

# Federal Funding for Recreation

## U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service

### Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – State Assistance Grants

This program provides up to 50% matching grants to states (who then subgrant to local communities) to acquire and develop public parks and other outdoor recreation facilities. In Vermont, LWCF is administered by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation (FPR).

**Additional information:** <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/lwcf/stateside.htm> and <https://fpr.vermont.gov/land-and-water-conservation-fund>

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### Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership

This new national competitive program provides grants to help urban communities acquire and/or develop land to create or reinvigorate public parks and other outdoor recreation spaces.

**Additional information:** <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1600/whatwedo.htm> and <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=P18AS00153%20> (2018 application)

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### Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA)

This program implements the natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission of the National Park Service. RTCA can help create local, regional and state networks of parks, rivers, trails, greenways and open spaces by collaborating with community partners and National Park areas.

**Additional information:** <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm>

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**National Park Service Conservation, Protection, Outreach, and Education**

This program supports projects that are complementary to National Park Service (NPS) efforts in resource conservation and protection, historical preservation and environmental sustainability. These projects may include but are not limited to research, education, outdoor recreation and community outreach and safety. The objectives include promoting the use of culturally diverse resources and environmental advocacy in collaboration and cooperation with state, tribal, and local governments, nonprofit organizations and educational institutions. Nonprofit organizations may submit an application for support. Due to limited availability of funds to support new external projects, consultation with NPS is strongly recommended prior to submission of applications.

**Additional information:**

[https://beta.sam.gov/fal/e659ef9d5184420a9b0445e6e4cedfbc/view?keywords=recreation&sort=-relevance&index=cfda&is\\_active=true&page=2](https://beta.sam.gov/fal/e659ef9d5184420a9b0445e6e4cedfbc/view?keywords=recreation&sort=-relevance&index=cfda&is_active=true&page=2)

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**Hydropower Recreation Assistance (FERC Hydropower Licensing Program)**

This program provides technical resources to government, industry, and nonprofits through the hydropower (re)licensing process to help meet outdoor recreation and river conservation needs.

**Additional information:** <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1988/index.htm>

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**For more NPS resources, please see <https://www.nps.gov/articles/community-assistance-national-regional-programs.htm>**

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## U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Forest Service

### Community Forest Program

The Community Forest Program (CFP) is a competitive grant program that provides financial assistance to tribal entities, local governments, and qualified conservation non-profit organizations to acquire and establish community forests that provide community benefits. Community benefits include economic benefits through active forest management, clean water, wildlife habitat, educational opportunities, and public access for recreation.

**Additional information:** <https://www.fs.fed.us/managing-land/private-land/community-forest>

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### Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – Forest Legacy Program

The Forest Legacy Program (FLP) is a conservation program administered by the U.S. Forest Service in partnership with the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation (FPR) to encourage the protection of privately owned forest lands through conservation easements or land purchases. Protection of private forests through FLP maintains a multitude of public benefits.

**Additional information:** <https://www.fs.fed.us/managing-land/private-land/forest-legacy> and <https://fpr.vermont.gov/state-lands/acquisition/forest-legacy-program>

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## U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration

### Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a federal assistance program of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), administered in Vermont by the Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation (FPR), providing funding for development and maintenance of recreational trail projects. Each fall, FPR solicits RTP grant applications for trail projects from municipalities and non-profit organizations. RTP grants typically range from \$5,000 to \$50,000. Grants

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are awarded for well-planned trail projects that will develop, protect and maintain trails and trail systems to create linkages to communities, improve livability and user-ability, and are open and maintained for public recreational use. RTP supports a wide range of recreational trail activities, such as hiking, mountain biking, walking, running, paddling (water-based trail use), cross-country and back-country skiing, nature-based interpretive trail use, equestrian, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicular riding or other off-road motorized recreational uses.

**Additional information:** [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/) and <https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreational-trails-program>

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**Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)**

The purpose of FLAP is to provide safe and adequate transportation access to and through Federal Lands for visitors, recreationists, and resource users. The FLAP supplements state and local resources for public roads, transit systems, and other transportation facilities, with an emphasis on high-use recreation sites and economic generators. Projects are selected by a Programming Decision Committee (PDC) established in each state. The PDCs request project applications through a call for projects.

**Additional information:** <https://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/>

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## Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

### Recreation Economy for Rural Communities

Recreation Economy for Rural Communities is a new planning assistance program (sponsored by EPA, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Northern Border Regional Commission) to help communities develop strategies and an action plan to revitalize their Main Streets through outdoor recreation. This is not a grant program. With this assistance, a planning team will help communities bring together local residents and other stakeholders to decide on strategies and an action plan to grow the local outdoor recreation economy. The planning assistance process will take place over a period of four to six months, with a focal point being a two-day, facilitated community workshop. Participants will work together to identify a vision, goals, and specific actions to realize the locally set goals. Eligible applicants include local governments, Indian tribes, and nonprofit institutions and organizations representing any community in the United States. Special consideration will be given to communities that are small towns; economically disadvantaged, such as those in Opportunity Zones; and/or in the Northern Border region of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York (all of Vermont is included in this region).

**Additional information:** <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/recreation-economy-rural-communities>

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## Other Federal Funding Sources

*Please note that while these programs may fund recreation projects, they are not solely dedicated to recreation.*

## U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Rural Development

### Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program

This program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. An essential community facility is defined as a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community in a primarily rural area, and does not include private, commercial or business undertakings.

**Additional information:** <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program/vt>

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## Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC)

### Economic & Infrastructure Development Investment Program

Since its founding in 2008, the NBRC federal-state partnership has provided federal grants to employment generating projects that have helped reduce poverty, unemployment, and outmigration. This is primarily accomplished through the NBRC's Economic & Infrastructure Development Investment program. Depending on the level of economic and demographic distress in the applicant's county, NBRC-funded projects can be eligible for up to an 80% matching grant. Please note that the Northern Border region now encompasses all of Vermont.

**Additional information:** <http://www.nbrc.gov/>

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## Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

### Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) - Vermont Community Development Program

The Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) assists communities on a competitive basis by providing federal CDBG financial and technical assistance to identify and address local needs in the areas of housing, economic development, public facilities (including senior centers and community centers), public services, and handicapped accessibility modifications. Any Vermont town, city (except Burlington, which administers its own program\*), incorporated village chartered to function as a general purpose unit of local government, or a consortium of such entities, is eligible for funding. However, the majority of projects are a coordinated effort between the municipalities, community groups and local or state non-profit organizations or small businesses.

**Additional information:** <http://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/vcdp>

**\*Information on Burlington's program:** <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CEDO/CDBG-Program-Overview>

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**For general information about federal grants and how to apply, please visit**  
<https://www.sanders.senate.gov/services/grants>.

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