

# TRAILS FUNDING SOURCES IN ALASKA

## Alaska Trails Initiative

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<http://www.alaska-trails.org/alaska-trails-initiative.html>

*Trails Funding Sources in Alaska* is a compilation of funding sources related to trails maintenance, repairs, usage, development and access. These funding sources include nonprofits, sports associations, and federal, state, and local governments. Where applicable, Alaska-specific information is included. Alaska Trails Initiative compiled this information to provide a reference guide to assist grant seekers in obtaining funding for outdoor recreation enhancement and development.

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# FEDERAL FUNDING

Federal grant funding for trails-related projects is available primarily from four agencies: [Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration](#), [US Fish and Wildlife Service](#), [National Park Service](#) and [EPA](#). Most of the federal grant programs are administered in the State of Alaska by a local state or municipal receipt agency.

## 1. FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION FUNDING

Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provides several funding opportunities for trail-related projects under its Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The FAST Act is a federal law that provides long-term funding certainty for surface transportation infrastructure planning and investment.

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### 1.1 RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP)

The RTP is an annual grant program of the FHWA that allocates funds to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities. The RTP provides reimbursable, matching funds to develop and repair recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. The RTP is administered by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation and reviews and recommendations are made by the Outdoor Recreational Trails Advisory Board (ORTAB).

#### **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

Federal, state, local, tribal governments and private non-profits are eligible to apply. Call for projects occurs annually; applications are typically due in the Fall of each year. Approximately \$1.3 million is available annually for trail projects in Alaska through RTP. The maximum individual grant award amounts for FY20 were \$75,000 for non-motorized and diversified categories and \$100,000 for motorized category. RTP grant awards require a 10% match. The matching share may include volunteer labor, in-kind services, cash donations of private funds, or materials and services at fair market value.

#### **ELIGIBLE USES**

RTP grant funds may be used for the following ([see notes below re current restrictions in Alaska](#)):

- Repair or restoration of existing trails
- Construction of new trails

- Rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities, bridges, signs, and trail linkages
- Purchase or lease of maintenance equipment needed to complete approved scope of work
- Development and publication of educational materials to promote safety and environmental protections related to the use of recreational trails.

### **CURRENT STATUS IN ALASKA**

In FY20, the RTP was only accepting applications that qualify as Stipulation 1 projects under the current Programmatic Agreement between the FHWA and the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources. The given reason for this decision is the late arrival of the RTP funds into the state and hence the choice to forego the more time-consuming environmental review and other administrative costs for Stipulations 2 and 3.

#### **STIPULATION 1:**

1. Purchase of trail maintenance equipment, materials and supplies;
2. Rehabilitation contained within the footprints of existing trails and trailhead facilities, including resurfacing or improving the trail facility surfaces;
3. Regrading within the footprint of existing trail and/or parking areas;
4. Striping and/or re-striping of existing trail facilities;
5. Development and distribution of educational materials;
6. Replacement, renovation, and/or rehabilitation of existing signs, kiosks, and markers;
7. New installation of signs, kiosks and markers at, and along, existing facilities;
8. Minor alterations to existing facilities in order to make them accessible to people of different abilities (Example: replacement of stairs with ramps, installing hand rails, etc.).

In past years, all parties involved in the Alaska RTP process – applicants and the State – have found the program to be complex, time consuming and frustrating. Evidence suggests the time required for applicants and for the State to administer the program is greater in Alaska compared to other states. AK Trails is currently working with State Parks and NPS Rivers Trails Conservation Assistance Program to make changes that will simplify the process for both State Parks and applicants. A particular need is to reopen the use of RTP funds to the full list of uses including Stipulations 2 and 3. A second issue is the need to allow volunteers to use mechanized equipment. This has been allowed in previous years, but was not permitted in this most recent year.

For more information visit <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/trails.htm>

## **1.2 FEDERAL LANDS ACCESS PROGRAM (FLAP)**

The Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) was established to improve transportation facilities that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within Federal lands. The FLAP supplements State and local resources for public roads, parking areas that serve as trail heads, trails, transit systems, and other transportation facilities, with an emphasis on high-use recreation sites and economic generators. Decisions are made by the Programming Decision

Committee (PDC), comprised of representatives of FHWA, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, and Alaska Municipal League.

### **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

Approximately \$7.5 million is available annually for FLAP projects in Alaska. Projects funded through this program tend to be much larger than those funded through RTP – often in the \$1-3 million range. Consequently Alaska DOT/PF has elected to call for applications every two-three years. This allows the pool of funds to grow, which means that multiple projects – typically 10-15 – can be awarded during each cycle. Federal, state, local, and tribal governments are eligible to apply. Next call for projects anticipated for early 2021.

### **ELIGIBLE USES**

FLAP funds may be used for the following:

- Construction/reconstruction of transportation facilities including trailheads, trails and bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Planning/research/engineering of transportation facilities
- Acquisition of necessary scenic easements or scenic/historical sites

### **CURRENT STATUS IN ALASKA**

FLAP has helped fund a multitude of trails and outdoor facilities projects in Alaska. This link lists FLAP-funded projects in FY2013-18

<https://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/ak/documents/ak-flap-accomplishments.pdf>

For more information visit <https://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/ak/>

## **1.3 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)**

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (AKDOT & PF) for the state and Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) for Anchorage Municipality. TAP helps states and municipalities with urbanized populations over 200,000 to fund a variety of activities related to improving transportation assets, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, environmental mitigation, and creating or improving recreational trails projects.

### **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

Eligible entities include local governments, regional transportation authorities, transit agencies, natural resource or public land agencies, education agencies, tribal governments, and nonprofits responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs. Other nonprofit entities are eligible to partner with any eligible entity on a project, if State or local requirements permit. The program requires 9.03% or more match.

Approximately \$12 million is available for TAP projects in Alaska during a grant cycle. 10 projects awarded in 2018-2019 ranging between \$0.3M-\$4.5M. The program is administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF). Call for projects occurs every 2-3 years; next cycle announcement will be in late 2020 or 2021.

## ELIGIBLE USES

The term “transportation alternatives” means any of the following activities: (A) Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation. (B) Construction, planning, and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers. (C) Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users. (D) Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas. (E) Community improvement activities. (F) Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution.

## CURRENT STATUS IN ALASKA

Money comes from the FHWA every year but the State and AMATS ([Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions](#)) would award money for projects every other or every third year. It is unclear when/if there are plans for the next round. AMATS is the only MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) in the state, and it receives specific money for projects.

Alaska Trails has helped make the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding a reality in Alaska, which meant over \$19 million obligated to trail, bicycle and pedestrian projects in 2016. There were no plans for the State Department of Transportation (DOT) or local Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to opt-in to the TAP program in 2015 when Alaska Trails gathered advocates and officials to press for the proper obligation of this funding. Alaska Trails organized a meeting with government employees and local advocates to make them aware of this new funding opportunity and to highlight what other states and localities were already doing with their TAP funding. Connecting to national groups that could show how TAP money could make an impact in communities was an effective way to convince decision-makers. By working with the DOT and local MPO, Alaska Trails was able to spur action on this important funding initiative.

Program Contact for Statewide TAP:

**Marcheta Moulton**, Small Federal Programs Manager

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AMATS contact for Anchorage share of TAP:

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For more information about Transportation Alternatives visit <http://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/atap/>

## 2. US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE FUNDING

US Fish and Wildlife Service funds two federal programs: Pittman-Robertson Act allocates funds for hunting, wildlife viewing and management and habitat conservation; Dingell-Johnson Act provides funds for improvements in recreational sport fishing access.

### 2.1 HUNTER ACCESS / PITTMAN-ROBERTSON

ADF&G Division of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) utilizes PR funds for wildlife management and research, and also funds projects to restore, conserve, and enhance wildlife populations and their habitats. Projects also include providing public use and access to wildlife resources, hunter education, and development and management of shooting ranges. The Hunter Access Program is within DWC and facilitates design and construction of projects that develop and enhance public access to wildlife resources for hunting, trapping and other recreation. Pittman-Robertson funds are comprised of tax revenue collected from the sale of firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment related to hunting activities.

#### **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

Pittman-Robertson funds will reimburse 75% of the cost of an eligible Hunter Access proposal and requires a 25% non-federal match. Funding availability for Hunter Access may vary from year to year depending on the Federal appropriation and State of Alaska legislative authorization (in FY20 it was \$2M), in 2020 applications were due in the spring and awards will be made in the fall. Total funding available nationwide are declining as the overall population becomes less interested in hunting and spends less on hunting related equipment.

#### **ELIGIBLE USES**

Trail-related proposals eligible for the Hunter Access program need to focus on developing and enhancing access to wildlife resources for hunting, trapping, and other wildlife-related recreation. These projects are diverse and include building, improving, and repairing public use trails, roads, parking lots, campgrounds, public cabins, boat launches, bridges and more. Projects provide additional or improved opportunity and access to Alaska's lands, with hunting as the core objective, but also may allow for wildlife viewing and other wildlife related recreational users.

#### **CURRENT STATUS IN ALASKA**

In recent years the State of Alaska has returned eligible PR funds to the federal government, as ADF&G did not spend or allocate all the available funds. With pressure from a range of parties, including Alaska Trails, in the spring of 2019 the legislature's approved capital budget responded with a requirement that ADF&G open up PR funding to third party entities, which would include Alaska Trails and other trail organizations. Specific language, extracted from the 31st Legislature, is below:

“It is the intent of the legislature that the Department of Fish and Game allocate up to 2,000,000 of Pittman-Robertson federal funds for agreements with nonstate entities, the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and local governments that provide the required federal match for eligible Pittman-Robertson projects. The Department of Fish and

Game shall advertise and communicate an opportunity for these entities to submit proposals for a period of at least 120 days that will close by August 1 to allow for federal agency approval by the end of the federal fiscal year on September 30. The Department of Fish and Game shall maintain the list of projects, award grants to eligible applicants before reverting or returning any Pittman-Robertson funds, and submit a report to the Legislative Finance Division by December 15 of each year.”  
(from <http://www.akleg.gov/PDF/31/Bills/SB0019Z.PDF>)

Following this direction, the Department of Fish and Game Pittman-Robertson (P-R) Fund online portal is now up and running. This portal allows for online application for federal funding for qualified projects. The portal was a collaborative effort between the department, Senator Kiehl, Senator Bishop, Representatives Hannan and Jonathan Kreiss Tompkins, and other legislators. Link to the portal:

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=hunteraccess.applicationmaterials>

Contacts for the HA/PR program:

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For more information about the HA/PR program visit

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=hunteraccess.applicationmaterials>

## 2.2 SPORT FISH RESTORATION, OR DINGELL-JOHNSON

The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, often referred to as the Dingell-Johnson Act or the Wallop-Breaux Amendment, funds projects to improve recreational power boating and sport fishing access. Like the Pittman Robertson Act, this legislation was established in the 1930's by a republican and democratic legislator, who were concerned that without dedicated funding, opportunities for the public to enjoy fishing would steadily decline.

Also like the Pittman Robertson Act, this legislation created a model "user pay/user benefit" program through federal excise taxes and import duties placed on sport fishing equipment, recreational powerboats, and gasoline used in recreational boats. The tax revenue collected by the U.S. Treasury is transferred to the U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, the federal agency responsible for administering the Sport Fish Restoration program.

### APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Applications are not accepted. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), Division of Sport Fish, manages the Sport Fish Restoration funds and allocates them towards its own projects. This program will cover up to 75 percent of the cost of a project and requires a 25 percent non-federal match, which is often met by the State through the sale of sport fishing licenses. To help control program costs, projects often partner with other state agencies, and local governments.

### ELIGIBLE USES

Recreational access needs are assessed, and projects identified by the local Division of Sport Fish Area Management Biologist or Access Program staff. The local biologist submits a list of project ideas annually to the Access Program Manager, who then reviews and researches the projects to ensure adherence to program regulations and Division of Sport Fish Access Program guidelines. Project ideas are ranked using established criteria, and are then prioritized based on project validity, need, and funding availability.

Sport Fish Restoration Recreational Angler Access (Non-Boating) funds can be used for acquiring land, and constructing, improving, or maintaining public works such as sport fishing related parking and camping areas, trails, fishing piers or docks, fish cleaning tables, restrooms, and associated facilities that are not related to power boating use.

Projects which may be eligible under this category include, but are not limited to:

- Construction of trails and grate walks.
- Fish cleaning stations.
- Land acquisition and development of fishing lakes and ponds where motorboats are not allowed.
- Access roads, bridges, signals, and other requirements to provide the public access to non-boating facilities.
- Camping facilities, restrooms, showers, potable water, security lights, trash receptacles, and parking areas associated with angler access facilities.
- Engineering costs (planning and construction) as well as the costs of environmental assessments and permit applications.
- Operation and maintenance of angler access facilities.
- Signage for effective use of access facilities and recognition of Sport Fish Federal Aid in Restoration Program.
- Publication of guides, brochures, maps, road signs, Internet sites, and other aids to inform sport anglers of access sites.

## **CURRENT STATUS IN ALASKA**

ADF&G does not put out calls for proposals out for the Sport Fish Restoration/ Dingell-Johnson grant program funds. Boating and non-boating angler access needs are identified by area management biologists based on input and requests they receive from local boaters, anglers and related organizations. All eligible projects are ranked using a set of established criteria and the decision to fund or not is determined by the agency's leadership and the approved budget.

That said, it has been many years since ADF&G have had funds available for non-boating recreational angler access projects and they don't foresee that changing given the current budget scenario. They also have a long list of projects that they would field if the funds became available.

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For more information on the Sport Fish Restoration, or Dingell-Johnson program visit:

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingSportBoatingAnglerAccess.main>

## 3. OTHER FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### 3.1 LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF)

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a federal 50% matching grant program overseen by the Department of Interior, National Park Service (NPS). LWCF is administered in partnership with individual states and U.S. territories, and provides grants for projects featuring “close-to-home” outdoor recreational opportunities for the public. In Alaska, LWCF has been administered by the State of AK Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, with funding recommendations reviewed by the Outdoor Recreational Trails Advisory Board (ORTAB).

LWCF revenue is generated primarily from Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas proceeds, motorboat fuels tax, and sales of surplus government property. The amount varies annually. More than \$40 million in LWCF grants has been invested in over 350 projects in Alaska since inception of the program in 1965.

The program has been controversial in at the national level. As currently structured, funding from off-shore oil and gas revenues goes into the US general fund, requiring Congress to set the appropriate appropriation of these funds each year. A bill is currently pending in Congress that would fix the appropriation in perpetuity, taking the appropriation decision out of Congress’s hands. Also controversial is the requirement that lands acquired with LWCF funds be forever held in public ownership and used for open space and recreational purposes.

#### **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

State, regional or local governments with the legal authority to provide park and recreation services on public lands are eligible to apply for LWCF assistance. Nonprofits might partner with a governmental entity to perform some of the work. LWCF requires 50% match, which can be met by cash and in-kind contributions, including adequately documented donations of goods or services such as equipment time and volunteer hours.

The grant process may be slow and complex, sometimes taking over a year from the application stage to the agreement between the state and sub-recipient, as each stage is reviewed and approved by NPS.

Typical LWCF schedule:

#### *Year 1*

- Aug/Sept: Competitive applications are requested (Competition open 90-120 days)
- Nov/Dec: Review submitted proposals for completeness and eligibility. Prepare and transmit to ORTAB for review.

#### *Year 2*

- January: ORTAB meeting to rank proposals and make funding recommendations
- February/March: Prep applications for NPS preview and approval to upload to Grants.gov
- April/May: When Grants.gov “window” is open, upload to this national database

- Sept/October: State receives grant agreement from NPS
- November/December: State issues/awaits execution of grant agreement between state and sub-recipients

## **ELIGIBLE USES**

LWCF projects need to be identified as a priority according to the [Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan: 2016-2021](#) (SCORP), and require to score at high or moderate priority to be selected. High priority projects include trail and facility upgrades, improved access to recreation areas, and those improving ADA accessibility.

Eligible projects include:

- Trail and facility upgrades or improvements (includes support facilities, restrooms, campsites)
- Improved access to recreation areas (parking, boat launches, trailheads, signage, etc.)
- Improving ADA accessibility (on trails, in parking areas, etc)
- Acquisition or development of new trails and facilities is a moderate SCORP priority.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act requires that property acquired or developed with LWCF assistance must be dedicated in perpetuity to public outdoor recreation. Any property so acquired or developed shall not be wholly or partly converted to other uses without the written approval of the Secretary of the Department of Interior or designee. This is both a lengthy and costly process, requiring many items, including replacing the “converted” land with land of greater or equal recreational value, and monetary value at currently appraised prices.

## **CURRENT STATUS IN ALASKA**

In FY2019, the federal apportionment for Alaska was roughly \$1.5 million. However, the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation did not receive the necessary receipt authority from the State to hold an LWCF grant competition. LWCF money must be obligated within 3 years after apportionment, or it will no longer be available. Therefore, DPOR anticipates rolling this funding forward to future grant rounds and has requested additional receipt authority from the State OMB. Further, the leftover funds from FY2018 - \$0.5M - add up to the total, bringing the unused Alaska LWCF funds to \$2M at this time (April 2020).

Typically, DPOR reserves half of each year’s apportionment for State outdoor recreation projects and half is available for locally sponsored projects. However, the State reserves the right to adjust that split, as warranted. State proposals do not compete against local proposals.

During the last competition in FY2018, the following proposals were approved - 5 to local communities and 1 for the State:

Municipality of Anchorage: Lyons Parks \$168,640  
 City & Borough of Wrangell: Angerman Park \$71,000  
 Haines Borough: Tlingit Park Upgrade & Harbor Connection \$216,312  
 Ketchikan Gateway Borough: Dudley Field: Restrooms & Storage \$136,000  
 Metlakatla Indian Community: Cedars 3: Scout Lake Connector Trail \$136,000  
 Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation: 6 Public Use Cabins \$230,000

For more information on the LWCF program in AK visit <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/lwcf.htm>

## 3.2 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CHALLENGE COST SHARE

The Challenge Cost Share Program is intended to support National Park Service projects that align with goals of local project partners. Projects should promote improved access and opportunities for outdoor recreation, environmental stewardship, and education in the National Parks, National Trails and / or Wild and Scenic Rivers. National Park Service staff works with local project partners to achieve these mutually beneficial outcomes. The partner organization is required to match the amount of Challenge Cost Share funding received with an equal share from the partner(s); any combination of cash, goods, and services can be counted toward the partner's cost share requirement, as long as all come from non-federal sources.

The maximum Challenge Cost Share project support is \$25,000.

### **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

Applications are submitted only by National Park Service staff; project partners are expected to collaborate fully in the application process but are not themselves eligible to apply. Partners may be educational institutions, private for-profit entities, or non-profit organizations. The project must have the endorsement of the NPS, as well as assurance from the local partner(s) that the project's budget is viable. If a project is selected, the partner organization will enter a formal agreement to receive and manage the project funds consistent with the project's purpose and budget.

Application deadline for FY2020 was April 2019. Future schedule is unknown currently.

### **ELIGIBLE USES**

Projects that directly benefit one or more NPS-administered Parks, National Trails, and Wild and Scenic Rivers (including Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers).

### **CURRENT STATUS IN ALASKA**

Administering agency in Alaska is NPS Alaska Region.

Past projects in Alaska include:

- 1) 2017 Education Without Walls and the Wrangell–St. Elias National Park
- 2) 2018 Yakutat Tlingit Tribe and Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, Hoonah, Alaska

There was no Challenge Cost Share project in 2019.

For more information visit <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1837/index.htm>

Email: [akr\\_rtca@nps.gov](mailto:akr_rtca@nps.gov)

## 3.3 US FOREST SERVICE - ALASKA FOREST FUND

The US Forest Service and National Forest Foundation (NFF) developed the Alaska Forest Fund to accomplish priority conservation and recreational enhancement projects. The Fund, led

by the NFF, leverages federal funding with private support from corporations, foundations, individuals, and nonprofit organizations.

The NFF then uses the funds to implement restoration projects by local non-profit organizations or contractors. Partners receiving awards provide additional leverage in the form of cash, volunteer labor or in-kind support. For non-profit partners, local contractors and rural communities adjacent to National Forests, the Alaska Fund is a meaningful source of capital that will increase their ability to share in the stewardship of the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest.

## **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

For more information on the Alaska Forest Fund contact Patrick Shannon, Pacific Northwest Director, [pshannon@nationalforests.org](mailto:pshannon@nationalforests.org), 503-407-2898 or Dayle Wallien, Conservation Partnerships Director, 206-832-8280, [dwallien@nationalforests.org](mailto:dwallien@nationalforests.org).

## **ELIGIBLE USES**

Projects are based upon the priorities of Alaska's National Forests and determined through a process managed by the NFF. These projects include:

- building new or repairing existing trails;
- improving access to subsistence areas or improving subsistence resources;
- hardening motorized trails and making them ecologically sustainable;
- restoring habitat impacted by recreational and other uses;
- restoring public use cabins.

## **CURRENT STATUS IN ALASKA**

The Forest Service provides funds to the NFF, which then works with corporations, foundations, individuals, and nonprofit organizations to find matching funds. In its first year, the AFF generated \$381,000 additional funds for local trail restoration, conservation initiatives and cabin renovations in Alaska. To date, most of the funding has supported 5 efforts on the Tongass National Forest, but work is now in progress to bring funding for work on the Iditarod National Historic Trail in Chugach National Forest.

<https://www.nationalforests.org/who-we-are/regional-offices/pnwprogram/alaska-forest-fund>

## **3.4 EPA BROWNFIELD CLEANUP GRANTS**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Cleanup Grants provide funds to empower states, communities, tribes, and nonprofit organizations to prevent, inventory, assess, clean up, and reuse brownfield sites. An applicant must be the sole owner of the site(s) that is the subject of its Cleanup Grant application. An application for funding for a brownfield site where EPA Cleanup Grant funds were previously expended will not be eligible for funding.

Projects should aim at revitalization of brownfield sites, to stimulate economic development in the target area upon completion of the cleanup of these properties, and/or to facilitate the

creation of, preservation of, or addition to a park, a greenway, a trail, undeveloped property, recreational property, or other property used for nonprofit purposes.

### **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

Deadline for 2019 was December 3, 2019. The Grants program requests a 20% match but that can be waived due to hardship.

EPA anticipates awarding an estimated 18 Cleanup Grants for an estimated \$9 million. The maximum amount of EPA funds that will be awarded under a Cleanup Grant is \$500,000. Applicants may propose to use up to \$500,000 to clean up one brownfield site or to allocate up to \$500,000 among multiple sites.

### **CURRENT STATUS IN ALASKA**

There are numerous brownfield sites in AK:

<https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=315240bfbaf84aa0b8272ad1cef3cad3>

In 2019 Alaska received one EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant:

Assessment Grant: \$300,000 hazardous substances, \$300,000 petroleum

EPA has selected the Municipality of Anchorage for a Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant. Community-wide hazardous substances and petroleum grant funds will be used to conduct 10 Phase I and 10 Phase II environmental site assessments and prepare six cleanup plans and two site reuse plans. Grant funds also will be used to prioritize brownfields and support community outreach activities. The five target areas for this grant are East Downtown/Fairview/Ship Creek, Downtown Core, Midtown/Spenard, Mountain View, and Chugiak/Eagle River. Coalition partners are the Anchorage Community Development Authority and Eklutna Inc.

For more information visit

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2019-10/documents/epa-olem-oblr-19-07.pdf>

# ALASKA STATE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Alaska state provides funds for one trails-related program, funded by DMV snowmachine registration fees.

## SNOWMACHINE TRAILS PROGRAM

The Snowmachine Trails Program provides reimbursable, matching grant funds for activities related to Snowmachine use in AK. It is managed by the SnowTRAC committee of the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

The program has two separate components: trail projects and grooming. The Grooming Pool aims to distribute grant funds for grooming, marking and signing snowmachine trail systems. Trail projects focus on trail easement acquisition, development and maintenance of trails and trail-related facilities for Snowmachine use.

Funds for the Snowmachine Trails Program come from the AK DMV snowmobile point-of-sale registration fees. Applications are open in September and grant selections are made in November each year.

### CURRENT STATUS IN ALASKA

For FY2018 AK DMV collected \$180,100.00 leaving \$158,488 available to allocate to grooming and trail projects after 12% administration allowance was removed. In FY2018 all funds went to the Grooming Pool because no trail project proposals were received.

This map shows the locations of the Grooming Pool trails throughout the state.

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/groompl.htm>

For more information about the Snowmachine Trails Program visit:

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/snowmotr.htm>

## STATE "G.O." GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS

The State Constitution provides that General Obligation Bonds must be authorized by law and ratified by the voters. Generally, the Constitution permits authorization of GOB's only for capital improvements. The legal provisions regarding GOB's are contained in Section 8, Article IX of the Alaska Constitution and AS 37.15, the State Bonding Act. The amount and timing of a bond sale must be approved by the State Bond Committee. There is no statutory limit on the amount of State GOB's that may be authorized.

As of June 30, 2017 the State had issued GOB's 66 times since statehood, raising over \$3 billion. With the need for capital funding continuing to grow in Alaska, and state revenues in decline, many parties in and outside the Legislature are suggesting this may be an appropriate time to use G.O. bonds. GO bonds would be one good means to fund investments like trails and other forms of outdoor recreation infrastructure that can in turn generate more economic activity. For more information, see the website below:

[https://treasury.dor.alaska.gov/Portals/0/docs/State%20Debt%20Book%20January%202017-2018%20updated%20final%202\\_9\\_18.pdf](https://treasury.dor.alaska.gov/Portals/0/docs/State%20Debt%20Book%20January%202017-2018%20updated%20final%202_9_18.pdf)

# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

State and federal governments often allocate funds and engage in partnerships and technical assistance programs for trails management and outdoor recreation. Agencies that allocate regular budgetary funding for trails-related technical assistance programs are listed below.

## FEDERAL

### **National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program (NPS/RTCA)**

supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects nationwide. The national network of conservation and recreation planning professionals partners with community groups, nonprofits, tribes, and state and local governments to design trails and parks, conserve and improve access to rivers, protect special places, and create recreation opportunities.

The FY 2019 NPS request provides \$9.1 million in the National Recreation and Preservation account for the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) and \$32.7 million for Historic Preservation Fund grants. These programs support NPS stewardship of important cultural resources and ecosystems, and assist States, local communities, and other groups in developing recreational sites and facilities to protect and conserve important, non-federal cultural and historic assets. The RTCA program provides technical assistance and support to communities across the U.S., helping them realize their local conservation and outdoor recreation vision. The NPS collaborates and works to leverage public and private resources to create successful close-to-home community-led projects. Through these projects, the National Park Service has collaborated with more than 14,000 partners to create 1.1 million acres of parks, build 38,400 miles of trails, and conserve 22,200 miles of rivers in all 50 states and territories. <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm>

#### *Contacts in Alaska:*

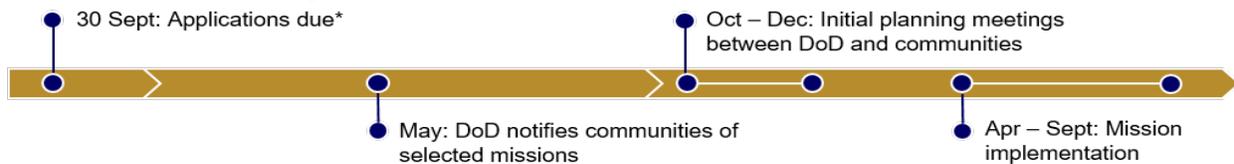
Zachary Babbs – Program Manager [Zachary\\_Babb@nps.gov](mailto:Zachary_Babb@nps.gov)

Michael Downs – Senior Outdoor Recreation Planner [Michael\\_E\\_Downs@nps.gov](mailto:Michael_E_Downs@nps.gov)

**Innovative Readiness Training (IRT)** is a Department of Defense (DoD) military training opportunity that delivers joint training opportunities to increase deployment readiness. IRT is a collaborative program that leverages military contributions and community resources to multiply value and cost savings for participants. Civil Engineering missions provide training opportunities to military units while providing incidental benefit to communities via infrastructure construction and improvements. Trails-relevant construction includes bridges, utilities, roadways, and other paving activities such as runway improvements. Communities typically provide materials (e.g. construction materials) and basic services (e.g. facilities) while the military provides the expertise and the workforce.

*Alaskan example:* Old Harbor Native Corporation and City of Old Harbor, AK are collaborating on a project with IRT to build a 1-mile road.

## 24-Month Community Timeline



\*Applications received after the September 30 deadline are unlikely to be matched until the next mission planning cycle.

<https://irt.defense.gov/>

**Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Department of Agriculture** administers the Conservation Technical Assistance Program (CTA). The program provides land users with conservation technology. The primary purposes of the CTA Program are to: reduce soil loss from erosion; solve soil, water quality, water conservation, air quality, and agricultural waste management problems; reduce potential damage caused by excess water and sedimentation or drought; enhance the quality of fish and wildlife habitat; improve the long term sustainability of all lands, including cropland, forestland, grazing lands, coastal lands, and developed and/or developing lands; and assist others in facilitating changes in land use as needed for natural resource protection and sustainability. Technical assistance is the help provided by NRCS, employees of other entities or agencies under the technical supervision of NRCS, to clients to address opportunities, concerns, and problems related to the use of natural resources.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/technical/cta/>

**US Forest Service (USFS)** engages citizens and organizations in partnerships and welcomes collaborations and proposals related to trails and access. USFS partners include land management agencies across all levels of government, nonprofit and for-profit entities, and communities. A successful example in Alaska is the USFS partnership with the **National Forest Foundation (NFF)** resulting in the Alaska Forest Fund (AFF) that leverages federal funding with private support in a straightforward way.

<https://www.fs.fed.us/working-with-us/partnerships>

**Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** welcomes partnerships in Alaska. Their partners range from national organizations, tribes, community associations, and volunteers to schools and educational institutions, friends groups, youth corps organizations, businesses, and other government agencies.

<https://www.blm.gov/get-involved/partnerships/about-our-partners>

**US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)** has successful partnerships with a number of national and local organizations. Because of personnel and funding constraints, agencies increasingly rely on volunteers and cooperating organizations to help in the successful execution of projects that would not otherwise be possible. The Service views these cooperative agreement as one that complements other formal volunteer programs. The contribution of funds or personnel assistance to the Service confers no special rights or privileges upon the contributor.

<https://www.fws.gov/refuges/youcanhelp/partnerships.html>

The Transportation Branch of the *Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)*, Alaska Region, provides management and oversight of the *Tribal Transportation Program (TTP)*. Transportation-related program activities are pursued through Government-to-Government program agreements and self-determination contracts with the 229 federally-recognized Alaska Native Tribes. Program activities include planning, design, construction, road and bridge maintenance, safety, transit operations, and more. Each year TTP funds are provided to tribal governments to address transportation needs in tribal communities. The TTP funding is allocated to each tribal government based on a formula that is derived by the National American Housing Self Determination Act (NAHSDA) population. The 229 tribes in Alaska will receive approximately \$45 million per year for years 2016 to 2020 for transportation planning, maintenance, and construction, which equates to a total of approximately \$240 million. The TTP funds are the most flexible funding source in the transportation sector and are the only federal funding source that can be matched with Title 23 federal funding. They can be spent on projects identified and prioritized by a tribe and can be used when developing a project using funding from multiple funding sources.

<https://www.bia.gov/regional-offices/alaska/transportation>

## STATE AGENCIES

*Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation* manages the vast Alaska State Park System. Containing 3.2 million acres, the system is the newest and largest in the United States. The system provides over 2,500 campsites, 128 trailheads, and 37 boat launches. Alaska State Parks receive over 4 million visits per year, almost twice the visitation seen in Alaska's National Parks. However, despite the increase in funding from both the legislature and user fees over the last 15 years, the division's budget has not kept up with the inflation, maintenance needs and system expansion. The deferred maintenance backlog for park facilities is now over \$49 million. In some years, as little as \$50,000 was appropriated to address this statewide backlog. At this rate, the deferred maintenance needs will continue to grow rapidly and significantly shorten the useful life of park facilities. A concerted multi-year effort will be necessary to rebuild and maintain Alaska's state park facilities to acceptable standards.

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/plans/strategicplan/compltpian.pdf>

*ADNR Division of Mining, Land and Water* manages all state-owned land except for trust property and units of the Alaska State Park System. When all land conveyances under the Alaska Statehood Act are complete, the division will be responsible for over 100 million acres of uplands, including non-petroleum minerals in these lands. In addition, the division manages Alaska's 65 million acres of tidelands, shorelands, and submerged lands, including some 34,000 miles of coastline. Finally, the division has jurisdiction over all of the State's water resources, equaling about 40% of the entire nation's stock of fresh water.

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/aboutus.htm>

*The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)* has an operating budget of approximately \$200 million, and it consists of a variety of funding sources, including federal receipts, general fund receipts, fish and game fund receipts, and several other sources. In regards to trail-related funding, the Sport Fisheries Division protects and improves public access to recreational fisheries resources.

[https://www.omb.alaska.gov/ombfiles/18\\_budget/Fish/Proposed/comp464.pdf](https://www.omb.alaska.gov/ombfiles/18_budget/Fish/Proposed/comp464.pdf)

*The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities* designs, constructs, operates and maintains the state's transportation infrastructure systems, buildings, and other facilities used by Alaskans and visitors. These include more than 5,600 miles of paved and gravel highways; more than 300 aviation facilities, including 239 airports; 21 harbors; and a ferry system covering 3,500 nautical miles serving 35 coastal communities. Recent efforts of the AK DOT/PF to develop community trails for pedestrian and bicycle use resulted in a comprehensive Alaska Active Transportation Plan.

[http://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/areaplans/modal\\_system/bikeped.shtml](http://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/areaplans/modal_system/bikeped.shtml)

## LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

This section covers miscellaneous sources of funding available from local governments.

**Municipal Parks and Recreation Departments** have funds and resources for trails development and often work with partners on projects. Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department, in particular, invites volunteer proposals from individuals and organizations with a goal of "improving, refurbishing and supporting the Municipality's park and recreation system." <http://www.muni.org/Departments/parks/Documents/Final%20Park%20Improvement%20Proposal%20Rev%209-10.pdf>

### TWO OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING SOURCES – MORE INFO TO BE ADDED:

- **Local Government bonds** – Over the last dozen years, local governments like the Municipality of Anchorage and the Mat Su Borough have successfully used bonds to raise money for a range of park, trail and recreation projects. These bonds are paid for using a small increment in additional property tax, typically less than \$2.00 per \$100,000 in assessed property value. Anchorage voters have approved 90% of all bonds put on the ballot raising over \$25 million dollars for parks and trails. Key to the success of these voter approved bonds is a solid track record, as has been developed by the Anchorage Park Foundation and the MOA Parks Department, in efficiently producing quality tangible results with voter approved funds.
- **Local Service Districts** – Service areas can provide funding for a range of public services. The funding for service area projects is derived from an increment of tax revenue within the defined service area. Two successful examples: Eagle River recreational service area relies on property tax revenue to generate annual funds used to both build and maintain parks and trails; the recently established Talkeetna Sewer service area uses sales tax revenue to

maintain and expand sewer treatment capacity in downtown to respond to steadily growing demands from tourism.

Service areas offer several real advantages in providing funding for trails and other recreation infrastructure, and to provide services that come when demand is growing from visitors and residents:

- Service areas are governed by a locally elected board, providing a great deal of local autonomy and control
- Service areas link growth in demand for services with growth in revenues to meet those demand (a direct solution to the “Alaska Disconnect”)

## FOUNDATIONS

### **Alaska Community Foundation: Anchorage Trail Care Grant Fund**

The Alaska Community Foundation (ACF) provides Anchorage Trail Care Grant Fund to support summer soft surface trail maintenance and construction projects in the Anchorage Bowl, from Girdwood to Eklutna. Soft surface trails are meant to include non-paved trails on public land used for non-motorized activities where maintenance is not generally funded through local, state, or federal budgets. Eligibility is limited to 501(c)3 nonprofits, or equivalent, organizations located in the state of Alaska. Equivalent organizations may include tribes, schools, churches, local government agencies, and programs. Individual grant amounts range from \$1,000-\$3,500 for a total of up to \$7,000.

<https://alaskacf.org/blog/grants/anchorage-trail-care/>

### **Anchorage Park Foundation: Community Challenge Grants**

Community Challenge Grants are dollar-for-dollar matching grants aimed to improve Anchorage parks and trails and increase feelings of community in neighborhoods. They offer a way to achieve community priorities to improve a park or trail that would not otherwise be funded through the Municipality of Anchorage.

<https://anchorageparkfoundation.org/programs/community-challenge-grants/>

### **Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation (MSTPF): Trails and Parks Grants**

<https://matsutrails.org/our-grants/>

The MSTPF supports organizations that advance quality trails and parks in the Mat-Su Borough. The foundation considers applications for financial assistance on a competitive basis each quarter as funding availability allows. The MSTPF Trails and Parks Grants provide the opportunity for eligible organizations to apply for grants up to \$100,000.00.

Many trails stewardship nonprofits provide opportunities to partner with and share resources for trails advancement. Examples of such organizations include Trails Mix in Juneau, Girdwood Trails Committee, and sport associations such as Chugach Mountain Bike Riders and Tsalteshi Trails Association in Soldotna.

### **Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm (KMTA) National Heritage Area: Programmatic and Community Grants**

KMTA awards annual grants to community projects that recognize, preserve, and interpret the historic, scenic, and natural recreational resources and cultural landscapes of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm historic transportation corridor. Projects promote and facilitate public

enjoyment of these resources. KMTA seeks to equitably fund diverse activities geographically distributed throughout the communities and transportation corridor of the Heritage Area. First-time applicants may request between \$300 – \$10,000.

Schedule for 2020:

JANUARY 6th: Applications Open

JANUARY 22nd: Grant Application Info Webinar.

MARCH 6th: Grant Applications Due

LATE APRIL: Spring Grants Awarded

EARLY MAY: Grant Recipients Notified

<https://kmtacorridor.org/grant-guidelines>

**Rasmuson Foundation:** *Tier 1 and Tier 2 grants*

Tier 1: Eligible activities include expansion of services or start-up of innovative programs that address issues of community and statewide importance.

Tier 2 Grants: Grants of more than \$25,000 for large capital (building) projects, projects of demonstrable strategic importance or innovative nature that address issues of broad community or statewide significance.

Schedule:

Tier 1 - There is no specific deadline for Tier 1 requests. They are reviewed on a rolling basis.

150 awards approved annually, these are grants of up to \$25,000.

Tier 2 - Twice a year (by Feb 1 and July 15)

<https://www.rasmuson.org/grants/tier-1-grants/>