

**Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)  
Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2)  
Grant Program Requirements and Guidelines**

**Administered by Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC)**

**Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Grant Cycle Applications**

**Applications Due (electronically) by  
Wednesday, April 12, 2017 at 4:00 PM**

These Grant Program Requirements and Guidelines are intended to expedite, simplify and standardize the administration of the Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2). If a grant is awarded, additional grant administration materials and guidelines will be provided.

DCNR provides pre-application help to grant applicants through the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC) Regional Advisors, pre-application workshops, technical reports and publications. Refer to the website for more information on the BRC C2P2 grants and current contacts; <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/index.aspx>.

Persons needing assistance when applying online using the application found at the website listed above may call the Grants Customer Service Center at 1-800-326-7734, Voice/TTY users call 1-800-654-5984. Persons having general questions regarding the grant application should always contact their DCNR Regional Advisor or BRC staff member.

*The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is an Equal Opportunity Employer and prohibits discrimination against users of programs, facilities or services funded or provided by the Department, regardless of race, color, sex, age, religion, political affiliation, national origin or disability.*

**Grants Customer Service Center Mailing Address**

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
Bureau of Recreation and Conservation  
Attn: Grants Customer Service Center  
400 Market Street, RCSOB 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
P.O. Box 8475  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8475



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BUREAU OF RECREATION AND CONSERVATION

September 30, 2016

Dear Recreation and Conservation Partner:

The DCNR recreation and conservation grants program will be accepting applications from January 23 to April 12, 2017. The Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC) has provided technical and grant assistance in support of nearly 7,000 projects that have helped plan, acquire, and develop parks, recreation facilities, trails, and conserved critical conservation areas and watersheds. Bureau resources also support many of the commonwealth's conservation, recreation and heritage partners.

The Pennsylvania Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2014-2019 ([www.paoutdoorrecplan.com](http://www.paoutdoorrecplan.com)) identifies PA outdoor recreation priorities. Projects will be selected, in part, on how well they align to these priorities. The priorities include:

**Community Parks & Recreation:** Priority projects in this category include planning and development projects that focus on rehabilitation of existing parks or promote health and wellness through innovative partnerships.

**Land Conservation:** Priority projects in this category include land conservation projects that protect critical habitat, forested watersheds, wetlands, and riparian corridors or create critical connections between public lands.

**Rivers Implementation:** Priority projects in this category include projects that enhance public access to Pennsylvania's waterways or projects that improve Pennsylvania's watersheds including the planting of riparian forest buffers.

**Trails:** Priority projects in this category include projects that close priority trail gaps as well as projects that rehabilitate or upgrade existing trails.

BRC staff are available to assist you in developing a competitive grant application. Staff contact information can be found on the regional office tab at: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/aboutus/index.htm>.

For more information on available grant program webinars and workshops, visit the DCNR Calendar of Events at <http://events.dcnr.pa.gov/>.

Thank you for your interest in working with DCNR to enhance the quality of life in your community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas P. Ford".

Thomas P. Ford  
Acting Bureau Director

## NOTE TO ALL READERS

1. ALL Applicants should read the **General Program Requirements and Guidelines** as laid out in this document along with the following document:

### [Grant Terms and Conditions](#)

The "GRANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS" will be incorporated in the Grant Agreement and the "GRANT AGREEMENT SIGNATURE PAGE" included in the application will become the Signature Page for the Grant Agreement for applicants selected for funding. We suggest that your solicitor/counsel review the Grant Terms and Conditions before you submit a grant application. They are mandatory for all grant projects and are not negotiable.

2. Then – **read** the sections related to the specific type of project for which you are seeking funds:

### [Development Projects](#)

### [Land Acquisition Projects](#)

### [Partnerships Projects](#)

### [Planning Projects](#)

### [Trail Projects](#)

### [Riparian Forest Buffers](#)

3. The following are federally funded programs administered by the Bureau:

### [Land and Water Conservation Program Fact Sheet](#)

### [National Land and Water Conservation Fund Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program](#)

### [PA Recreational Trails Program Fact Sheet](#)

## **Pre-Application Period- Developing the Grant Application**

The first step in developing a grant application is to contact the applicable DCNR Regional Office or BRC staff member. DCNR Regional Advisors are responsible for providing technical assistance to potential applicants and in many cases will meet with applicants at the proposed project site. Their role is to assist the applicant in developing a competitive, complete, and accurate application. Projects are ranked in order of highest to lowest score based on their total rating score of the criteria in the "Project Narrative". (In rating a project application, the Bureau may consider other factors for selection such as regional priorities, regional demand and demonstration projects.) The highest scored projects will be selected for funding until available funds are exhausted.

## **Program Administration/Organization**

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC) provides a single point of contact for communities and non-profit conservation agencies seeking state assistance through its Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) in support of local recreation and conservation initiatives. This assistance can take the form of grants, technical assistance, information exchange and training. All of DCNR's funding sources are combined into one annual application cycle (generally early spring), and there is a single application format and process with one set of requirements and guidelines. Some C2P2 applications are selected for funding through the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Program or the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program, which require some supplemental information to address federal requirements. To obtain assistance, contact one of DCNR's BRC six Regional Offices.

A wide range of grant and technical assistance programs are offered through the C2P2 program to help Pennsylvania communities, land conservancies and non-profit organizations plan, acquire and develop:

- recreation, park and conservation facilities,
- watersheds, rivers corridors and resources,
- greenways and trails,
- heritage areas and facilities, and
- critical habitat, natural areas and open space.

Agency programs are linked with other State agency efforts to conserve historic resources, protect water quality, enhance tourism, and foster community development. Technical assistance or grant funding can be provided to undertake recreation and conservation projects, examples include but are not limited to:

- developing a trail that connects a subdivision to a downtown business district,
- rehabilitating a community athletic field,
- building a safe playground,
- preparing a watershed or greenways plan,
- protecting critical natural or open space areas, or
- rehabilitating a snowmobile or ATV trail.

The demand for DCNR's C2P2 funds has been steadily increasing as communities and conservancies seek to meet the recreation and conservation needs of residents; increase their access to outdoor recreation and natural areas, enhance quality of life and preserve critical landscapes.

## II. Bureau Priorities

In 2017, the DCNR grant program will focus on supporting community recreation and conservation infrastructure projects that implement Pennsylvania's 2014-2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan [www.paoutdoorrecplan.com](http://www.paoutdoorrecplan.com).

Specific priorities for grant funding include:

**Community Parks & Recreation:** Priority projects in this category include planning and development projects that focus on rehabilitation of existing parks

**Land Conservation:** Priority projects in this category include land conservation projects that protect critical habitat, forested watersheds, wetlands, and riparian corridors or create critical connections between public lands.

**Rivers Implementation:** Priority projects in this category include projects that enhance public access to Pennsylvania's waterways or projects that improve Pennsylvania's watersheds including the planting of riparian forest buffers.

**Trails:** Priority projects in this category include projects that close priority trail gaps as well as projects that rehabilitate or upgrade existing trails.

**FIGURE 2**

**FUNDING SOURCES by ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS TABLE**

This chart illustrates which sources of funding can be used to fund various categories of applicants. This chart should be read in conjunction with the Funding Source / Eligible Projects Table (Figure 3) to understand which applicants and types of projects are eligible for a specific funding source.

<b>Funding Sources/ Applicant</b>	Keystone Fund-Community Recreation	Keystone Fund-Land Trust	<b>Keystone Fund-Rails-to-Trails *</b>	<b>Keystone Fund- Rivers Conservation *</b>	Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	<b>Environmental Stewardship Fund (GG1) *</b>	Pennsylvania Recreational Trails (PRT) Fund	Snowmobile and All-Terrain Vehicle Restricted Accounts	Heritage Area Fund
Municipality	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	**
COG	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	**
Conservation District	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	**
Land Trust	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	**
School District	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	**
College/University	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	**
<b>Non-Profit Organizations- Rivers, Conservation, Trails, etc.</b>	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	**
For-Profit Entity	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	**
Housing / Redevelopment Authority	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	**
Designated Heritage Areas	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y

\* Funds Limited

\*\*Yes, but only as a sub-recipient through a Designated Heritage Area

**FIGURE 3**

**FUNDING SOURCES by ELIGIBLE PROJECT TYPES TABLE**

This chart illustrates which sources of funding can be used to fund various types of projects. This chart should be read in conjunction with the Funding Source / Eligible Applicants Table (Figure 2) to understand which applicants and types of projects are eligible for a specific funding source.

<b>Funding Sources/ Project Type</b>	Keystone Fund-Community Recreation	Keystone Fund-Land Trust	<b>Keystone Fund-Rails-to-Trails *</b>	<b>Keystone Fund- Rivers Conservation*</b>	Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	<b>Environmental Stewardship Fund (GG1) *</b>	Pennsylvania Recreational Trails (PRT) Fund	Snowmobile and All-Terrain Vehicle Restricted Accounts	Heritage Area Funds
Development	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Land Acquisition	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Planning	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Partnerships	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Trail Maintenance	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Trail Educational Programs	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y

\* Funds Limited

## Grant Programs Eligible for Funding

**Community Recreation and Conservation Program-** Grants are awarded to municipalities and authorized non-profit organizations for recreation, park, and conservation projects. These include planning for feasibility studies, conservation plans, master site development plans, and comprehensive recreation, park and open space and greenway plans; acquisition of land for active or passive park and conservation purposes; and new development and rehabilitation of parks and recreation facilities. Most projects require a 50% match, which can include a combination of Cash and/or Non-Cash values.

**Small Community Development Projects-** Small community development projects provide a municipal applicant, with a population of 5,000 or less, and ***whose total project cost is \$60,000 or less***, with a smaller match requirement. Please note that these projects are focused on playground development and rehabilitation; all upgrades are required to meet current safety and accessibility standards.

**Land Trust Program-** Grants are awarded to pre-qualified Land Trusts and Conservancies to fund projects for open space and natural areas planning and acquisition. Priority is given to protecting critical habitat. These grants require a 50% cash match and/or a land donation non-cash value.

**Partnerships Program-** Grants are awarded to statewide and regional entities that advance Pennsylvania's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Pennsylvania's Heritage Areas Program and the Conservation Landscape work, as well as statewide and regional capacity building. Project categories include: Convening, Education & Training; Special Purpose Planning & Studies; Implementation; and Mini-Grants. Required match is generally based upon the funding source and level of available funding. However, applicants must demonstrate at least a 20% secured match to be eligible to receive the maximum point value on their application. Applications are to be written so that project activities take place during a 12 to 18 month timeframe within the standard grant agreement period. Applications should not request grant amounts larger than \$300,000 for 18 months of work.

**Trails Program-** Grants are awarded to projects that assist municipalities and non-profit organizations with planning, acquisition of land, construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of trails and trail-related facilities that include trailheads, access roads, parking areas, interpretive signage and comfort stations. For the purposes of this program, trails are defined as a designated land or water corridor with public access that provides recreation and/or alternative transportation opportunities to motorized and/or non-motorized users of all ages and abilities. To be considered a "Trail project" at least 75% of the total project cost must be related to trail activities and/or trailside facilities. These grants require a minimum of a 50% match, which can include a combination of Cash and/ or Non-Cash values. Additional eligible applicants and eligible activities can be found in the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails, the Snowmobile and All-Terrain Vehicle program descriptions below.

**Pennsylvania Recreational Trails (PRT) Program-** Grants are awarded to federal & state agencies, municipalities, non-profit and for-profit organizations to assist with the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of trails and trail related facilities for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trails, the purchase or lease of equipment for trail maintenance and construction, and the development of educational materials and programs. These grants require a minimum 20% match, which can include a combination of Cash and/or Non-Cash values.

**Snowmobile and All-Terrain Vehicle Program-**Grants are awarded to assist with the planning, acquisition of land, construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of areas and facilities for snowmobile and/or all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use, the purchase or lease of equipment for trail construction and maintenance and the development of educational materials and programs. These grants require a minimum 20% match, which can include a combination of Cash and/or Non-Cash values. Land acquisition projects require a 50% cash match and/or a land donation non-cash value as match.

**Rivers Conservation Program-** The purpose of this program is to address DCNR's responsibility to serve as an advocate for Pennsylvania's river resources. This program is open to non-profit and municipal entities. However, non-profit organizations are encouraged to partner with a municipal entity to develop and execute this type of project. Eligible projects include those that implement river conservation plan recommendations, enhance water trails, expand public access to aquatic resources, or increase awareness of Pennsylvania's river systems. These grants require a minimum of a 50% match, which can consist of cash and/or non-cash values. Priority is given to projects that implement plan recommendations in watersheds that are recorded on the [Pennsylvania Rivers Registry](#).

**Riparian Forest Buffer Program-** Grants are awarded to municipal entities, educational institutions and non-profits to establish riparian forest buffers along Pennsylvania's waterways. DCNR will consider a variety of forest buffer project types, including conventional and multifunctional riparian forest buffers. More information about the multifunctional buffer concept is available in the grant application portal. All grants require 50% match from cash or non-cash sources. This grant program requires a minimum grant amount of \$50,000.

**Circuit Rider Program-** Grants are awarded to initiate new programs and services for county(ies), Councils of Government and/or multi-municipal entities, that individually do not have the financial resources to hire a professional full-time staff person. The Circuit Rider's purpose is to initiate new programs and services in the designated service area. The intended result of this project is to increase the ability of grantee to more efficiently and effectively meet their recreation, park, greenway, open space and/or natural resource conservation needs. The grantee will be responsible for the long-term financial commitment and maintenance of this professional position. This is a four year commitment of funding. Match is variable based on the year of funding. Eligible project costs include the circuit rider's salary only and Bureau-approved technical assistance and training expenses.

**Peer Program-** Grants are awarded to help municipalities improve their park, recreation and conservation services through a collaborative process. Projects are accomplished through contracts with experienced professionals who will work closely with local leaders. Examples may include projects that form new intergovernmental recreation and park agencies (which is a high priority for DCNR); improving management of a specific facility like a community center, trail or pool; conducting an overall management assessment of an agency's park and recreation services; community asset assessment and action planning; park and recreation board training and development, etc. The applicant must provide at least a ten percent (10%) local cash match. Non-cash match is not accepted for Peer Projects.

## Sources of Funding

The C2P2 program funds various types of grants with several different funding sources:

- The Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund (Key 93)
- The Environmental Stewardship Fund (Growing Greener 1)
- Heritage Areas Funding
- Snowmobile Restricted Account
- All-Terrain Vehicle Restricted Account
- The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds to the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails (PRT) program
- The Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

To maximize the number of projects funded, DCNR will determine the best funding for projects based on eligible applicants, matching requirements, funding requested. Before submitting a grant application, applicants should discuss this and other issues relating to their proposed project with their DCNR BRC Regional Advisor/Staff Member.

### **Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund (Key 93)**

The Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund Act (Key 93) became law in July 1993 with an approval of 48-0 in the Senate and 196-3 in the House. The Keystone Fund is DCNR's primary source of funding to support grants for recreation and land conservation (approximately 60% of all funding sources). Grants are awarded to project types including Community Recreation Grants for planning, development and land acquisition; Rivers Conservation Plans and Projects; Land Trust Projects; and Rails-to-Trails Projects.

The Keystone legislation provides for 15% of the Realty Transfer Tax collected by the Commonwealth to be put in the Keystone Fund for distribution to several state agencies. DCNR receives 65% of the funding. DCNR's 65% allocation is divided (by law) for the following uses: 30% for state park and forestry facility rehabilitation and construction (up to 10% of this amount can be used for rails-to-trails projects and up to 10% can be used for rivers conservation projects); 25% for grants for Community Recreation; and 10% for grants to Land Trusts.

### **Environmental Stewardship Fund (Growing Greener 1)**

In 1999, the Legislature approved the establishment of a new fund – the Environmental Stewardship Fund – that provided funding to several state agencies and authorities for the purpose of clean water and sound land use, land reclamation, natural resource conservation and community recreation. DCNR's portion of the Fund is invested in state park and forestry facilities as well as grants for greenways, trails, open space, natural areas, river corridors and watersheds, community parks and recreation and other projects to conserve the biological diversity of the Commonwealth. Funding for Growing Greener 1 is from tipping fees placed on disposal of municipal waste and from the Marcellus Legacy Fund (Act 13) of 2011.

**Limitations-** Grant recipients of Environmental Stewardship Funds (Growing Greener 1) must adhere to the following provision in the Environmental Stewardship and Watershed Protection Act (Act 68 of 1999):

*Section 6105(f) – “Expenditure limitation. No moneys made available through the fund shall be used for any purpose which, directly or indirectly, precludes access to or use of any forested land for the practice of sustainable forestry and commercial production of timber or other forest products. This subsection shall not apply to funds used by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, counties, or municipalities, for the purchase or improvement of park land to be used for public recreation.”*

For applicants seeking funds to buy land, this means that grant recipients cannot generally prohibit the harvesting of timber on forested lands. Grant recipients will be encouraged to develop sustainable forest management plans to help determine where timber harvesting may or may not be appropriate.

For assistance or further information regarding sustainable forestry management and planning, please contact DCNR's Bureau of Forestry at (717) 787-2105.

For land acquisition projects and other projects having the potential to affect forest lands, grant recipients will need to certify that the project does not preclude sustainable forestry practices (refer to Attachment – "Certification of the Grant Application" and Appendix A of the Grant Terms and Conditions).

### **Heritage Areas Funding**

Pennsylvania's Heritage Areas Program has been established within DCNR by legislation to identify, protect, enhance and promote the historic, recreational, natural and cultural resources of the Commonwealth. Heritage Areas funding supports the implementation of these activities via the State's 12 designated heritage areas and is contingent upon appropriation through the State budget process.

### **Snowmobile Restricted Account**

These funds are provided to municipalities, appropriate/authorized organizations, educational institutions and for-profit organizations for the planning, acquisition of land, development, and maintenance of areas and facilities for snowmobile use, the purchase or lease of equipment for trail construction and maintenance and the development of educational materials and programs.

### **All-Terrain Vehicle Restricted Account**

These funds are provided to municipalities, appropriate/authorized organizations, educational institutions and for-profit organizations for the planning, acquisition of land, development, and maintenance of areas and facilities for all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use, the purchase or lease of equipment for trail construction and maintenance and the development of educational materials and programs.

### **Federal Funding** (Two Federal funding programs are administered by DCNR.)

#### **Pennsylvania Recreational Trails (PRT)**

In Pennsylvania, the Recreational Trails Program is administered by the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR), Bureau of Recreation & Conservation (BRC) in consultation with the Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee, which is composed of both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail users. Funding for the Recreational Trails Program is provided to the Commonwealth through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Eligible applicants include federal and state agencies, local governments, higher education and other educational institutions, non-profits and for-profit enterprises. Grants are provided to assist with the construction, renovation and maintenance of trails and trail related facilities for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail, the purchase or lease of equipment for trail maintenance and construction, and the development of educational materials and programs. The Department provides grant funding not to exceed 80% of eligible costs.

This funding must be distributed among motorized, non-motorized, and diverse trail use, as follows: 40% minimum for diverse trail use, 30% minimum for motorized recreation and 30% minimum for non-motorized recreation.

### **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

Only political subdivisions (municipalities and municipal agencies) and school districts are eligible to receive LWCF funding. Annual appropriations of federal funds are made to the states to provide 50% matching grants for general public outdoor park, recreation and conservation, land acquisition and development projects.

# BUREAU OF RECREATION AND CONSERVATION

## Regional Staff Assignments



### NORTHWEST REGION (6)

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### NORTHCENTRAL REGION (4)

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Updated: October 17, 2016

# General Program Requirements and Guidelines

## I. Pre-application Information

### A. Eligible Applicants

- **Municipality** – Any county, city, borough, incorporated town, township or home rule municipality.
- **Municipal Agency** – Any official agency created by a municipal government under the laws of the Commonwealth such as municipal authorities, Council of Governments (COG's) and intergovernmental commissions.
- **Appropriate/Authorized Organization** – A non-profit entity involved in research, restoration, rehabilitation, planning, land acquisition, development, education or other activities, which furthers the protection, enhancement, conservation, preservation or enjoyment of this Commonwealth's environmental, conservation, recreation or similar resources.

The organization (unless it is an educational institution) must be **both tax-exempt** under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and **registered** with the Pennsylvania Department of State, Bureau of Charitable Organizations (BCO). **Evidence of 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status and BCO Registration should be provided as part of the application.** Please note that although the BCO regulations may not require an organization to register with them, legislation for this grant program does require such registration. EXCEPTION: This is not required for grantees applying for Pennsylvania Recreational Trails (PRT), Snowmobile Restricted Account, or All-Terrain Vehicle Restricted Account funding under the Trails Program.

- **Pre-qualified Land Trusts** – Non-profit conservation or preservation organizations, conservancies or land trusts that:
  - Have a primary purpose of conservation and preservation of critical habitat, open space, parklands or natural areas for public benefit;
  - Are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;
  - Are registered with the Pennsylvania Department of State, Bureau of Charitable Organizations;
  - Have been in existence at least 5 consecutive years.
  - To obtain a pre-qualification form and instructions, contact the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Rachel Carson State Office Building, PO Box 8475, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8475; (717)787-7672 or contact your DCNR Regional Advisor.
- **For-profit Enterprises** - *Eligible only for PA Recreational Trails, Snowmobile and All-Terrain Vehicle Program funding.* For the purposes of these programs, for-profit enterprises must be established under Pennsylvania law or must be authorized to do business in Pennsylvania under applicable Pennsylvania law.
- The Bureau will make the final determination as to whether an applicant is eligible to apply for a specific project type. If unsure about eligibility, you are reminded to contact your Bureau-Regional Advisor or Staff Member for further clarification.

## B. Required Public Participation

### Municipality and Municipal Agency:

- Must provide opportunity for public comment by citizens, local associations, planning agencies, etc.
- Applications from a municipal agency must also include a copy of a notification letter(s) to the County Planning Commission and local impacted municipalities that briefly outlines the project and provides the County and municipalities with the opportunity to comment on the proposed project.
- Municipal agencies may be required to obtain approval from the participating local governing bodies in that authority or other official agency before the grant money is used for such a development, land acquisition or planning project.

### Non-municipal and Authorized Organization Applicants:

- Should seek cooperation from the general public, municipal government, private sector, etc.
- Applications must include a copy of letters to the municipality(ies) and county where the project is located that briefly outlines the proposed project and provides the municipality and county with the opportunity to comment.
- **Please Note:** DCNR generally will not award funds in cases where local elected officials have expressed opposition to a proposed project. There may be special circumstances where applicants are not able to gain consensus of all interested parties. In these cases, DCNR will carefully assess the merits of each individual situation to determine whether funding is warranted.
- For certain land acquisition projects, an authorized organization shall obtain approval of all Counties in which land to be acquired is situated before the grant money is used for such an acquisition.

## C. Project Start Date

Grants are awarded to assist with projects that will be undertaken **after** the award of the grant, not to retroactively reimburse cost of projects that have already begun or been completed before the award of the grant.

In rare situations, for example due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the applicant's control, the Bureau may permit grant funds and/or the required match to be applied to project costs incurred before the date of the grant award. The Bureau refers to this permission as a "Waiver for Retroactivity". The waiver must be approved in writing by the Department prior to the applicant initiating work that would be paid for by the requested grant and required match.

A waiver does not guarantee or in any way affect the chances of a project being selected for funding. It merely gives the applicant a project start date to which grant funds would be applied retroactively if the project is ultimately selected for funding. A grant applicant who wishes to request a waiver must contact their DCNR Regional Advisor for preliminary direction and submit a written request and other required materials to the Bureau's Central Office in Harrisburg, which will determine the approval or denial of a waiver. If the waiver is approved, the applicant must still submit a complete grant application by the application deadline.

If the Bureau approves a waiver, it will approve it for a specific round of funding and give an effective date of retroactivity. This date is the beginning of the period that would be covered by a grant, if a grant is later awarded.

If the Bureau approves a request for a waiver but the project is ultimately not selected for funding, the waiver cannot be applied to a grant application submitted in a future round of funding.

#### D. Eligible/Ineligible Costs

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the following:

[Development Eligible and Ineligible Project Activities / Costs Policy](#)

[Acquisition Eligible and Ineligible Project Activities / Costs Policy](#)

[Partnerships Eligible and Ineligible Project Activities / Costs Policy](#)

[Planning Eligible and Ineligible Project Activities / Costs Policy](#)

Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the appropriate DCNR Regional Advisor to discuss any funding eligibility issues prior to submission of a grant application.

#### E. Matching Funds

Most DCNR grants require matching funds by cash and/or eligible non-cash value. Depending on the project type, matching funds may include cash, in-house services, donated services, equipment use and/or volunteer labor. All match must be directly related to the BRC approved scope of work. See the table below and refer to the sections on each project type for more information on match requirements.

Project Type	Required Match	Cash	Non-Cash	Land Donation
Circuit Rider	Varies	x		
Development	50%	x	x	x
Land Acquisition	50%	x		x
Land & Water Conservation Fund	50%	x		
Partnerships	Varies	x	x	
Peer	10%	x		
Planning	50%	x	x	x
Rivers	50%	x	x	x
Riparian Forest Buffer	50%	x	x	
Small Community (Development)	Varies	x	x	x
Trails (Development & Planning)	50%	x	x	x
Trails (Land Acquisition)	50%	x		x
Trails (PRT Development)	20%	x	x	
Trails (Snowmobile and ATV Development & Planning)	20%	x	x	x
Trails (Educational Programs)	20%	x	x	
Trails (Equipment Purchase)	20%	x		

Match, whether in the form of cash, non-cash or a donation of land, may be used only once as match. If it has been counted as match for another project or a portion of this project, it may not be counted again as match, no matter who funded the project(s). Additionally, match in excess of that counted for a project, may not be carried over for use on another grant. As part of the Bureau's technical assistance program, applicants are encouraged to discuss match requirements and sources with their Regional Advisor. Visit the "Funding Resources" webpage for sources of potential match along with other financial resources available for recreation and conservation related funding:

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/elibrary/resourcesta/funding/index.htm>

## **F. Control of Property, Deed Restrictions and Public Access**

- The applicant must control the property that will be developed, rehabilitated or for which a Site Development Drawing will be completed. Property that is not owned in fee simple must be controlled through a permanent easement or long-term lease agreement (minimum of 25 years) to protect facilities for their useful lifetime.
- All property acquired in fee or through easements funded with DCNR grant assistance requires a non-conversion clause be included in the deed, easement or declaration of covenants restricting the use and transfer of the property.
- Donated lands used as match for planning, land acquisition and/or development projects must show transfer of title within the same time period as the grant project to be an eligible match. Match is a one-time use per parcel and any excess value cannot be banked toward future projects. The document used to convey title must also include a non-conversion clause restricting the use and transfer of the property.
- All facilities and property funded by DCNR must be accessible to the public for uses consistent with the purposes for which it was acquired. Refer to the sections on each project type for more information on public access requirements.

## **G. Maintenance of DCNR Funded Projects**

- Land acquisition and/or development projects matched by eligible land donations require that the land acquired be owned and properly maintained in perpetuity.
- Facilities developed with DCNR funding must be maintained for their useful life. (See Article XIX of the Grant Terms & Conditions)

Failure to enforce the above noted requirements (in items F & G) and/or allowing change of use or ownership may constitute a conversion. DCNR is required to investigate and determine appropriate action to take pursuant to the legislation governing the funding source used for the project. Should conversion occur, equivalent replacement land and/or repayment of funds, including interest, may be required as determined by DCNR.

## **H. Appraisals and Title Search/Insurance**

Appraisals need to clearly indicate the spectrum of interests/rights being appraised. The inclusion or exclusion of rights appraised including but not limited to surface, mineral (coal and hard mineral), oil, and gas, wind, timber, etc. needs to be clearly disclosed. To ensure that the appraisal reflects the value of the rights being acquired a title search should be done prior to or as part of the appraisal process. A title search and title insurance will be required prior to project completion and closeout. Applicants are strongly encouraged to complete this prior to the appraisal being ordered and conducted.

## **I. Indoor Recreation and Conservation Facilities**

Indoor recreation and conservation facilities, including such facilities as gymnasiums, swimming pools, multi-purpose rooms, ice rinks and environmental education centers, are eligible for funding. Support facilities, structures or systems that directly relate to eligible indoor recreation facilities may also be eligible, and include such items as locker/rest rooms, roof and window repairs, heating, air conditioning, and electrical systems and parking lots. A feasibility study is normally required for improvements, new construction or acquisition of such a facility. Areas of

municipal buildings used for daily or regular municipal business and meetings and rooms rented or used for non-recreation purposes, as well as libraries, are not eligible for grant funding.

## **J. Important notice about confidentiality of submitted materials**

Under Pennsylvania's "Right-to-Know Law" records submitted to DCNR by grant applicants are considered to be public records unless they are protected by one or more of the exceptions specified in the law. Therefore, even *before* grants are awarded, grant applications and any other submissions by grant applicants may be subject to disclosure to the public upon request.

Similarly, *after* the award of grants, submissions by grant recipients are public records unless covered by an exception. In addition, certain grant-related records in the possession of grant recipients, even if not possessed by DCNR, could be public records under the law unless covered by an exception. If this is the case, the grantee will be required to make these records available.

Examples of records that fall within the exceptions to the Right-to-Know Law's requirement of public access are trade secrets and other confidential proprietary information, location of threatened or endangered species, real estate appraisals, and environmental reviews. Note that if part of a record falls into an exception and part of it does not, the record will be released with the non-public information redacted (blocked out).

Under the Right-to-Know Law, if a grant applicant or recipient will be submitting to DCNR any material that contains trade secrets or confidential proprietary information, the submission must be accompanied by a signed statement to that effect on a form provided by DCNR. **If you believe such confidential information will be contained in your grant application, please contact the Grants Customer Service Center at 1-800-326-7734 to request a "Trade Secret/Confidential Proprietary Information Notice."**

### III. Award Process

When the Application period closes, all grant applications and accompanying documentation are reviewed, rated and ranked, by a combination of DCNR Regional and Central Office personnel. (Please note that on average 500+ applications are received yearly.) In addition, internal meetings and discussions are also conducted, during this time period. This review process may take up to 4-6 months. During that time frame, the Commonwealth's Budget and DCNR Grant Funding Allocation are being refined and allocated. From the total funds available to DCNR in a given funding cycle, DCNR may initially reserve administrative and contingency funds. Contingency funds may be used for projects that address emergency situations, provide unique opportunities, are innovative in nature or help meet special DCNR/Commonwealth priorities. **The Bureau reserves the right to select the funding source and adjust the grant amount to be awarded for a project.**

Once the review process is completed and allocation is secured, grant applicants will be notified. The goal is to notify all grant applicants no later than the end of September of each year. Please note, that should complications or unforeseen issues arise, this process may be delayed and/or subsequently modified.

#### Notification of Funding Status:

All applicants will be notified, in writing, by the Bureau of the status of their grant application.

1. **SELECTED Applications**- Project will be funded; level of funds reserved for the project
2. **HIGH VALUE Applications**- High ranked projects not selected for funding may be classified as "High Value Projects", and may be funded when those projects are ready to proceed and/or when additional funds become available.
3. **NOT FUNDED Applications**- Projects not selected for funding but can reapply in a future funding round and, upon request, can receive technical assistance from the Bureau to strengthen their application.

**Refer to the following web-links for documents which should be helpful in developing your Grant Application:**

#### Bureau Policy Links:

- [ADA Policy](#)
- Eligible and Ineligible Grant Project Activities/Costs Policy
  - [Development Eligible and Ineligible Project Activities / Costs Policy](#)
  - [Acquisition Eligible and Ineligible Project Activities / Costs Policy](#)
  - [Partnerships Eligible and Ineligible Project Activities / Costs Policy](#)
  - [Planning Eligible and Ineligible Project Activities / Costs Policy](#)
- [Greening Policy](#)
- [Ownership and Control Policy](#)
- [PNDI Policy](#)