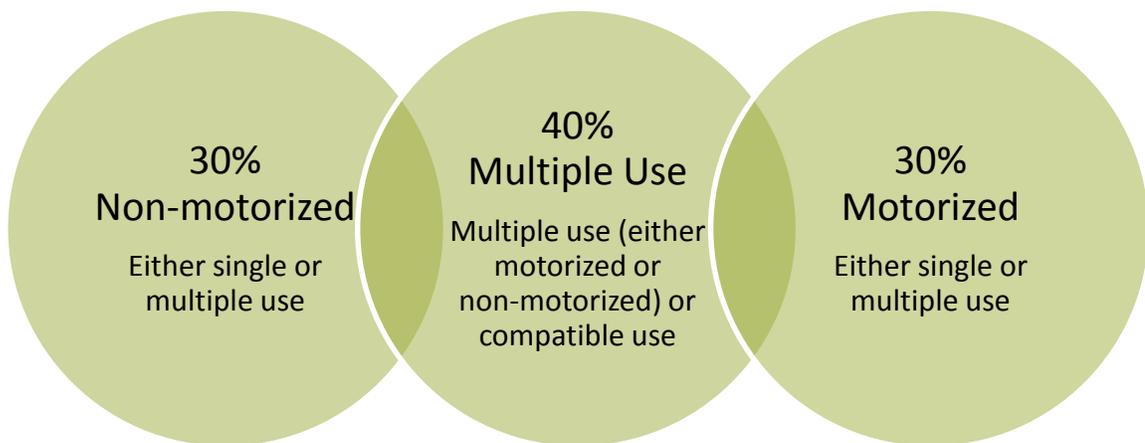
- Filling an established need.
- Adhering to high design standards.
- Reducing trail maintenance backlogs.
- Being ready to proceed and having widespread public support.
- Demonstrating sustainability and environmental stewardship

---

<sup>24</sup>These documents are found on the RCO Web site at [www.rco.wa.gov/doc\\_pages/strategy.shtml](http://www.rco.wa.gov/doc_pages/strategy.shtml).

- Presenting a favorable benefit-cost ratio and appropriately estimating and explaining costs.
- Bringing a high proportion of non-government contributions and matching value to the project (cash, goods, services, etc.)
- Exhibiting sponsor compliance the Growth Management Act, when applicable.

### 40-30-30 Requirement



Federal legislation<sup>25</sup> requires that not less than:

- 40 percent of this program's funds must be used for multiple recreational trail uses in trail corridors, trail sides, or trailheads. This means more than one trail activity. That is:
  - More than one non-motorized trail activity (multiple use), or
  - More than one motorized trail activity (multiple use), or
  - A combination of compatible non-motorized and motorized trail activities.
- 30 percent of this program's funds must be used for motorized recreation, either multiple or single use.
- 30 percent of this program's funds must be used for non-motorized recreation, either multiple or single use.

---

<sup>25</sup>23 U.S.C. 206, (d)(3)(A)

RCO applies the 40-30-30 formula to the money it receives from the federal government. It then applies the formula to the amount of money awarded in the general and education categories. These percentage requirements may not be waived and the money must be carried over to the next grant cycle if there are insufficient project applications to meet the 40-30-30 minimums.

By federal rule and board practice, no more than 5 percent of RTP funds may be allocated to education projects.

**Note:** It is possible to exceed the minimum percentage requirements. For example, a diverse motorized project, such as snowmobile and motorcycle trails, may satisfy the 40 percent diverse use requirement and the 30 percent motorized use requirement simultaneously. The same applies for non-motorized use.

## **Categorizing Projects**

As applications arrive, RCO uses the decision tree (Appendix 1) to designate which category is most appropriate to meet federal rules. Staff also determine if there are other categories in which the project is eligible. Projects are categorized as one of the following:

### **Non-motorized, Single Use**

A project primarily intended to benefit only one mode of non-motorized recreational trail use, such as pedestrian only or equestrian only.

Note: A trail for pedestrian use could include walking, hiking, running, bird watching, and backpacking. It's considered a single use because all use is by pedestrians. Similarly, winter uses such as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, would be considered a single use because all use is by pedestrians.

### **Non-motorized, Multiple Use**

Projects that benefit more than one mode of non-motorized recreational trail use at the same time (such as walking and bicycling) or in different seasons (such as hiking in the summer and cross-country skiing in the winter).

### **Compatible Use**

A project intended to benefit both non-motorized recreational trail use **and** motorized recreational trail use. A project may be classified in this category if it primarily benefits non-motorized uses. For example, a trail that is built for equestrian use in the summer and snowmobile use in winter or a trailhead serving all-terrain vehicles and bicycles.

### **Motorized, Multiple Use**

A project primarily intended to benefit more than one mode of motorized recreational trail use, such as: motorcycle and all-terrain vehicle use or all-terrain vehicle use in summer and snowmobile use in winter. These projects may benefit some non-motorized uses, but the primary intent must be for the benefit of motorized use.

### **Motorized, Single Use**

A project primarily intended to benefit only one mode of motorized recreational use, such as snowmobile trail grooming. These projects may benefit some non-motorized uses, but the primary intent must be for the benefit of motorized use.

### **Classifying Motorized Use**

In most years, it has been a challenge for the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board to meet the 30 percent motorized use requirement because too few applications are received.

To assist the State of Washington in meeting the federal requirement to spend a minimum of 30 percent of the funding on motorized projects, RTP projects are defined as motorized if the application shows the amount of approved motorized use to be more than incidental. In addition, at least one of the following criteria must be met:

- If an education project, it must target motorized use.
- If a trail project, the manager must have certified it as having a motorized primary management objective.
- If a trail project, it must be open to motor vehicles and include features clearly designed to accommodate recreational, motorized trail vehicles (climbing turns, tread hardening, groomed paths, off-road vehicle or snowmobile-related signs, loading ramps, etc.)

### **Changing Categories to Meet Funding Requirements<sup>26</sup>**

To meet the minimum funding requirements, projects may be moved between categories. The process is described below.

After projects are evaluated, but before the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board meets to award grants, staff identifies the highest scoring, partially funded, or unfunded project and determines if it could be funded by moving it (or a project higher on the list) to a category with extra funds. Staff, in consultation with the advisory committee, then recommends that the board shift the project if all of the following criteria are met:

- It is eligible for placement in the new category.

---

<sup>26</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2008-16

- There are enough excess funds for the project in that category.
- The category change does not affect an education project.

The process is repeated, in order of project scores, until the excess funds are exhausted or there are no more projects eligible for a move. Any remaining unobligated money is applied to the same category in the next grant cycle.

# Section 4: Project Selection

---

## In this section, you'll learn about:

- ✓ How project evaluation works
- ✓ Advisory committee
- ✓ Evaluation criteria

## How Project Evaluation Works

Project evaluation is based on a set of questions adopted by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board. The questions are created from statutory and other criteria developed through a public process. The evaluation questions for each category may be found in the following pages.

There are two sections to the evaluation criteria: Advisory committee questions and RCO staff-scored questions. In the first section, the advisory committee (see below) uses subjective criteria to score each project. Scores are based on each applicant's response to evaluation questions, graphics included in the application, and summary application material made available for the project's evaluation.

Letters and other documented expressions of project support that are provided to RCO by attaching in PRISM by the technical completion date will be provided to the advisory committees as part of the evaluation packet. Applicants also should summarize this support when responding to evaluation Question 9 for general projects or Question 5 for education projects.

In the second section, RCO staff scores the projects using objective measures, such as matching share, population, and conformance to growth management planning. Scores are based on material submitted by applicants and information obtained from the state Office of Financial Management and the Department of Commerce.

Scores from sections one and two are combined for a project's total evaluation score. The resulting ranked lists are the basis for funding recommendations to the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, which makes the final funding decisions in an open public meeting.

## **Advisory Committee**

RCO manages RTP with the assistance of a standing advisory committee. The RTP advisory committee's role is to recommend policies and procedures to RCO for administering grant funds and to review, evaluate, and score grant applications.

In recruiting members for the committee, RCO seeks to appoint people who possess a statewide perspective and are recognized for their experience and knowledge of outdoor recreation in Washington.

Check RCO's Web site for membership and other details at [www.rco.wa.gov/grants/advisory\\_committees/rtp.shtml](http://www.rco.wa.gov/grants/advisory_committees/rtp.shtml).

RCO's director may appoint *ex officio* members to the committee to provide additional representation and expertise.

## **Do Not Fund Recommendations<sup>27</sup>**

Occasionally during evaluations, the advisory committee may express significant concerns about a project, such that it would like to discuss a "Do Not Fund" recommendation. If this occurs, the advisory committee may discuss its concerns at the post-evaluation meeting, which takes place after application scores are tabulated.

If a "Do Not Fund recommendation" is scheduled to be considered, RCO will notify the applicant in writing, identify the significant concerns expressed by the evaluators, and invite the applicant to attend the post-evaluation meeting to respond to questions. The applicant also may submit a written response to the evaluators' concerns. To ensure all projects are treated equally, no additional testimony from applicants or visitors is taken at the post-evaluation meeting. The advisory committee determines a "Do Not Fund recommendation" by a simple majority vote of the committee members that participated in application evaluations.

RCO staff will forward to the board a summary of the "Do Not Fund recommendation" and any committee member comments. The board will consider the advisory committee's recommendation at a regularly scheduled public meeting, before the ranked list is adopted (consideration may take place at the same meeting, but the "Do Not Fund" recommendation will be discussed before the ranked list is adopted). The board retains discretion in awarding all grant funds.

---

<sup>27</sup>Approved by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, January 9, 2014.

## Evaluation Criteria

### Education Projects

Education proposals are evaluated and funded separately from RTP General (development and maintenance) projects. The advisory committee assesses each principally on the criteria shown in the table below. RCO does not provide more information to encourage a variety of creative proposals.

Applicants must respond to the five questions individually and attach them to their applications in PRISM.

- Use white, 8 ½ x 11-inch paper, with 1-inch margins.
- Use a regular typeface, such as Arial or Times Roman, 12-point size.
- At top of each page, print: applicant name, project name, and date written.
- The total of all evaluation responses must not exceed three, single-sided pages.
- In order, print the question's number, followed by the question, and then the response. Each question must have its own separate answer.

These responses along with the project summary, cost estimate, application work types and metrics, maps, plans, visuals, and letters of support, comprise the evaluation packet<sup>28</sup> that is provided to the advisory committee for evaluation review and scoring.

RTP Education Projects Evaluation Criteria Summary			
Scored By	Question	Title	Maximum Points
Advisory Committee	1	Need	5
Advisory Committee	2	Need satisfaction	5
Advisory Committee	3	Applicant's ability	5
Advisory Committee	4	Cost-benefit	5
Advisory Committee	5	Support	5
<b>Total Points Possible</b>			<b>25</b>

Revised November 16, 2000

- 1. Need.** Describe the need for this project.
- 2. Need satisfaction.** Describe the extent to which the project satisfies this need.
- 3. Applicant's ability.** Describe the applicant's ability to accomplish the project.

<sup>28</sup>See the RTP Applicant's To-Do List for additional details about the materials included in the evaluation packet at [www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/CheckLists/RTP.pdf](http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/CheckLists/RTP.pdf).

4. **Cost-benefit.** Describe the project's cost-benefit.
5. **Support.** Describe the support for the project.

## Development and Maintenance Projects

Development and maintenance applicants respond to each question individually and attach them to their applications in PRISM.

- Use white, 8 ½ x 11-inch paper, with 1-inch margins.
- Use a regular typeface, such as Arial or Times Roman, 12-point size.
- At the top of each page, print: applicant name, project name, and the date written.
- For each question, and in order, print the question's number, followed by the question, and then the response. Each question must have its own separate answer.
- The total of all evaluation responses must not exceed four, single-sided pages.
- Do not respond to both Questions 3 and 4 – respond to the question that fits the project type: 3 applies only to development projects, 4 applies only to maintenance projects.
- Do not respond to Questions 10 and 11 (Matching Shares, Growth Management Act). RCO will score these questions based on other information, or information submitted with the application.

These responses, along with the project summary, cost estimate, application work types and metrics, maps, plans, visuals, and letters of support, comprise the evaluation packet<sup>29</sup> that is provided to the advisory committee for evaluation review and scoring

---

<sup>29</sup>See the RTP Applicant's To-Do List for additional details about the materials included in the evaluation packet at [www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/CheckLists/RTP.pdf](http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/CheckLists/RTP.pdf).

RTP Development and Maintenance Projects Evaluation Criteria Summary				
Scored by	Question	Title	Maximum Points	Project Type Questions
Advisory Committee	1	Need	15	All
Advisory Committee	2	Need satisfaction	15	All
Advisory Committee	3	Project design	10	Development
Advisory Committee	4	Maintenance	10	Maintenance
Advisory Committee	5	Sustainability and environmental stewardship	10	All
Advisory Committee	6	Readiness to proceed	5	All
Advisory Committee	7	Cost-benefit	5	All
Advisory Committee	8	Cost efficiencies	5	All
Advisory Committee	9	Project support	10	All
RCO Staff	10	Matching shares	10	All
RCO Staff	11	Growth Management Act preference	0	All
<b>Total Points Possible</b>			<b>85</b>	

## Development and Maintenance Projects Detailed Scoring Criteria

### Scored by Advisory Committee

1. **Need.** How great is the need for improved trail facilities that provide a backcountry experience? The following considerations are provided to help applicants and evaluators understand some of the elements that help a project score well. A successful proposal need not address each bullet. Respondents should elaborate on all points clearly relevant to their project.
  - State, Regional, Land Manager, or Community Needs
    - Is the project supported by location or type in a publicly reviewed and adopted plan? For example: *2013-2018 Washington State Trails Plan* or the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board's *2013-2018 Washington State Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) Plan* or *Outdoor Recreation in Washington: The 2013 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*?
    - Describe how critical RTP funds are to the completion of this project.
    - Describe any significant environmental damage in need of repair.
    - Describe the consequences of not funding this project. For example, how immediate is any threat? Will actions be taken that will lead to a loss of quality etc.?

- Trail Inventory Issues
  - How large is any maintenance backlog?
  - What similar trail opportunities are available now in the local area?
  - How much of this need can be attributed to a history of inadequate care and maintenance?
  - What is the current physical condition of the proposed facility?
- Use
  - How convenient will the finished project be to intended users?
  - How heavily are trails and support facilities in the area used?
  - How heavily will the finished project be used?
  - Are there significant not served or under-served user groups?
  - To what extent will safety hazards be resolved?

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points, which staff later multiplies by 3.

0 points      No or very weak need established.

1-2 points    Fair to moderate need established.

3 points      Strong need established.

4-5 points    Very high to exceptional need, established in several ways.

Revised February 2006

**2. Need satisfaction.** To what extent will the project satisfy the service area needs identified in Question 1, Need?

How well does the specific proposal satisfy the need established in Question 1? For example on the proposed trail, will all surface water issues be remedied (water bars, grade dips, puncheon, water crossings, etc.)? How about the trail corridor (clearing, brushing, tree removal, etc.), safety, and sign issues? Responses must be quantified. How efficiently does the proposal target these needs?

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points; which staff later multiplied by 3.

0 points      No or weak evidence of need satisfaction

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 1-2 points | Fair to moderate evidence. Project fills only a small portion of the apparent or expressed need, or insufficient information is provided. |
| 3 points   | Strong evidence. The project will address an important need, although that need will not be filled completely by the project.             |
| 4-5 points | Very high to exceptional evidence. Project fills a critical need.   |

Revised February 2006

### Answered by Applicants with Development Projects Only

**3. Project design.** Is the proposal appropriately designed for intended uses and users? The following considerations are provided to help applicants and evaluators understand some of the elements that help a project score well. A successful proposal need not address each bullet. Respondents should elaborate on all points clearly relevant to their projects.

- Describe how the project's setting is appropriate to the need? How does it complement the need?
- How does the design protect and complement the environment?
- Describe how the facility is designed for ease of maintenance.
- Describe the extent to which the design is barrier-free and user friendly.
- Describe the spatial relationships, surfacing, width, and grades. How tight are curves? Are there switchbacks? How is multiple-use facilitated?
- If a trail, is it designed in a loop. Does it lead to a primary destination?
- Does the project have a primary management objective?<sup>30</sup>
- For projects with a motorized "Primary Management Objective," is an adequate level of difficulty maintained?

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points, which staff later multiplies by 2.

---

<sup>30</sup>"Primary Management Objective" means the main type of use for which a trail is managed. Not all trails are managed for a specific use. "Primary Management Objectives" are adopted by policy and communicated to a trail's users. For example, if an agency carries out a policy to manage a trail specifically for hiking, and communicates this fact to users, the "Primary Management Objective" is hiking. A hiking "Primary Management Objective" does not necessarily mean that other trail uses are prohibited. A "Primary Management Objective's" advantage is that it provides all users with an understanding of the type of trail experience to expect.

0 points	Poor evidence presented or the design is inappropriate. For example: Environmental issues are not addressed; trail difficulty level and user experience are not addressed or can be expected to change substantially; or there is a high probability of user displacement.
1-2 points	Below average to moderate. For example: Design does only a fair job of addressing environmental issues; the difficulty level and user experience will be somewhat degraded; there appears to be some user displacement.
3 points	Good. For example: Design is adequate and reasonable to address environmental problems, the difficulty level and user experience will be unchanged; not much user displacement will occur.
4-5 points	Very good to excellent. Design is outstanding, if a trail: retains difficulty level and user experience with no user displacement.

Revised February 2006

#### Answered by Applicants with Maintenance Projects Only

**4. Maintenance.** To what degree will the project reduce recreational trail maintenance backlogs and/or recreate a recreational trail opportunity?<sup>31</sup> The following considerations are provided to help applicants and evaluators understand some of the elements that help a project score well. A successful proposal need not address each bullet. Applicants should elaborate on all points clearly relevant to their projects.

- Typically, how often does this trail require maintenance work?
- When was maintenance was performed last on this trail?
- How much of the area's trail maintenance backlog will be alleviated by this project? That is:
  - What is the total number of trail miles in the system you administer (i.e., park, ranger district, etc.)?
  - What is the number of trail miles your jurisdiction plans to maintain each year?

---

<sup>31</sup>Many winter recreation trail opportunities are re-created through snow grooming maintenance activities.

- What is the number of trail miles needing maintenance due to unplanned events resulting from such things as unusual weather, etc.?
- Is this project request for support of regular planned maintenance or maintenance due to unplanned events? If yes, what were the events?
- How are you qualified to complete this project in a quality and timely fashion? What is your experience with past maintenance projects?
- Are the project's maintenance goals specific and appropriate? Explain.
- To what extent will this maintenance project extend the service life of this facility?

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points, which staff later multiplies by 2.

0 points	Poor. Too little information is presented, or the project likely will not reduce trail maintenance backlogs or not recreate a recreational opportunity.
1-2 points	Fair to moderate. Maintenance backlogs are reduced only somewhat or there appears to be only moderate ability to recreate a recreational opportunity.
3 points	Good. Project substantially reduces maintenance backlogs or a relatively important trail opportunity is recreated.
4-5 points	Very good to excellent. This project effectively eliminates trail maintenance backlogs or recreates a critical trail opportunity.

**5. Sustainability and environmental stewardship.** Will the project result in a quality, sustainable, recreational opportunity while protecting the integrity of the environment?

Factors to consider for development and maintenance projects are outlined below.

- Does the proposed project protect natural resources onsite and integrate sustainable elements such as low impact techniques, green infrastructure, or environmentally preferred building products?
- Vegetation/Surfaces – Are you replacing invasive plant species with native vegetation? Are you using pervious surfaces for any of the proposed facilities?

- Education – Are you installing interpretive panels or signs that educate users about sustainability?
- Materials – What sustainable materials are included in the project?
- Energy – What energy-efficient features are you adding?
- What modes of transportation provide access to the site?
- Water – Is the on-site storm water managed by rain gardens, porous paving, or other sustainable features? Does the design exceed permit requirements for storm water management? Does the project divert or control water run-off?
- If there are wetlands on site, describe the size, quality, and classification and explain how the design considers the wetland functions.
- What is the strategy or plan for long-term maintenance and stewardship of the site?
- What other developed features will contribute to increasing energy efficiencies, reducing maintenance, minimizing environmental impacts, or being more sustainable?

▲ Point Range: Evaluators award a maximum of 5 points, which staff later multiplies by 2.

Adopted January 2014.

- 6. Readiness to proceed.** Is the applicant prepared to begin the project? The following considerations are provided to help applicants and evaluators understand some of the elements that help a project score well. A successful proposal need not address each bullet. Respondents should elaborate on all points clearly relevant to their projects.

There are often good reasons why managers are unable to initiate a project immediately. Even so, if other factors are equal, RTP favors projects that move the most quickly.

- Exactly when will work on the project begin? When will work be completed or the facility be open to use?
- Are all elements ready:
  - Permits
  - Environmental clearances

- Engineering
- Signed agreements
- Equipment
- Labor force, etc.?
- Have any appeals been resolved? Explain.
- How urgent is it that immediate action is taken? Explain.

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points.

0 points	Very large barriers exist that likely will delay the project a year or more.
1-2 points	Substantial to significant barriers exist that likely will be removed in less than 12 months.
3-4 points	Minimal to ordinary barriers exist that very likely will be removed by the time a grant and contract are awarded.
5 points	No barriers. The project is ready to move forward immediately.

Revised February 2006

- 7. Cost-benefit.** Do the benefits of the project outweigh costs? Costs may include hard fiscal outlays, unacceptable harm to the environment, or factors that cause unnecessary ill will for trail users. Benefits are gains that come with the investment of public dollars. They can be gains for trail users, the environment, the public, or others.

The following considerations are provided to help applicants and evaluators understand some of the elements that help a project score well. A successful proposal need not address each bullet. Respondents should elaborate on all points clearly relevant to their projects.

- What alternatives to the project were considered and why were they rejected in favor of the current proposal? For example, in a snow grooming project, was leasing, contracting work to a private party, or “no action” considered?
- What is the cost per mile for trails or other unit of measure for other projects?

- What is the long-term cost of maintenance? Will it be cost-effective over the long-term?
- What is your past record with cost estimates (on-target, overruns, shortages, etc.)?
- Describe other benefits this project will provide, such as community economic development, education, and stewardship.
- What will be the environmental cost-benefit of this project?

It is important that applicants quantify responses. For example, by how much will a new and faster or larger snow groomer reduce maintenance costs? How much will be saved on future reconstruction costs if maintenance backlogs are eliminated now?

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points.

0 points	No evidence of a net benefit presented.
1-2 points	Little to modest evidence of a mild net benefit.
3-4 points	Adequate to strong evidence of a good net benefit.
5 points	Substantial evidence of an exceptional net benefit.

Revised February 2006

**8. Cost Efficiencies.** To what extent does this project demonstrate efficiencies or a reduction in government costs through documented use of donations or other resources?

- Donations – cash, real property, volunteer labor, equipment use, or materials
  - What are the donations for this project?
  - Who is making the donation?
  - What is the value of the donation and how was the value determined?
  - Is the donation in hand?
  - If the donation is not in hand, do you have a letter of commitment from the donor that specifies what is being donated and when?

- Is the donation necessary for implementation of the project? Are donations included in the project proposal?
- Private grants awarded by non-governmental organizations
  - Is there a private grant that is being used as match for this project?
  - Who awarded the grant?
  - What is the grant amount?
  - What is the purpose of the grant?
  - When will grant funds be available?
- Are there other efficiencies for this project that will result in cost savings?
  - What is the cost efficiency?
  - Who is providing it?
  - What's the value?
  - When was the commitment made and when does it expire?

▲ Point Range: Evaluators award 0-5 points.

Revised by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2016-07 on February 2016.

**9. Project support.** To what extent do users and the public support the project?

The following considerations are provided to help applicants and evaluators understand some of the elements that help a project score well. A successful proposal need not address each bullet. Respondents should elaborate on all points clearly relevant to their projects.

Support can be demonstrated in both financial and non-financial ways and varies depending upon the project type. In scoring this question, evaluators consider the type of support that is most relevant. Examples of support and endorsement include the following:

- Efforts by the applicant to identify and contact all interested parties.
- The extent that there is support for the project. For example:
  - Level of land manager and user support (moderate, very strong, etc.)

- Positive letters, oral testimony at public meetings, support from friends and user groups.
- Positive, or the absence of extensive negative, media coverage.
- The extent to which the public was involved in a comprehensive planning process that includes this project.
- Non-applicant donations to help complete the project: Labor, equipment, money, materials, land.
- Advisory board approval or completion of a public planning process that endorsed this project.

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points, which staff later multiplies by 2.

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 0 points   | No or very weak evidence presented.           |
| 1-2 points | Minimal or fair specific evidence of support. |
| 3 points   | Moderate to good support.                     |
| 4-5 points | Exceptional to overwhelming support.          |

Revised February 3, 2006

### Scored by RCO Staff

**10. Matching shares.** To what extent will the applicant match the RTP grant with contributions from its own resources? RCO staff will respond to this question for each development and maintenance project. This question is based on information submitted with the application. For evaluation scoring purposes, an RCO grant used as match will not count toward the award of matching share points. No additional information is required.

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points; which staff later multiplies by 2.

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| 0 points | 20-25 percent of project's value will be contributed by the applicant.    |
| 1 point  | 25.01-30 percent of project's value will be contributed by the applicant. |
| 2 points | 30.01-35 percent of project's value will be contributed by the applicant. |
| 3 points | 35.01-40 percent of project's value will be contributed by the applicant. |

- 4 points      40.01-45 percent of project's value will be contributed by the applicant.
- 5 points      More than 45 percent of project's value will be contributed by the applicant.

Revised January 2014

**11. Growth Management Act Preference.** Has the applicant made progress toward meeting the requirements of the Growth Management Act? Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250 requires that:

- A) Whenever a state agency is considering awarding grants to finance public facilities, it shall consider whether the applicant<sup>32</sup> has adopted a comprehensive plan and development regulations as required by Revised Code of Washington 36.70A.040 ("state law").
- B) When reviewing such requests, the state agency shall accord additional preference to applicants that have adopted the comprehensive plan and development regulations. An applicant is deemed to have satisfied the requirements for adopting a comprehensive plan and development regulations if it:
  - o Adopts or has adopted within the time periods specified in state law;
  - o Adopts or has adopted by the time it requests a grant or loan; or
  - o Demonstrates substantial progress toward adopting within the time periods specified in state law. An agency that is more than 6 months out of compliance with the time periods has not demonstrated substantial progress.
- C) A request from an applicant planning under state law shall be accorded no additional preference based on subsection (B) over a request from an applicant not planning under this state law.

Scores for this question are based on information from the state Department of Commerce, Growth Management Division. If an agency's comprehensive plan, development regulations, or amendments have been appealed to a Growth Management Act Hearings Board, they cannot be penalized during the period of appeal. Scoring occurs after RCO's technical completion deadline.

---

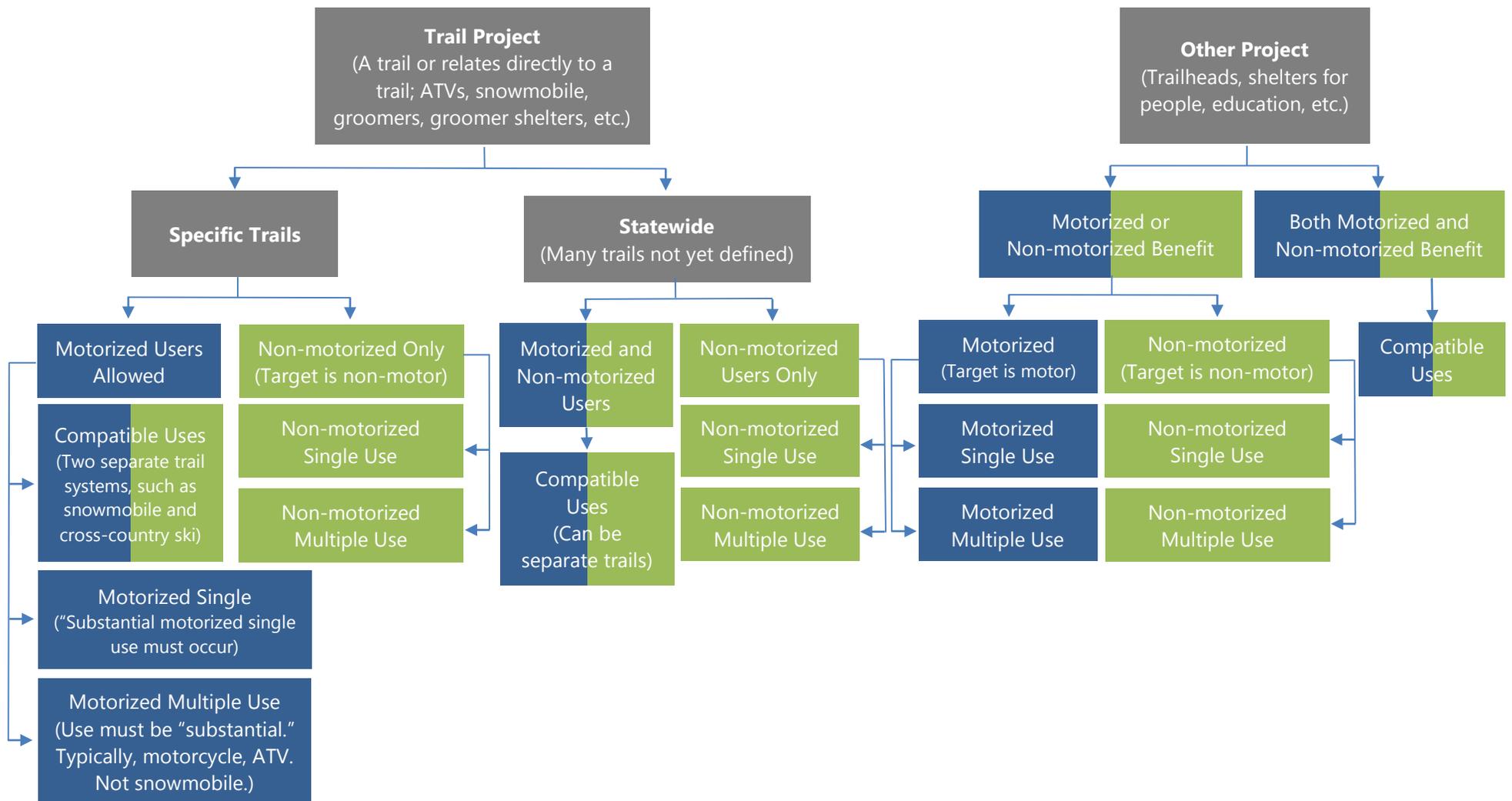
<sup>32</sup>All references to applicants in this question refer to counties, cities, and towns only.

▲ Point Range: 0 to -1.

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| -1 point | The applicant does not meet the requirements of Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250. |
| 0 points | The applicant meets the requirements of Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250.         |
| 0 points | The applicant is a nonprofit organization or state or federal agency.                 |

Revised July 1999

# Appendix 1: RTP Category Decision Tree



Projects are classified as motorized if the amount of approved motorized use is more than incidental. In addition, at least one of the following criteria must be met:

- If an education project, it must target motorized use.
- If a trail project, the manager must have certified it as having a motorized "Primary Management Objective." "Primary Management Objective" means the main type of use for which a trail is managed. Not all trails are managed for a specific use. "Primary Management Objectives" are adopted by policy and communicated to a trail's users. For example, if an agency carries out a policy to manage a trail specifically for hiking, and communicates this fact to users, the "Primary Management Objective" is hiking. A hiking "Primary Management Objective" does not necessarily mean that other trail uses are prohibited. A "Primary Management Objective's" advantage is that it provides all users with an understanding of the type of trail experience to expect, or
- If a trail project, it must be open to motor vehicles and include features clearly designed to accommodate recreational, motorized trail vehicles, such as climbing turns, tread hardening, groomed paths, off-road vehicle or snowmobile related signs, loading ramps, etc.