

# Recreational Trails Program

## FACT SHEET

### Who may Apply?

- Local governments
- Federal agencies
- Nonprofits
- Special purpose districts
- State agencies
- Tribes

### Types of Projects Funded

- Education
- Development or rehabilitation of trail facilities
- Maintenance

### Federal Funding

People venturing into the backcountry help pay for these grants. Funding comes from federal gasoline taxes attributed to recreational, non-highway uses, and is dedicated to improve trails and facilities that provide a backcountry experience.

### Leveraging State Dollars

Grant recipients must provide at least 20 percent in matching resources.

### Recreation and Conservation Office

PO Box 40917  
Olympia WA 98504-0917  
Telephone: (360) 902-3000  
TTY: (360) 902-1996  
E-mail: [info@rco.wa.gov](mailto:info@rco.wa.gov)  
Web: [www.rco.wa.gov](http://www.rco.wa.gov)

## Maintaining Washington's Trails

Washingtonians are an active population. A recent survey revealed that one-third of the state's population recreates on trails in the state's mountains and forests.<sup>1</sup> People are hiking, biking, riding horses, cross-country skiing, and using off-road vehicles and snowmobiles.

### Purpose

To accommodate them, the Recreational Trails Program provides federal funding to maintain trails and facilities that offer a backcountry experience.

This funding is vital to keeping trails open to the public. As public agencies face funding shortages, maintenance often is delayed or eliminated. This grant program is one of the few for maintaining backcountry trails.

Typical projects include maintaining and rerouting trails, building trail-side and trailhead facilities, and running environmental education and trail safety programs.

## Ensuring the Best Projects are Funded

The grant process is open and competitive to ensure the best projects receive funding. The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board accepts applications in even-numbered years. A citizen committee, which is made of recreational trail users, scores the applications using criteria established by the board and submits a ranked list to the board for consideration. The board approves the list and forwards it to the Federal Highway Administration for review and final approval.

## Outdoors Recreation Improves Economy, Health

Use of trails provides many economic and health benefits to Washington. A recent report by the Washington Trails Association<sup>2</sup> showed that Olympic National Park visitors add \$90 million to the local area and generate 1,900 jobs. Backcountry campers to one national park in Washington contributed \$985,000 in 2000 to restaurants and bars, groceries, gas and oil, local transportation, and admission fees.

In addition to providing money for jobs, hiking lowers the risk of health care costs. Many people spend time in the outdoors to relieve stress, a major contributor to illnesses, and studies have shown outdoor experiences decrease attention deficit disorder, obesity, and depression among children.<sup>3</sup>



The U.S. Forest Service has received several Recreational Trails Program grants totaling more than \$72,000 to maintain trails in the Pasayten Wilderness.

# Recreational Trails Program Fact Sheet

## INVESTING IN WASHINGTON'S GREAT OUTDOORS

### Grant Recipients (1994-2015)

Anacortes  
Apple Country Snowmobile Club  
Back Country Horsemen of Washington  
Benton County  
Bremerton Cruisers Motorcycle  
Butte Busters Snowmobile Club  
Chinook Trail Association  
Clallam County  
Clark County  
Coal Mines Trail Commission  
Colville National Forest  
EarthCorps  
Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance  
Foothills Rails to Trails Coalition  
Friends of the Trail  
Gifford Pinchot National Forest  
Grays Harbor County  
Hi-Country Snowmobile Club  
High Country Cruisers  
Hurricane Ridge Education Foundation  
Idaho Panhandle National Forest  
Issaquah  
Issaquah Alps Trail Club  
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe  
Jones Creek Trail Riders Association  
Junco Snowmobile Club  
King County  
Kitsap Land Trust  
Lake Cle Elum Ridge Ryders  
Lake Wenatchee Recreation Club  
Lopez Island Conservation Corps  
Loup Loup Ski Education  
Methow Valley Snowmobile Association  
Methow Valley Sport Trail Association  
Montesano  
Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest  
Mount Tahoma Trails Association  
Mountain Trails Grooming Association  
Mountains to Sound Greenway  
Nooksack Nordic Ski Club  
Northwest Glacier Cruisers  
Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest  
Olympic National Forest  
Olympic National Park



The Mount Tahoma Trails Association used a \$49,000 grant to buy equipment and groom cross-country ski trails in Lewis County.

Pacific Northwest Trail Association  
Palisades  
Peninsula Trails Coalition  
Sky Riders Snowmobile Club  
Snohomish County  
Spokane County  
Spokane Nordic Ski Education Foundation  
Spokane Winter Knights  
The Mountaineers  
Trout Unlimited-Grays Harbor  
Umatilla National Forest  
U.S. Corps of Engineers  
Vancouver Snobusters  
Volunteers for Outdoor Washington  
Washington Department of Natural Resources  
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission  
Washington State Snowmobile Association  
Washington Trails Association  
Washington Water Trails Association  
Washington Wilderness Coalition  
Whatcom County  
Winter Knights Snowmobile  
Yakima Greenway Foundation

<sup>1</sup>Amanda C. Ritchie et al., "Outdoor Recreation in Washington: The 2013 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan," Responsive Management, Harrisonburg, VA, May 2013, pp. 160-165.

<sup>2</sup>Jeannie Frantz, "The Value of Hiking," Washington Trails Association and University of Washington Political Science Department, Seattle, WA, August 2007, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Jeannie Frantz, "The Value of Hiking," Washington Trails Association and University of Washington Political Science Department, Seattle, WA, August 2007, p. 7.