

2025 Grant Program Guidance

Stewardship Local Assistance Grants
Federal Land & Water Conservation Program
Federal Recreational Trails Program



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Introduction

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is committed to providing the public with high-quality, accessible outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the state. The DNR partners with communities and organizations to expand outdoor recreation via the following grant programs:

KNOWLES-NELSON STEWARDSHIP LOCAL ASSISTANCE GRANT SUBPROGRAMS

- Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP)
- Acquisition of Development Rights (ADR)
- Urban Green Space (UGS)
- Urban Rivers (UR)

FEDERAL RECREATION GRANT PROGRAMS

- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
- Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

This booklet contains information about each of these grant programs, application details, and criteria the DNR uses to rank applications and select projects. Up to 50% grant assistance is available to acquire and develop land for outdoor recreation. The Recreational Trails Program can award up to 80% grant assistance to develop or maintain trails. The Stewardship Local Assistance, LWCF, and RTP grant programs are often very competitive. Typically, grant requests exceed available funds by 3:1.

Stewardship Local Assistance grants provide opportunities for nature-based outdoor recreation activities where the primary focus or purpose is the appreciation or enjoyment of nature. Such activities include, but are not limited to, hiking, bicycling, wildlife or nature observation, camping, nature study, fishing, hunting, picnicking, cross-country skiing, canoeing and multi-use trail activities. Nature-based outdoor recreation is defined in Ch. NR 51.002(19), Wis. Admin. Code.

The Federal LWCF and RTP Grant Programs have unique eligibility criteria and funding priorities. For example, a broader range of outdoor recreation projects are eligible for LWCF and RTP grants relative to the nature-based outdoor recreation emphasis within the state Stewardship program. The DNR implements the LWCF and RTP grant programs in partnership with the National Park Service and Federal Highway Administration, respectively. Annual appropriations for the LWCF and RTP programs depend on the federal budget process. Availability of grants under these programs depends on the amount and timing of grant funds made available from the federal government.

Public access is fundamental to all grant programs. Reasonable public access is required for any property purchased or developed with grant funds. The DNR can help determine what constitutes appropriate and reasonable public access for grant-funded properties.

This booklet does not contain all the materials and forms needed to apply for Stewardship Local Assistance, LWCF, or RTP grants. Applicants should visit the following DNR websites to download current application materials and forms:

- *Stewardship Local Assistance* - [Local units of government application process | Wisconsin DNR](#)
- *LWCF & RTP* - [Federal grants administered with local units of government Stewardship grants | Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program | Wisconsin DNR](#)

Contact your Regional Grant Project Manager

There are many important details to understand when applying for a Stewardship Local Assistance, LWCF, or RTP grant. DNR Project Managers are located throughout the state and can help determine project eligibility and walk applicants through the grant process from project conception to final reimbursement.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact their regional Project Manager as early as possible in the planning stages of a project, ideally within three months prior to submitting an application, for a detailed explanation of the grant programs in general, a tentative determination of eligibility, and tailored guidance to make an application as competitive as possible. Regional Project Managers are also an excellent source of information about other DNR grant and loan programs. Contact information for each regional Project Manager is provided below and on the DNR Stewardship website:

each regional Project Manager is provided below and on the DNR Stewardship website:

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/GrantContacts>.

DNR Regional Project Managers & Counties Served

<p>GRACE MIKELSONS – West Central Regions <i>Stewardship Local Assistance; LWCF</i> 1300 W. Clairemont, Eau Claire, WI 54701</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counties Served: Adams, Barron, Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Crawford, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Marathon, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Portage, St. Croix, Trempealeau, Vernon, Wood 	<p>Phone: (608) 228-7111 Email: grace.mikelsons@wisconsin.gov</p>
<p>KURT BYFIELD – South Central, West Central Regions <i>Motorized RTP Grants</i> 3911 Fish Hatchery Rd., Fitchburg, WI 53711</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counties Served: Adams, Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Dodge, Dunn, Eau Claire, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jackson, Jefferson, Juneau, La Crosse, Lafayette, Marathon, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Portage, Richland, Rock, Sauk, St. Croix, Trempealeau, Vernon, Wood 	<p>Phone: (608) 501-4274 Email: kurt.byfield@wisconsin.gov</p>
<p>JESSICA TERRIEN – <i>Interim</i> Southeast Region <i>Stewardship Local Assistance; LWCF; RTP</i> 1027 W. St. Paul Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53233</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counties Served: Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Sheboygan, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha 	<p>Phone: (920) 461-2680 Email: jessica.terrien@wisconsin.gov</p>
<p>JEREMY HOLTZ – Southeast, Northeast Regions <i>Motorized RTP Grants</i> 2984 Shawano Ave., Green Bay, WI 54313</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counties Served: Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Sheboygan, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha, Brown, Calumet, Door, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara, Winnebago 	<p>Phone: (920) 883-7428 Email: jeremy.holtz@wisconsin.gov</p>
<p>CHERYL HOUSLEY – South Central Region <i>Stewardship Local Assistance; LWCF; RTP</i> 3911 Fish Hatchery Rd., Fitchburg, WI 53711</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counties Served: Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Richland, Rock, Sauk 	<p>Phone: (608) 516-9560 Email: cheryl.housley@wisconsin.gov</p>
<p>JEFF PENNUCCI – Northern Region - Rhinelander <i>Stewardship Local Assistance; LWCF; RTP</i> 107 Sutliff Ave., Rhinelander, WI 54501</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counties Served: Florence, Forest, Iron, Langlade, Lincoln, Oneida, Price, Taylor, Vilas 	<p>Phone: (715) 499-1424 Email: jeff.pennucci@wisconsin.gov</p>
<p>PAT ANDERSON – Northern Region - Spooner <i>Stewardship Local Assistance; LWCF; RTP</i> 801 W Maple St, Spooner, WI 54801</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counties Served: Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Polk, Rusk, Sawyer, Washburn 	<p>Phone: (715) 416-5020 Email: patricka.anderson@wisconsin.gov</p>
<p>ELLIE CRABB – Statewide <i>Non-Motorized / Diversified RTP Grants</i> 101 S. Webster St., Madison, WI 53703</p>	<p>Phone: (608) 516-6146 Email: ellie.crabb@wisconsin.gov</p>
<p>JESSICA TERRIEN – Northeast Region <i>Stewardship Local Assistance; LWCF; RTP</i> 2984 Shawano Ave., Green Bay, WI 54313</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counties Served: Brown, Calumet, Door, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara, Winnebago 	<p>Phone: (920) 461-2680 Email: jessica.terrien@wisconsin.gov</p>

For information on program policy and statewide coordination, contact the following DNR Statewide Grant Program Managers:

Stewardship Local Assistance Grants; Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants	PAM ROOD	Phone: (608) 333-3718 Email: pamelaa.rood@wisconsin.gov
Stewardship Nonprofit Conservation Organizations Grants	LUKE ROFFLER	Phone: (608) 294-8017 Email: luke.roffler@wisconsin.gov
Recreational Trails Program Grants	BOBBI WINEBAR	Phone: (920) 461-2595 Email: roberta.winebar@wisconsin.gov

Application Submittal Process, Application Deadline, and Grant Award Timeframe

Complete grant applications must be submitted electronically (e.g. email, zip files, wibox.wi.gov/dropbox) to your Regional Project Manager by 11:59 pm on **May 1, 2025**. Contact a regional Project Manager for information regarding required application components. Note that several application components such as a local adopted Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP), local resolutions, and appraisals can take time to complete.

The time between submitting a complete application and receiving a grant contract ranges from 6 to 18 months depending on the details of each project. While we strive to make tentative grant awards as quickly as possible, applicants should keep this timeframe in mind when applying for a Stewardship Local Assistance, LWCF, and/or RTP grant.

Required Additional Review and Approval

If an applicant proposes acquiring a property on which hunting, trapping, fishing, hiking, or cross-country skiing activities would be restricted or prohibited, the Natural Resources Board (NRB) will need to approve the requested change in nature-based activities allowed (Ch. NR 52, Wis. Admin. Code). Applicants will work with a regional Project Manager and Grant Program Manager complete a public safety review, public notice the proposed prohibition, and to submit the request to the NRB for review and approval.

Contact a regional Project Manager for details about additional reviews and approvals needed.

Long-term Obligations for Grant Recipients

Terms and conditions for property acquired or developed with Stewardship, LWCF, or RTP grants are outlined in the grant agreement or contract and include all applicable state and federal statutes and codes. It is important for potential applicants to understand long-term obligations that are associated with these grant programs, as some of these obligations apply in perpetuity. Details about long-term obligations for grant recipients are available from regional Project Managers. The following are several key requirements:

- Nature-Based Outdoor Activities: Grant recipients must ensure that any property acquired with a Stewardship grant remains open to the public for nature-based public outdoor activities (defined in Ch. NR 52.02(7), Wis. Admin. Code, as hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, and cross-country skiing), unless otherwise approved by the DNR Natural Resources Board (per the requirements of Ch. NR 52, Wis. Admin. Code).
- Stewardship acquisition properties: Stewardship acquisition grant obligations are in perpetuity.

- Ownership: Grant recipients must retain legal control and oversight of the property (via fee title ownership, permanent easement or for some grant programs leases are allowed) and maintain facilities on the property acquired or developed with a Stewardship, LWCF, or RTP grant. Transfer of ownership of property acquired or developed with a grant requires written approval from the DNR and/or applicable federal agency (for LWCF and RTP programs).
- Recording of Stewardship and LWCF grants: Stewardship and LWCF acquisition and development grant contracts must be recorded at the Register of Deeds once the acquisition or the development project is completed. A recordable legal description is required at the time the application is submitted and is included in the grant contract.
- LWCF acquisition and development projects: LWCF grant obligations are in perpetuity.
- Clear Title of project area: Grant recipients must demonstrate that the title to the project site or property to acquire does not contain any issues that impact the legal authority of the applicant to construct the proposed development project or acquire the grant-funded property. Applicants are encouraged to conduct a title search as early as possible in the project and discuss any issues with a regional Project Manager. (e.g. outstanding liens, utility right of ways, or reserved rights of previous owners, etc.)
- Stewardship development projects: Grant recipients have a grant obligation to maintain and operate the grant-funded facilities for a minimum of 20 years unless there is a 25-year lease or otherwise outlined in the grant contract.
- Public Access: Grant recipients must ensure that the grant property or facility remains open to the public for outdoor recreation, consistent with provisions of the original grant contract. Recipients may place reasonable access restrictions on grant properties (e.g. closing a park during nighttime hours).
- Reasonable User Fees: Grant recipients may charge reasonable user fees (e.g. state park daily entrance or camping fee) to defray operation and maintenance costs. However, any income accruing from the property should be used for purposes that support the original grant project application.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans (NR 51 requirement for Stewardship and NR 50 requirement for LWCF)

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans (CORPs) are developed by local communities. CORPs typically contain goals and objectives, a description of planning region, an inventory of existing outdoor recreation facilities, an analysis of outdoor recreation needs (including a public input process), and a recommendation of projects that may be implemented to address unmet recreation needs. CORPs must be updated **every five years**. Projects funded with Stewardship grants need to be consistent with a local adopted CORP. Further, the project may need to be specifically identified in the CORP, depending on the Stewardship grant subprogram.

For projects supported with LWCF grants, the proposed project needs to be consistent with the CORP and the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) adopted by the DNR. For RTP grants, the proposed project needs to be consistent with the SCORP.

All applicants, even those with a current CORP, should contact a regional Project Manager early in the planning process to discuss grant program CORP requirements.

Eligible Applicants

The following table summarizes entities and organizations that are eligible for Stewardship Local Assistance, LWCF, and RTP grant awards. Additional eligibility details for each program are provided in the “Program Description” sections below. Entities that are not directly eligible for these grant programs are encouraged to consider partnering with eligible entities.

A key consideration in eligibility for Stewardship Local Assistance and LWCF grants is whether an applicant has an approved local CORP or if the project is identified in the CORP approved by a unit of government other than the applicant. Applicants that do not have a current CORP should contact their regional Project Manager for information and assistance.

	Stewardship Local Assistance Subprograms				Land and Water Cons. Fund	Rec. Trails Program
	Acq. and Dev. of Local Parks	Acq. of Dev. Rights	Urban Green Space	Urban Rivers		
Local Governments (Towns, Villages, Cities, & Counties)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Tribal Governments	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lake sanitary districts and public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts ¹	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Nonprofit conservation organizations (NCOs) whose primary purpose includes acquisition of property for conservation purposes ²	Y ³	Y ³	Y ³	Y ³	N	N
Nonprofit organizations with a primary purpose of promoting, encouraging, or engaging in trail activities ⁴	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Incorporated trail organizations ⁴	N	N	N	N	N	Y
School districts / UW System	N	N	N	N	Y	Y

¹ Lake Sanitary Districts are further defined in S. 30.50(4q), Wis. Stats.

² NCOs are further defined in S. 23.0955(1), Wis. Stats., Ch. NR 51.002(21), Wis. Admin. Code, and Ch. NR 51.04, Wis. Admin. Code.

³ NCOs are eligible to receive Local Assistance Grants for land acquisition projects only. Local Assistance regulations apply.

⁴ Further defined in S. 181.0103(17), Wis. Stats.

Governing Board Resolution Requirements

A current signed resolution (within the past 2 years) from the applicant's governing board is required as part of the application. A resolution provides the DNR with an official approval of the project and the governing board's commitment of funding to complete the project. The resolution must include:

1. A statement that the applicant has budgeted enough funds to complete the project or acquisition.
2. The name of an authorized representative designated (by title) to act on behalf of the applicant to:
 - a. Submit an application;
 - b. Submit reimbursement claims along with necessary supporting documentation within 6 months of project completion date; and
 - c. Take necessary action to undertake, direct, and complete the approved project.
3. A statement that the applicant will comply with all local, state, and federal rules, regulations, and ordinances relating to the project and maintain the completed project in an attractive, inviting, and safe manner; will keep the facilities open to the general public during reasonable hours consistent with the type of facility; and will obtain from the DNR or the National Park Service approval in writing before any change is made in the use of the project site.

Note: Applicants are encouraged to refer to a [sample resolution template found at Local units of government application process | Wisconsin DNR](#) in the application tab.

Reimbursement

Payment of grant funds is on a reimbursement basis. For Stewardship, a 50% advance payment of the grant award may be available for development projects. Accurate and comprehensive documentation of project costs is critical. As applicable to the project and grant program, applicants will be required to submit a DNR Grant Payment Request ([Form 8700-001](#)) and detailed documentation (e.g. proof-of purchase, proof-of-payment, force account details, etc.) prior to reimbursement. Land acquisition projects and projects funded under federal grant programs have unique documentation requirements.

Costs eligible for reimbursement vary by grant program and project type. For example, pre-engineering costs for development projects are typically eligible for reimbursement in the Stewardship and LWCF program but are not eligible under RTP grants. Administrative costs, construction expenses or materials purchased prior to issuance of the grant agreement, costs to prepare the grant application, and costs to prepare a local CORP are not eligible for reimbursement under Stewardship grants. Contact a regional Project Manager for more information about eligible and ineligible costs for each grant program and reimbursement documentation requirements.

Applicant Share (Matching Funds)

Project applicants are required to provide matching funds equal to or greater than the amount of the grant award. Stewardship and LWCF require a 50% match while RTP requires a 20% match. If an applicant is awarded RTP funding, Stewardship and LWCF funding would not be available even if the project is eligible for these programs.

Eligible sources of matching funds vary depending on the grant program. All sources of match must be identified in the grant application. Common eligible sources of matching funds include:

- Applicant funds.
- Financial donations from private organizations and individuals.

- Municipal labor, equipment, and materials provided by the municipal applicant (e.g. “Force account” match).
- In-kind donations of labor, services, materials, and equipment from private organizations and individuals. Professional service donations (e.g. engineering services, landscape design, etc.) are valued at an hourly rate consistent with similar professionals in the same part of the state. Donations of unskilled labor are calculated at an hourly rate consistent with the state minimum wage (or federal minimum if awarded a federal grant) and must be documented on Volunteer Labor Forms found on the grants webpages.
- Federal grants can typically be used as match funding for Stewardship grants and vice versa. In most cases, federal grants cannot be used to provide matching funds for other federal grants. Contact a regional Project Manager to determine which funding sources can be used for match funding.
- Donation of land from a third party. Donating property is an excellent way for private organizations and individuals to support public outdoor recreation. Up to 50% of the fair market value of the donated land may be used to cover the sponsor's share of acquisition costs. The following are several key considerations regarding donated property used as match:
 - Donated property is subject to the same appraisal requirements as property acquired with grant funds. To be considered as match, the applicant must provide an appraisal deemed acceptable for grant purposes by a DNR review appraiser. Please see the appraisal requirements section in these guideline for more details. This process does not apply to other sources of matching funds. Applicants are encouraged to consider potential impacts to the timing of their project when donated property is used as match.
 - Donated property must be eligible for the same grant program for which it is being proposed as match.
 - Upon completion of the project, the donated property becomes subject to the terms the of the grant contract and program for which it was provided as match.
 - Donated land offered as match must have been acquired within three years of the closing date for the parcel in the application.
 - Donated property must have been in private ownership and not previously dedicated to public outdoor recreation or conservation purposes.
 - For some projects, the value of match property can affect the amount of the eligible grant award.

Americans with Disability Act

Projects involving development or modification of facilities must comply with 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act requirements to the greatest extent practicable. DNR guidance is available at: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/Aid/grants/CF0031.pdf> . Please consult with an American Disabilities Act Specialist to ensure your project is meeting these requirements.

Labor Requirements and Davis-Bacon Wages Rates

RTP projects:

If all or part of your project occurs within the right-of-way of a federal-aid highway* you will need to follow these additional regulations:

- Davis-Bacon Act - federal prevailing wage law that applies to contracts and subcontracts in excess of \$2,000 (does not apply to force account work performed by highway agency forces) (23 U.S.C. 113).

- Convict (Inmate) labor is not allowed unless performed by persons who are on parole, supervised release, or probation (23 U.S.C. 114(b))

LWCF and Stewardship projects: Davis-Bacon wage rates do not apply.

* Under title 23, all public roads are Federal-aid highways, except those that are functionally classified as local roads or rural minor collectors.

Property Appraisals and Consultation with the DNR Appraisal Reviewer

Property appraisals are a key component of all land acquisition grant projects. State law requires that Stewardship grants for fee title and conservation easement acquisition must be based on current fair market value of the real estate and further specifies that DNR must certify that value fairly compensates the seller. Appraisal requirements also apply to any property proposed as match for acquisition or development projects.

For Stewardship grant projects where an appraisal is necessary, a current full narrative appraisal that meets current State guidelines (Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice - USPAP) is required. LWCF and RTP⁵ grant project appraisals also need to meet the most current Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions (USFLA or “Yellow Book”) standards. All appraisals must reflect current market value and identify DNR as an intended user. A DNR review appraiser reviews all appraisals for proposed grant awards. Appraisals must be certified by the reviewer and the report must be deemed acceptable for grant purposes before the DNR can calculate a grant award and execute a grant contract. **The applicant’s appraiser must have a pre-appraisal consultation with a DNR Appraisal Reviewer prior to the start of the appraisal process. Please contact your regional Project Manager for this contact information.**

If the property value for a proposed grant funded land acquisition or land being used as match exceeds \$350,000, state law requires the DNR to consider two appraisals when calculating a grant award. The applicant must provide one appraisal, and the DNR will contract the other. Provided that both appraisals are deemed acceptable for grant purposes, the grant calculation will be based on the lower of the two acceptable appraisals.

Appraisals and DNR review can extend the timeframe between tentative grant award and contract execution. Contact a regional Project Manager to discuss appraisal requirements and obtain a current copy of the [DNR Appraisal Guidelines \(https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/Aid/grants/lf0048.pdf\)](https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/Aid/grants/lf0048.pdf) before initiating the appraisal process.

⁵ The RTP grant program falls under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) so acquisition applications are not being accepted for State Fiscal Year 2025 due to the timeframe that must be met.

Acquisition Projects

Acquisition of property that provides public outdoor park and recreation areas, open space near urban areas, or river access are typically eligible for Stewardship and LWCF land acquisition grants. Land acquisitions for Local Assistance, LWCF, and RTP⁶ grant programs must occur in accordance with state and federal guidelines for preparation of appraisals and eligible transaction costs. Below are several highlights regarding grant funded land acquisition; please also see the [DNR Land Acquisition Guidelines](#) for more details.

- **Condemnation/Eminent Domain:** Grant funded land acquisitions must be on a willing-seller willing-buyer basis. State law prohibits the expenditure of Stewardship grant funds for acquisition or development of property acquired via condemnation. Federal rules for RTP do not allow for this type of acquisition.

- Property Value: Grant awards up to 50% for land acquisition (and property used as match) are based on the appraised value. Special provisions apply in cases where the current landowner has owned the grant or match property for less than three years.
- Eligible Costs: Eligible land acquisition costs include the fair market value of the property up to 50% for the land acquisition. For the Stewardship program, eligible costs also include reasonable associated costs related to the purchase of the property and are limited to the following expenses: appraisal costs; land surveys; relocation payments; title evidence; recording fees; initial signage posting;⁷ attorney fees,⁷ historical, cultural, and environmental analyses as required by the DNR. If the property value exceeds \$350,000, the DNR will contract the second appraisal. See the Property Appraisals section for more information.
- Pre-grant Acquisition: No land can be acquired prior to the date of grant award unless the applicant receives a letter of retroactivity. For Stewardship grants, this letter is provided by the DNR. For LWCF grants, letters from both the DNR and NPS are required. Letters of retroactivity are not allowed in RTP. **Applicants who anticipate acquiring property prior to grant award should contact their regional Project Manager prior to submitting an application to request a state/federal letter of retroactivity.**
- Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Review: Per S. 32.035 Wis. Stats., the DATCP Agricultural Impact Statement (AIS) Program reviews agricultural land acquisitions proposed by entities that have the potential to use condemnation, such as local governments, state agencies, and public utilities to determine the magnitude of potential agricultural resource impacts that may result from the acquisition. Applicants other than nonprofits are required to notify DATCP – at www.agimpact.wi.gov – of a project that acquires agricultural land.

Upon notice, the AIS Program will determine if an agricultural impact statement is required for the project. Applicants are also required to submit documentation of the notice provided to DATCP with the grant application. If a copy of the DATCP agricultural impact determination is received prior to the application due date, applicants should provide a copy of the determination within the submission. All applicants considering a grant application to help purchase agricultural land are encouraged to discuss the project with DNR grant staff before applying.

Prior to scoring prospective land acquisition projects submitted by nonprofit or local government applicants, DNR will evaluate the following:

- Agricultural Resources and Potential: Agriculture contributes \$88.3 billion annually to the economy in Wisconsin and employs approximately 12% of the state’s workforce. Reflecting the importance of agriculture in Wisconsin’s economy, the DNR will evaluate a property’s agricultural resources prior to rating and ranking any proposed acquisition project. The DNR asks that applicants submit information regarding any agricultural land and uses of property prior to or with submission of grant application material.

DNR will closely consider acquisition of high-quality agricultural lands, property that is likely to remain in agricultural use, and property that is isolated from other public access or conservation lands. Applicants considering a grant application to purchase agricultural land are encouraged to discuss the project with DNR grant staff before applying.

- Ease of Public Access: Expansion and enhancement of public access to nature-based outdoor recreation is a priority for the DNR, and Stewardship funded land purchases must be open to the public pursuant to S. 23.0916, Wis. Stats. DNR staff evaluates feasibility of public access on a case-by-case basis taking into account the size, shape, topography, and/or remote location of a parcel, and practical accessibility is considered before a prospective land acquisition project undergoes scoring and ranking.

DNR will carefully consider projects that benefit a very limited population and/or are remote enough that members of the public are unlikely to visit. Applicants considering purchasing land that may have public access challenges are advised to discuss the project with DNR grant staff before applying.

⁶ *The RTP grant program falls under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) so acquisition applications are not being accepted for State Fiscal Year 2025 due to the timeframe that must be met.*

⁷ *Per NR 51, these costs are capped at \$2,000, grant cost-share is limited to \$1,000.*

Development Projects

Grant awards for development projects are based on costs associated with the development activities outlined in the grant application. Note that construction costs incurred prior to the date of the grant award are not eligible for reimbursement or match. For development projects applicants must own the property or have an easement or lease that provides legal access for the purposes of the project. The lease must have a minimum 25-year duration as of the date of the application pursuant to Ch. NR 51, Wis. Admin. Code for Stewardship supported projects and a minimum 15-year lease for Recreational Trails Program supported projects.

For development projects grant recipients must comply with state and federal procurement requirements for bidding, wages, and procurement of goods and services. See [ProcurementGuide.pdf](#) (Wisconsin.gov). Also see additional procurement requirements in the RTP and LWCF grant sections.

For LWCF grants, the applicant must possess legal control of the property in order to provide reasonable assurance that they have approval authority for any changes to public access and/or recreational opportunities on the subject property.

A wide variety of project types are eligible for development grants. Development projects supported with Stewardship grants must provide nature-based recreation opportunities. Development projects funded by LWCF grants can also support active outdoor recreation facilities such as athletic fields.

The following activities are common examples of development projects, and the grant programs by which they can be supported are listed for reference:

- Trails, trailheads, and associated trail amenities (e.g. restrooms, benches, lighting, kiosks) – Stewardship; LWCF; RTP
- Canoe/kayak launches – Stewardship; LWCF; RTP (if part of a water trail system)
- Fishing piers – Stewardship; LWCF; RTP (if part of a trail system)
- Day-use picnic areas – Stewardship; LWCF
- Campgrounds – Stewardship; LWCF; RTP (on a case-by-case basis)

The following types of projects are typically not eligible for Stewardship or RTP grant funding but may be eligible for a LWCF grant:

- Splash pads
- Soccer/baseball fields
- Sport courts

The following are examples that are typically not eligible for reimbursement in the Stewardship Local Assistance, LWCF, or RTP grant programs:

- Purchase of equipment
- Income-generating facilities (e.g. concession buildings)
- Stand-alone maintenance facilities that do not specifically serve the grant property
- Facilities developed on property that was acquired via condemnation

IMPORTANT PROJECT LOCATION CONSIDERATIONS

- If your development is planned for property or a structure in a floodplain, please contact your local floodplain zoning administrator, or [DNR floodplain engineer](#). There have been recent changes to the standard ordinance due to flood events in recent years and technical staff can aid with compliance with the ordinance interpretation and design, as well as data modeling for flood resilience.
- DNR technical assistance for local floodplain administration is welcome and often necessary to protect consistency statewide for ordinance standards. The standard floodplain ordinance is administered at the County or local level. Standard ordinance is reflective of state and federal requirements. DNR floodplain engineers assist municipalities on technical questions & reviews (H&H) for planned changes within the floodplain. A floodplain is considered to be the channel of a river or stream plus the surrounding area which is covered by flood water during the regional flood, per Ch. NR 116.03, Wis. Admin. Code. Please see <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/floodplains/modelZoningOrdinances.html> for more information
- Wetlands/Waterways: For projects in or near a navigable waterway or wetland, the following resources are available:
 - Surface Water Data Viewer: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/surfacewater/swdv/>
 - Wetland ID Service: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Wetlands/identification.html>
 - Waterway/wetland questions hotline: (608) 267-3125 or DNRWMSPublicInquiry@wisconsin.govPlease work with [DNR staff](#) to determine permitting and regulatory requirements as early as possible in your project development process.

Grant Program Descriptions

Stewardship Local Assistance

Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP) Subprogram

Statute/Code: [S. 23.09\(20\), Wis. Stats.](#); [Subch. XII of Ch. NR 51, Wis. Admin. Code](#).

Purpose: The ADLP program helps communities and organizations acquire and develop land for public nature-based outdoor recreation and improve community recreation areas.

Allocation: Funds are allocated on a regional basis proportional to population. Projects compete against other projects from their region.

Eligible Applicants: Towns, villages, cities, counties, tribal governments, and NCOs. NCOs are only eligible for land acquisition under this program.

Eligible Projects: Land acquisition and development projects that provide opportunities for nature-based outdoor recreation are eligible for ADLP grants.

Funding Priorities: ADLP funding priorities include projects that:

- Support a local CORP;
- Support multiple uses, for multiple seasons;
- Are of regional/statewide significance;
- Result in a first-of-a-kind facility for the applicant;
- Projects that involve the use of materials or products utilizing Wisconsin recycled products.
- Provides recreation opportunities for elderly, minorities, disabled, and low-income populations.
- Project facility planned will be more basic in attributes than elaborate.
- Projects to renovate existing facilities that are in danger of being lost for public use.
- Provide accessible recreation opportunities; and

- Have other priority characteristics specified in statute/code.

Stewardship Local Assistance Acquisition of Development Rights (ADR) Subprogram

Statute/Code: [S. 23.09\(20m\), Wis. Stats.](#); [Subch. XV of Ch. 51, Wis. Admin. Code.](#)

Purpose: The purpose of the ADR program is to protect natural, agricultural, and forest lands that provide nature-based outdoor recreation by purchasing development rights and compensating landowners for limited future development on their land.

Allocation: Projects compete statewide.

Eligible Applicants: Towns, villages, cities, counties, tribal governments, and NCOs.

Eligible Projects: ADR grants may only be used to support projects that acquire development rights to support nature-based outdoor recreation.

Funding Priorities: The following types of properties are given priority consideration for ADR grant funding:

- Land with water frontage;
- Land that provides a buffer between developed and natural areas;
- Land that connects existing natural resource protection areas; and
- Land with other priority characteristics specified in statute/code.

Stewardship Local Assistance Urban Greenspace (UGS) Subprogram

Statute/Code: [S. 23.09\(19\), Wis. Stats.](#); [Subch. XIII of Ch. NR 51, Wis. Admin. Code.](#)

Purpose: The UGS program supports acquisition of land for open natural areas and community gardens within or near urban areas.

Allocation: Projects compete statewide.

Eligible Applicants: Towns, villages, cities, counties, tribal governments, NCOs, sanitary districts, and public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts.

Eligible Projects: Projects that acquire land within or in proximity to urban areas that provides open space, protects unique natural features, and/or provides opportunities for community gardening are eligible to apply for UGS grants. Development projects are not eligible for UGS grants.

Funding Priorities: UGS funding priorities include acquisition of land that:

- Preserves land on the natural heritage inventory database;
- Implements elements of approved water quality plans or initiatives;
- Has unique natural features;
- Provides a linear corridor connecting open natural areas;
- Has water frontage;
- Is of regional or statewide significance;
- Land related to brownfields redevelopment.
- Land can accommodate all NBOA uses; hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, and cross country skiing;
- Provides area for community gardens;
- Has other priority characteristics specified in statute/code; and
- Involve two or more governmental agencies.

Stewardship Local Assistance Urban Rivers (UR) Subprogram

Statute/Code: [S. 30.277, Wis. Stats.](#); [Subch. XIV of Ch. NR 51, Wis. Admin. Code.](#)

Purpose: The UR program helps restore and preserve the character of urban river corridors through the acquisition and development of land adjacent to rivers.

Allocation: Projects compete statewide. No applicant can receive more than 20% of the UR funds allocated in any fiscal year.

Eligible Applicants: Towns, villages, cities, counties, tribal governments, and NCOs.

Eligible Projects: Land acquisition and development projects that provide opportunities for nature-based outdoor recreation are eligible for UR grants.

Funding Priorities: UR program funding priorities include projects that:

- Restore river corridors following dam removal;
- Support redevelopment of brownfields;
- Acquire land with unique natural or aesthetic values;
- Acquire land that connects with previous land acquisitions;
- Provide outdoor recreation opportunities for diverse urban populations;
- Provide new or expanded access to urban waterways;
- Involve two or more governmental agencies;
- Support local/regional plans; and
- Have other priority characteristics specified in statute/code.

Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Statute/Code: Land and Water Conservation Act ([Pub. L. No. 88-578](#)); [Ch. NR 50.06 Wis. Admin. Code](#); [LWCF Federal Financial Assistance Manual, Vol. 72](#).

Purpose: The federal LWCF program supports land acquisition and development of high-quality outdoor recreation amenities in local communities.

Allocation: Funds are allocated on a regional basis proportional to population. Projects compete against other projects from their region.

Eligible Applicants: Towns, villages, cities, counties, tribal governments, and school districts. NCOs are not eligible to receive LWCF grants.

Eligible Projects: Generally, all acquisition and development projects that are eligible under the ADLP, UGS, and UR Stewardship subprograms are also eligible for LWCF grants. In addition, projects that provide outdoor recreation facilities that are not exclusively nature-based, such as active sports facilities, are eligible for LWCF grants. Some exceptions apply, such as cases where the applicant intends to meet their match requirement with federal funds. Contact a regional Project Manager for details.

Funding Priorities: LWCF funding priorities include projects that:

- Meet the needs of urban areas;
- Provide recreation opportunities for elderly, minority, disabled, and low-income populations;
- Acquire land in areas with limited outdoor recreation facilities;
- Provide multi-use and multi-season facilities;
- Enhance or preserve natural beauty;

- Are proposed by applicants which have sufficient financial resources to adequately maintain and operate the project; and
- Have other priority characteristics specified in law/statute/code or the LWCF Federal Financial Assistance Manual, Vol. 72.

LWCF Program Requirements:

All LWCF funded acquisition and development projects are subject to the rules of the LWCF Act in **perpetuity**. The Act requires that any project benefitting from LWCF assistance regardless of the amount or extent of the assistance, cannot be converted to any use other than public outdoor recreation without approval from the Department of Natural Resources and the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior (54 U.S.C. 200305(f)(3)).

LWCF Development Projects Procurement Requirements:

Build America, Buy America (BABA): As required by S. 70914 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Pub. L. No. 117-58, on or after May 14, 2022, none of the funds under a federal award that are part of a federal financial assistance program for infrastructure may be obligated for a project unless all of the iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States, unless subject to an approved waiver. To qualify for the Department of the Interior (DOI) BABA Small Grant Waiver, the total project cost (federal share and applicant match) must be \$250,000 or less. Contact your regional Project Manager and review information on this website: <https://doi.gov/grants/BuyAmerica>.

Minority Business Enterprise Development: Pursuant to Executive Order No. 12432, it is national policy to award a fair share of contracts to small and minority firms. NPS is strongly committed to the objectives of this policy and encourages all recipients of its Cooperative Agreements to take affirmative steps to ensure such fairness by ensuring procurement procedures are carried out in accordance with the Executive Order.

Federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

Statute/Code: [23 U.S.C. § 133\(h\)](#); [23 U.S.C. § 206](#); [Ch. NR 50.21, Wis. Admin. Code](#).

Purpose: The RTP program provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail uses. RTP grants are to be used on trail projects that further a specific goal or are included in the State Comprehensive Recreation Plan (SCORP) or a local plan referenced in the SCORP.

Allocation: RTP grant awards may not exceed \$100,000 for individual projects submitted in the Federal Fiscal Year 2025-2026 application cycle. Projects compete statewide within three project categories:

Nonmotorized/Nonmotorized Diversified (30%): Projects designed to benefit nonmotorized recreational trail use where motorized use would not be allowed.

Motorized/Motorized Diversified (30%): Projects designed to benefit motorized recreational use; projects may also benefit some nonmotorized uses as long as motorized use is the primary intent.

Diversified (40%): Projects designed to benefit multiple uses; includes projects where motorized use would be permitted (e.g. seasonally) but where motorized use is not the predominant beneficiary. Diversified projects are not required to have motorized use.

Eligible Applicants: Towns, villages, cities, counties, tribal governing bodies, school districts, state agencies, federal agencies, or incorporated organizations are eligible to apply for funds. Incorporated

organizations are those that are incorporated under Ch. 181, Wis. Stats., whose primary purpose is promoting, encouraging, or engaging in outdoor recreation trails activities.

Eligible Projects: RTP funds may only be used on trails which have been identified in or which further a specific goal of a local, county, or state trail plan included or referenced in the SCORP. These include traditional trails as well as water trails recognized by the DNR (see <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/watertrails/> for more information about water trails). Eligible RTP projects, in order of priority, are:

- Rehabilitation and maintenance of existing trails and trailhead facilities;
- Development of new trails, trail linkages and trailhead facilities (some restrictions apply on federal lands); and
- Acquisition of property for trails in areas with limited trail opportunities. **Note:** applications for acquisition projects are not being accepted for State Fiscal Year 2025.

Ineligible Projects & Pre-award Expenses:

A State may not obligate funds apportioned to carry out this section for:

- condemnation of any kind of interest in property;
- construction of any recreational trail on National Forest System land for any motorized use unless
 - the land has been designated for uses other than wilderness by an approved forest land and resource management plan or has been released to uses other than wilderness by an Act of Congress; and
 - the construction is otherwise consistent with the management direction in the approved forest land and resource management plan;
- construction of any recreational trail on Bureau of Land Management land for any motorized use unless the land
 - has been designated for uses other than wilderness by an approved Bureau of Land Management resource management plan or has been released to uses other than wilderness by an Act of Congress; and
 - the construction is otherwise consistent with the management direction in the approved management plan.

Pre-award expenses are not eligible for reimbursement under RTP grants. Examples of pre-award expenses include pre-engineering and design, and any expenses incurred before a grant agreement is received, except for expenses incurred for the completion of an archaeological or endangered resources investigation that may be required by the DNR.

The Recreational Trails Program promotes the following:

- Use of Youth Conservation Corps or Service Corps (<https://corpsnetwork.org>)
- Trails Designed for Universal Use

E-bikes Guidance:

- Under the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), 23 U.S.C. § 206(a), electric bikes, electric scooters, and personal mobility devices (such as a Segway) are considered motorized uses. See the American Trails website for more information: <https://www.americantrails.org/resources/basic-facts-on-department-of-justice-rule-on-power-driven-mobility-devices-for-accessibility>.
- Motorized recreation is different for RTP: it includes any motorized vehicle except for motorized wheelchairs.
- A trail that allows both bicycles and electric bicycles is considered a diverse trail and not a nonmotorized trail or a motorized trail for funding category purposes.
- If a trail is built as a nonmotorized trail, e-bikes should be prohibited.
 - Some state laws don't match with Federal law in this respect.

RTP Useful Life Requirements:

1. If the trail property is **acquired** with RTP funding, the area must be used for the trail category purposes for which it was funded for at least 20 years. After 20 years, if the grantee is no longer able to maintain the trail or trailhead facilities, the area will need to remain in outdoor recreational use in perpetuity. See **NOTE** below.
2. If the trail property is **developed** with RTP funding after May 1, 1991, the area must be used for the trail category purposes for which it was funded for at least 20 years. After 20 years, if the grantee is no longer able to maintain the trail or trailhead facilities, approval from the WDNR and FHWA to abandon the project area is required. See **NOTE** below.
3. If the trail property receives funding for **rehabilitation** of a trail or trailhead facility, the project area must be used for the trail category purposes for which it was funded for at least 20 years. See **NOTE** below.
4. If the trail property receives funding for **maintenance** of a trail or trailhead facility, the project area must be used for the trail category purposes for which it was funded for at least 5 years. If property received development or rehabilitation funding within the last 15 years, the project area must be used for the trail category purposes for which it was funded until the development or rehabilitation grant has reached its useful life if the **NOTE** below does not apply.
5. If the trail property is located on public or private land and has a lease or easement but the lease or easement is not renewed after 20 years, the property is no longer required to be maintained for trail use. Trails on private property with a lease or easement less than 15 years at the time of application are not eligible for RTP funding.*

NOTE: If the trail was open for use on May 1, 1991, and was predominantly used by nonmotorized recreational trail users and motorized uses were prohibited or had not occurred, then the trail can not be upgraded, expanded or otherwise facilitated for motorized use. This is a permanent ban and no useful life provision.** If the trail was open for use on or after May 2, 1991, this prohibition does not apply.

* The DNR lease maximum length is 15 years (s. 23.305(3) Wis. Stats).

** Federal Highways Administration Recreational Trails Program Guidance

RTP Program Requirements:

For information on the following RTP program requirements, please check the RTP webpage:

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/aid/RTP.html>.

- Americans with Disabilities Act: projects involving development or modification of facilities must comply with 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act requirements to the greatest extent practicable. DNR guidance is available at: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/Aid/grants/CF0031.pdf>
- Buy America, Build America (BABA) specific to the RTP program (effective August 16, 2023) **If the total amount of the federal funding for a project is below \$500,000, the Buy America requirements for iron, steel, manufactured product, and construction materials is waived. If the total amount of the federal funding for a project is \$500,000 or more, the allowable threshold for noncompliant products is the lesser of \$1,000,000 or 5% of total applicable costs for the project. However, if the noncompliant products include iron, steel, manufactured products, the FHWA's threshold amount of 0.1% of the total contract amount or \$2,500 applies.** See <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/08/16/2023-17602/waiver-of-buy-america-requirements-for-de-minimis-costs-and-small-grants#further-info> Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program: see <https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/civil-rights/dbe/default.aspx> for information.
- Davis-Bacon Act: see page 8 for information regarding prevailing wage requirements.

RTP Scoring Category Definitions:

Rehabilitation

- Restoration of trails, trailheads, and trailhead facilities that have been damaged/worn to their former condition
- Culvert replacement
- Trail re-route that extends outside of the original footprint by less than one acre
- Resurfacing trail with new material (e.g. was gravel, now pavement; adding new gravel to a trail segment that is damaged due to heavy use)
- Repairing/updating trailhead or trailhead facilities (replacement of items, e.g. roof, parts of wood structure, lights)
- Project within original footprint
- Replacing something that is already there
- Bridge replacement or total deck and rail replacement

Maintenance

Maintaining or preserving; keeping trails, trailheads, and trailhead facilities in good condition.

- Brushing
- Grooming
- Mowing
- Minor miscellaneous (replacing parts of a railing or a few boards on a bridge; adding gravel to small area(s) of a trail; adding riprap to a bridge abutment)
- Resurfacing with same material in short sections of the trail
- Minor repairs of trailhead or trailhead facilities (signs; painting and filling holes of parking lots; replacing lightbulbs or plexiglass/acrylic, etc.)
- Project within original footprint
- Fixing or maintaining what is already there

Development

Growth, expansion, or development of new trails, trailheads, and trailhead facilities.

- Constructing new trailhead or trailhead facility (restrooms, kiosks)
- Construction of new trails, trail linkages (segments)
- Major trail re-routes (due to loss of easement, ground washout/sinkhole, unsafe bridge, etc.)
- Project extends outside of original footprint by more than 1 acre

Acquisition (NOTE: applications for acquisition projects are not being accepted for State Fiscal Year 2025)

Bought or obtained; gaining possession of land to construct trails, trailheads, and trailhead facilities.

- Fee simple
- Easements

Application Materials

The following documents are required as part of a complete grant application, with requirements for the type of project (acquisition or development) indicated in the corresponding column. Please contact a regional Project Manager for information about required documents and documentation examples. Application materials, forms, and example documents are available at:

- Stewardship Local Assistance – <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Stewardship/Grants/ApplyLUG.html>
- LWCF & RTP – <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Stewardship/Grants/FederalLUG.html>

Applicants should submit all application documents electronically to their regional Project Manager. **Please note that narrative responses to ranking criteria in Sections A, B, C, D and E below should be provided on form 8700-338. Required maps can be generated by using the DNR Surface Water Data Viewer tool at <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/SurfaceWater/swd>.**

ACQ. PROJECT	DEV/MAINTENANCE/REHAB. PROJECTS	REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Grant Application (Form 8700-191) – Must be Signed by Project Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Response to Ranking Questions & Criteria (Form 8700-338) and required documentation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Grant Applicant Governing Board Resolution supporting the project and approval of budgeted matching funds. Refer to a sample resolution template found at Local units of government application process Wisconsin DNR in the application tab.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Project Location Map
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Project Boundary Map
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Aerial photo map
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Recordable Legal Description and GPS Coordinates
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Environmental Hazards Assessment Form (Form 1800-001)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Cost Estimate Worksheet (Form 8700-014)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Estimated Construction/Acquisition Timeline
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Site Plan (<i>for Development Projects: show facilities to be constructed with grant assistance; for Acquisition Projects: identify planned trails or facilities</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Remediation Plan and (if available) signed DNR Final Close-out Letter (<i>applicable only to projects with brownfields</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	13	Copy of related Grant Application and/or Grant Agreement (<i>applicable only if applicant is proposing a grant as all or part of their local match</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14	Public Access & Acceptable Uses Form (Form 8700-322)
<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	15	Appraisal (<i>applicable to all acquisition projects and development projects that propose land donations as match</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>		16	Offer to Purchase (<i>if available</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>		17	Relocation Plan (<i>if applicable</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>		18	Copy of Seller's Deed (<i>applicable only if seller has owned property for less than three years</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>		19	If acquisition is located outside of the applicant's jurisdiction, a resolution is required from the jurisdiction where the property is located
<input type="checkbox"/>		20	Land Management Plan
<input type="checkbox"/>		21	Agricultural Resource Impact Determination document from DATCP (<i>applicable only to acquisition projects with agricultural activity on the property</i>)
N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	22	Copy of Warranty Deed, Draft or Final Easement, Land Use Agreement, or Lease Document
N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	23	Required permits, if available
N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	24	Map showing the proposed project relative to the related larger trail system (<i>for RTP trail projects only; map should identify roads and bridges</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	25	Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) – provide a link to the CORP and the location of relevant information and data supporting this project.

Ranking Criteria

Below are the criteria DNR uses to score, rank, and select projects for Stewardship Local Assistance, LWCF, and RTP grant awards. Criteria reflect program eligibility and priorities outlined in public law, statute, code, and policy. Upon receipt of an application, DNR staff review information submitted and score the application relative to the criteria outlined below and program eligibility.

Applicants should provide a narrative response to each question below on Form 8700-338. Form 8700-338 and any required supporting documentation should be submitted with the application package. Responses without supporting documentation will not be awarded points.

The ranking questions are split into four sections, relative to program eligibility. Regional Project Managers can answer any questions you may have about program eligibility.

Section A and B: All applicants should provide a response to questions in Section A and B.

Section C: Applicants with a project that is eligible for a Stewardship Local Assistance or LWCF grant should provide a response to questions in Section C. Applicants with a project that is only eligible for an RTP grant should answer “N/A” to questions in this section.

Section D: In addition to Section A and B, applicants with a project that is eligible for an RTP grant should provide a response to questions in Section D. Applicants with a project that is not eligible for an RTP grant should answer “N/A” to questions in this section.

Section E: In addition to Sections A and B, applicants with a project that is eligible for an LWCF grant should provide an answer to questions in Section E. Applicants with a project that is not eligible for an LWCF grant should answer “N/A” to questions in this section.

SECTION A: All Applicants

All applicants must provide a narrative response to each question in this section. **APPLICANTS MUST HAVE #1 AND EITHER #2 (FOR AN ACQUISITION PROJECT) OR #3 (FOR A DEVELOPMENT PROJECT) TO BE CONSIDERED ELIGIBLE.**

Initial Eligibility Ranking Questions	Max. Points	Question Details and Documentation Notes	Grant Programs
<p>1 COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (CORP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the project identified in a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan approved by the applicant or the County where the applicant resides? Does the project support a goal identified in an approved Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan? Does the project support a goal identified in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)? (<i>RTP only</i>) 	N/A	<p>Provide a link to the CORP and the location of relevant information and data supporting this project.</p> <p>For projects that support a goal of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, please identify the specific goal(s) supported by the proposed project.</p> <p>LWCF projects must be specified in a CORP; Stewardship projects must be consistent with CORP goals.</p> <p>A CORP must be updated every five years. It may be referred to as a Parks and Open Space Plan. The CORP is not the same as the Comprehensive Plan, which refers to plans developed and adopted per requirements of S. 66.1001, Wis. Stats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADLP UGS UR LWCF RTP
<p>2 LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN (Acquisition Projects Only): The applicant has a plan for long-term management of the property that preserves and enhances its conservation and/or recreational value.</p>	N/A	<p>Submit copy of land management plan. For local governments, this information may be included in the CORP, parks management plan, or other document.</p> <p>NCOs are required to submit a Land Management Plan if they intend to keep the property long-term.</p> <p>For Stewardship and LWCF acquisition projects, sponsors must adhere to the program requirements in perpetuity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADLP UGS UR LWCF
<p>3 LEGAL RIGHT TO CONSTRUCT (Development Projects Only): The applicant has the legal right to construct the proposed project and meet post-grant compliance requirements.</p> <p>For RTP, must be located on public land or have a lease or easement for at least 15 years. Property with development/rehabilitation projects must be open and maintained for at least 20 years. Property with maintenance projects must be open and maintained for at least 5 years. If a property received development funding for rehabilitation within the last 15 years the project area must be used for trail purposes until the development or rehabilitation grant has reached its useful life.</p>	N/A	<p>Submit copy of deed, lease, easement, memorandum of understanding, or other documentation. Draft lease or easement documents are acceptable if negotiation of key components (e.g. legal description, compensation) have been deemed acceptable to all parties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADLP ADR UGS UR LWCF RTP

SECTION B: All Applicants

All applicants must provide a narrative response to each question in this section.

Ranking Questions		Max. Points	Question Details and Documentation Notes	Grant Programs
4	<p>GREEN TIER: The applicant is a designated Green Tier Legacy community. (0.1 pt.)</p>	0.1	<p>See the Green Tier website for eligible Legacy Communities for this point.</p> <p>https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/GreenTier/Participants/CharterPages/LegacyCommunities.html</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR • LWCF • RTP
5	<p>RAILROAD CORRIDOR: The project will acquire or develop an abandoned rail corridor for outdoor recreation. (0.1 pt.)</p>	0.1	<p>This tiebreaker is only awarded for the acquisition or initial development of a property.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR • LWCF • RTP
6	<p>SAFE ACCESS: Users have an existing opportunity for safe and legal parking and access to the project site or the proposed project will significantly improve safe and legal access to the site. (0.1 pt.)</p>	0.1	<p>Projects that provide access only via roadside parking would not receive points for this question.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR • LWCF • RTP
7	<p>RURAL PROSPERITY INITIATIVE: The project area is located in a rural city, village, town or township of less than 2,500 residents. (1 pt.)</p>	1	<p>For counties, the city, village, town or township project site within the county is less than 2,500 residents.</p> <p>Provide 2020 project site census data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR • LWCF • RTP
8	<p>PROJECT ADDRESSED IN PLANS OTHER THAN A CORP OR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: The project is referenced in or supports other applicable plans, such as a local green space plan, integrated resource management plan, riverfront restoration plan, water quality plan, or other applicable plan approved by a governmental unit (including DNR Master Plans or State Trail Plans). (1 pt.)</p>	1	<p>Provide copies of the plan cover page and page(s) that describe the subject project.</p> <p>The SCORP is not considered an additional plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADR • UGS • UR • RTP
9	<p>PREVIOUS GRANT COMPLETION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant has successfully completed and closed all previous Stewardship Local Assistance, LWCF, or RTP grants. (1 pt.) • Applicant did not receive a Stewardship Local Assistance, LWCF, or RTP grant in application years 2020-2024 (3 pt.) 	4	<p>Applicants should provide a list of applicable grants.</p> <p>Stewardship Local Assistance, LWCF, or RTP development/rehabilitation grant applications received in 2024 (Fiscal Year 2025)</p> <p>RTP maintenance grants automatically receive these 2 points.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • UGS • UR • LWCF • RTP

SECTION B, cont'd

Ranking Questions	Max. Points	Question Details and Documentation Notes	Grant Programs
<p>10</p> <p>ACCESS TO OTHER OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES: The proposed project provides direct access to other existing developed facilities, such as campground, fishing pier, local park, etc. (1 pt.)</p>	1	<p>Provide documentation that shows the relationship between the proposed project and the existing facility/facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • UGS • LWCF • RTP
<p>11</p> <p>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION: The project is being developed in close cooperation between two separate governmental entities. (2 pts.)</p> <p>Note: Nonprofits are not eligible for these points.</p> <p>The project will fulfill goals for two separate governmental entities. Both entities will contribute to the project either financially (land, matching funds), with labor or management of the property once the project is complete.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The project is being developed in a joint effort between two or more governmental entities.</p>	2	<p>Provide plan name, copy of cover page, and page number/chapter reference, if applicable.</p> <p>The partner jurisdiction must have a joint role in the project, such as voluntary contribution of matching funds or force account services. Letters of support are not sufficient to receive these points. Regional projects that are being developed cooperatively by multiple governmental entities also will receive credit for this question. Land owned by one government entity and developed by a separate government entity would be eligible for these points (land use agreements or memorandum of agreement are eligible).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UGS • UR • RTP
<p>12</p> <p>SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY: Project will use sustainable and green infrastructure practices and products in both development and acquisition projects. Applicant will take steps to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce Contributors to Climate Change Examples: reduce heat island effect, cool/green roofs, canopy improvement, use of renewable/zero emissions energy sources, etc. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Water Quality Examples: stormwater retention and/or filtering (bio basins for site), eliminate impervious surfaces, use of pervious pavements, protection and restoration of wetlands, provide public a source for contaminate-free drinking water. (1 pt.) 	1	<p>Applicant should describe the way materials, design, and other project elements promote and reduce contributors to climate change, improve water quality or similar sustainability principles.</p> <p>For development projects, applicants should provide documentation regarding the extent to which proposed practices or products are above-and-beyond traditional construction. Examples include stormwater retention ponds exceeding the size of the requirements or designing trails to avoid tree removal will be considered reducing heat island effect.</p> <p>Installation of solar lighting will qualify for the point. Use of LED lighting is standard practice and will not result in receiving the point.</p> <p>Crushed gravel is considered an impervious surface.</p> <p>For acquisitions, applicants should explain how the property will increase green space, improve water quality or climate resiliency in the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR • LWCF • RTP

SECTION C: Stewardship Local Assistance & LWCF Eligible Projects

Applicants with a project that is eligible for Stewardship Local Assistance or LWCF grants should provide a response to questions in Section B. Applicants with a project that is eligible only for RTP grants should answer “N/A” to questions in this section.

Ranking Questions		Max. Points	Question Details and Documentation Notes	Grant Programs
13	<p>FINANCIAL SUPPORT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant has identified external (non-applicant) funding sources of at least 50% of the applicant’s proposed matching funds. (1 pt.) • Applicant has an existing agreement with a nonprofit, service, or similar organization that decreases the applicant’s costs for ongoing operation and maintenance. (1 pt.) 	2	<p>Applicants must provide letters of commitment from local contributors, proof of budget approval, or similar documentation of financial support.</p> <p>For the ongoing operation and maintenance point, applicants must provide a copy of a Memorandum of Understanding or similar agreement executed with the partner organization.</p> <p>Note: Tax Increment Funding (TIF) district funds are considered applicant funds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • UR
14	<p>PROJECT IMPACT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is the first-of-its-kind for the applicant. (1 pt.) • The project is adjacent to and supports a recreational resource that draws visitors from the region. Data must be provided to receive these points. (2 pts.) 	3	<p>“First-of-its-kind” means the applicant has never done this type of project at any sites within their jurisdiction.</p> <p>To receive full points for this question, applicants must provide suitable documentation that supports the regional nature of the recreational resource (e.g. tourism or seasonal increase in population statistics).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR
15	<p>PRODUCTS:</p> <p>Project will use products made in Wisconsin from recycled materials. (1 pt.)</p>	1	<p>Provide documentation showing products to be used and anticipated vendors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • UR
16	<p>NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY (NHI):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition: Proposed acquisition includes property that is identified as a protected community on the NHI database or otherwise formally recognized. (1 pt.) <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development: Development plans that identify the NHI resource on or near the project site, and how the applicant will enhance and protect these resources. (1 pt.) 	1	<p>Provide documentation that the property is included on the DNR Natural Heritage Inventory and/or narrative description of the location of NHI resources relative to proposed site development plan.</p> <p>Describe what measures will be taken to preserve, enhance, and protect NHI resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR • LWCF
17	<p>DAM REMOVAL:</p> <p>The project was identified in or supports goals of a DNR-approved dam abandonment plan. (2 pts.)</p>	2	<p>Provide plan name, copy of cover page, and page number/chapter reference, if applicable.</p> <p>If the dam abandonment plan is more than five years old, the applicant should provide documentation demonstrating that the plan is still viable and current.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UR

SECTION C, cont'd

Ranking Questions		Max. Points	Question Details and Documentation Notes	Grant Programs
18	<p>UNIQUE NATURAL FEATURES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition: The proposed project includes acquisition of land with unique aesthetic/scenic value, natural value, ecological value, unique natural features. (1 pt.) <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development: The proposed project includes development of recreational opportunities that support unique natural features and/or scenic highways. (1 pt.) 	1	Applicant should submit information documenting the specific unique natural features being protected or enhanced by the proposed project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR • LWCF
19	<p>URBAN POPULATIONS (list located on pg. 31):</p> <p>The project includes land acquisition or development of a property in a designated urban/urbanized area or project site is located outside of, but primarily serves, a designated urban/urbanized area as identified on page 30. (1 pt.)</p>	1	See the Community and Population Information located on pg. 31. If applicant is not on the list of qualifying urban/urbanized areas, but serves a transient population, the applicant should provide documentation regarding recreational needs of transient populations that would be met by the proposed project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR • LWCF
20	<p>DIVERSITY OF INTENDED USERS:</p> <p>The project is intended to serve specific diverse populations (e.g. elderly, minority, disabled, low-income). Describe the intended users and how they will benefit from this project. (1 pt. ADLP, UR; 2 pts. LWCF)</p>	1-2	<p>Provide intended user demographics and how users are benefitting from this project.</p> <p>Note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Serving nearby schools is not sufficient to qualify for this point. 2. This is not intended to be an ADA compliance question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • UR • LWCF
21	<p>WATER ACCESS:</p> <p>The project will significantly improve or expand existing water access for water-based outdoor recreation within the applicant's jurisdiction. (1 pt.)</p>	1	Direct water access includes frontage on rivers, streams, lakes, estuaries, reservoirs, and flowages where there currently is no public access. An example is an ADA pier to provide new, enhanced access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR
22	<p>BROWNFIELDS:</p> <p>The project involves brownfield redevelopment, as the term is defined in S. 23.09(19)(a)1., Wis. Stats. (2 pts.)</p>	2	Provide documentation showing that the site meets definition per Wis. Stat. § 23.09(19)(a)1. and applicant is allowed to acquire or develop the site (e.g. site closure letter, environmental reporting, blight district, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UGS • UR
23	<p>COMMUNITY GARDENS (Acquisition Projects Only):</p> <p>The project will provide land for non-commercial gardening activities within or serving residents of urban areas. (1 pt.)</p>	1	This question applies to acquisition projects only. Applicants submitting a development project application should answer "N/A" to this question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UGS

SECTION C, cont'd

Ranking Questions	Max. Points	Question Details and Documentation Notes	Grant Programs
<p>24 NATURE-BASED OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES (Acquisition Projects Only): After acquisition, the public will be able to conduct all five designated nature-based outdoor activities on the project property. (2 pts.)</p>	2	<p>This question applies to acquisition projects only. Applicants submitting a development project application should answer "N/A" to this question.</p> <p>Nature-based outdoor activities include hunting (gun and bow), trapping, fishing, hiking, and cross-country skiing (as defined in Ch. NR 52, Wis. Admin. Code).</p> <p>For acquisition of properties with no water access, applicants should consider fishing as an available activity for purposes of this question.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR
<p>25 PROJECT CONTINUITY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition: Applicant has already acquired some of the land for the project. (1 pt.) • Development: Applicant has already acquired or developed some eligible facilities for the project without grant assistance. (1 pt.) 	1	Provide narrative description of acquisition and/or facilities being developed, including type of funding used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR • LWCF
<p>26 RIVERWAY ACQUISITION (Acquisition Projects Only): For land acquisition projects, the proposed acquisition will contribute significantly to the overall success of an urban river project or comprehensive riverway or lake management plan. (1 pt.)</p>	1	Applicants should describe how the proposed acquisition contributes to the success of the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • UGS • UR
<p>27 OPEN NATURAL CORRIDORS (Acquisition Only): The applicant will acquire land that provides open natural linear corridors connecting open natural areas, city parks, or similar outdoor recreation amenities or serves as a buffer between outdoor recreation property and land with potential for urban development. (2 pts.)</p>	2	<p>Provide a narrative description of the relationship between the proposed project and the linear corridor.</p> <p>Applicants should include a map that highlights the location of the proposed project relative to the corridor/trail.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADR • UGS
<p>28 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (Not the CORP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has or is developing a comprehensive plan for their local jurisdiction (as defined in S. 66.1001, Wis. Stats.) with provisions that support intergovernmental cooperation. (1 pt.) • The proposed project is supported by or included in the applicant's comprehensive plan. (1 pt.) <p>Note: Nonprofits are not eligible for this point.</p>	2	<p>Provide a link or copies of the Comprehensive Plan and the location of relevant information and data supporting this project.</p> <p>"Comprehensive Plan" refers to plans developed and adopted per requirements of Wis. Stat. § 66.1001. This plan is not the same as the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP).</p> <p>See https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/LocalGovtsGrants/Comprehensive-Planning.aspx for more details.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADLP • ADR • UGS • UR

SECTION C, cont'd

Ranking Questions	Max. Points	Question Details and Documentation Notes	Grant Programs
<p>29 RESTORATION OR RENOVATION OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES (Development Only):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project will specifically provide for the renovation or replacement of outdoor recreation facilities that are in danger of being lost for public use or updating the existing facilities to meet current Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. (2 pts.) The project was previously funded with LWCF funding. (1 pt.) (2 pts. ADLP, UR; 3 pts. LWCF) 	2-3	<p>For renovation projects provide documentation that shows the project will address safety issues and/or ADA compliance.</p> <p>For replacement facilities provide documentation of the need for the facilities and an increase in users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADLP UR LWCF
<p>30 PROJECT TIMELINE:</p> <p>Acquisition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land can be acquired within one year. (1 pt.) The property appraisal is complete. (1 pt.) Applicant has a seller accepted offer-to-purchase or option. (2 pts.) <p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project can be completed prior to June 30, 2028. (1 pt.) Required permit application(s) (beyond local permits required) have been submitted. (1 pt.) Permits are in hand at time of application OR no state or federal permits are required. (2 pts.) 	4	<p>Applicant should provide a current timeline for the acquisition or development project.</p> <p>Applicants are highly encouraged to contact DNR prior to executing an appraisal contract for grant purposes. Similarly, contact DNR Wetlands/Waterways and/or DNR Stormwater staff if permitting is needed for proposed project.</p> <p>Provide a detailed timeline of project goals.</p> <p>For state and federal permits provide a notice of application receipt.</p> <p>Submit copies of all permits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADLP ADR UGS UR LWCF
<p>31 ELIGIBLE RECREATIONAL USES WITHIN PROJECT AREA:</p> <p>Explain the number of eligible recreational uses for facilities within the project scope of work (development projects) <i>OR</i> planned uses for new land acquisition property (acquisition projects).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature Based Outdoor Recreation: examples include picnic facilities; trails; water access; pedestrian, bike, and cross-country ski access; camping; habitat restoration; community gardens. (1 pt.) Active Recreation Use (facility-based; LWCF ONLY): examples include: sports and playfields; swimming pools; splash pads; skating/hockey rinks; downhill ski facilities. (1 pt.) Multiple Season Use: explain use of project facility/facilities in all seasons. (1 pt.) (2 pts. ADLP; 3 pts. LWCF) 	2-3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADLP LWCF

SECTION D: RTP Eligible Projects

Applicants with a project that is eligible for RTP grants should provide a response to questions in Section D. All other applicants should answer "N/A" to questions in this section.

Ranking Questions		Max. Points	Question Details and Documentation Notes	Grant Programs
32	RTP PROJECT TYPE (see page 17 in Guidance Booklet for Definitions): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation and/or Maintenance (8 pts.) • Development (3 pts.) 	8	Projects that include more than one activity type will be reviewed to determine which category is appropriate.	• RTP
33	YEAR-ROUND USE: Project area is open for year-round use. (1 pt.) Project area is also open for year-round motorized use. (0.5 pt.)	1.5		• RTP
34	NUMBER OF COMPATIBLE USES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motorized Activities: 1 pt. if any of the following are allowed on the trail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ATV/UTVs - Off-highway motorcycles - Snowmobiles - E-bikes - E-scooters - Segways • Pedestrian Activities: 1 pt. if any of the following are allowed on the trail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cross-country skiing (ungroomed) - Hiking/walking/jogging/running - In-line skating - Photography - Snowshoeing - Wildlife observation/bird watching • Other Activities: 1 pt. if any of the following are allowed on the trail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biking - Canoe/kayak access - Cross-country skiing (groomed) - Horses 	3	Please list all compatible uses for the project area. Compatible uses can include a mix of motorized and nonmotorized uses (e.g. hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or using other off-road motorized vehicles). All uses must share the same project (trail) area to be counted. Points can also be given for trailhead and restroom projects.	• RTP
35	RESOLVES CONFLICTS BETWEEN USERS: Proposed trail project will provide for increased safety of recreational users by separating uses on a shared corridor, e.g. separating motorized use from nonmotorized, establishing trail segments to resolve pedestrian conflicts, or creating pedestrian paths at blind curves. (1 pt.)	1	Typically, user conflicts are resolved via development projects, not rehabilitation or maintenance. Resolution may occur through development of separate trails for different use types, etc. Applicants must provide documentation regarding historical user conflicts on the existing trail.	• RTP
36	TRAIL PATROL: The applicant has the ability to ensure enforcement and safety for trail users, either directly or through cooperative agreements with non-governmental organizations or other governmental entities. (1 pt.)	1	Applicants may receive points for this question if the applicant patrols the trail or if the applicant has a written trail patrol agreement with another non-state entity. An email or letter from the local police or similar enforcement entity stating how often they check the trail is sufficient.	• RTP

SECTION D, cont'd

Ranking Questions	Max. Points	Question Details and Documentation Notes	Grant Programs
<p>37 SAFE TRAIL DESIGN: Proposed project area does not cross or use any public motorized vehicular or access roads unless the road is closed for maintenance seasonally or is a maintenance-only road. Trailhead-only projects receive this point and water trails can receive this point if there are no portages that cross public motorized vehicular roads. (1 pt.)</p>	1	<p>Applicants should provide a map showing the proposed project relative to the overall trail system, roads, and bridges.</p> <p>For full credit on this question (1 pt.), the project needs to be located completely off the road surface with no at-grade crossings. The only exception are roads that are closed to motorized vehicles seasonally (when trail use is in effect), or roads that are used for maintenance-only access to a property.</p> <p>If a driveway crosses the trail, the applicant may not receive this point.</p>	• RTP
<p>38 QUALIFIED YCC OR SERVICE CORPS: Applicant has entered into a contract or service agreement with a state youth conservation or service corps to perform construction or maintenance on the project. (2 pts.)</p>	2	<p>Applicants should provide a copy of the contract, service agreement or letter of intent.</p> <p>Corps Network: https://corpsnetwork.org</p>	• RTP
<p>39 LOCAL DONATIONS AND VOLUNTEER SUPPORT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project will include donations of labor materials, and/or equipment from sources other than the applicant unless the applicant is a non-governmental entity. (1 pt.) • Donations comprise 20% or more of the total project cost. (1 pt.) • Applicant manages the trail system where the project area is located but does not own the property and has a written agreement in place with the property owner for this management. (1 pt.) 	3	<p>Letters of support are not sufficient to receive points for this question. Applicants must provide letters of commitment from local contributors, proof of budget approval, or similar documentation of financial support and provide management agreement documentation.</p>	• RTP
<p>40 TRAIL CONNECTIVITY (Development Only): The applicant will develop a new segment of a linear corridor that connects one or more segments of an already established trail. Off-road trail connections only. (2 pts.)</p>	2	<p>Provide a narrative description of the relationship between the proposed project and the linear corridor. This does not apply to trails leading into campgrounds, parks, etc. unless directly connecting to another trail.</p> <p>Applicants should include a map that shows the off-road trail connectivity. Exception for on-road bridge connection.</p>	• RTP

SECTION E: LWCF Eligible (Active Recreation) Projects

Applicants with a project that is eligible for LWCF grants should provide a response to questions in Section E. All other applicants should answer "N/A" to questions in this section.

Ranking Questions	Max. Points	Question Details and Documentation Notes	Grant Programs
<p>41 WISCONSIN'S STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (SCORP): Wisconsin's SCORP has identified five goals for outdoor recreation. Explain how your project application supports one or more of these priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Boost participation in outdoor recreation. 2. Grow partnerships. 3. Provide high-quality experiences. 4. Improve data to enhance visitor experiences and benefits. 5. Enhance funding and financial stability. 	N/A	Provide an explanation or documentation of how the project meets one or more of the SCORP priorities.	• LWCF
<p>42 PROXIMITY OF RECREATION OPPORTUNITY: Explain how the project provides recreation land where a scarcity of recreation opportunities exists. The project area must be at least 1 mile from any other outdoor recreational facility open to the public. (1 pt. development; 2 pts. acquisition)</p>	1-2	Explain and provide a map showing where the nearest recreational opportunities exist.	• LWCF
<p>43 ALTERNATIVE ACCESS FOR TRANSPORTATION TO THE PROJECT AREA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project area will be accessible by an off-road trail. (1 pt.) • The project area is on a mass public transportation route (e.g., bus, train). (1 pt.) 	2	Explain how users will access the property and provide a map showing off-road trail access or bus/train route to property. Define what the connecting properties are.	• LWCF
<p>44 IMMEDIATE NEED FOR THE PROJECT: Please explain any threats to losing recreational use of the property or facility if not immediately acquired or developed. (1 pt. development; 2 pts. acquisition)</p>	1-2	Is there a possibility this property or facility will no longer be used for outdoor recreation purposes in the next three years? Provide information showing potential threat to the property or facility (e.g .reports of facility deterioration, approaches from developers, or security threats.	• LWCF

Community and Population Information

Urban/Urbanized Areas - Counties		
Brown	Kenosha	St. Croix
Calumet	La Crosse	Sauk
Chippewa	Manitowoc	Sheboygan
Columbia	Marathon	Walworth
Dane	Milwaukee	Washington
Dodge	Outagamie	Waukesha
Eau Claire	Ozaukee	Waupaca
Fond du Lac	Portage	Winnebago
Grant	Racine	Wood
Jefferson	Rock	

Urban/Urbanized Areas – Cities, Towns, & Villages		
Addison	Belleville	Center
Alden	Bellevue	Chase
Algoma (C, Kewaunee Co.)	Beloit	Chilton
Algoma (T, Winnebago Co.)	Berlin	Chippewa Falls
Allouez	Black River Falls	Clayton
Altoona	Bloomer	Clintonville
Amery	Bloomfield	Columbus
Antigo	Boscobel	Combined Locks
Appleton	Brillion	Cottage Grove
Arbor Vitae	Bristol (T; Dane Co.)	Cross Plains
Arcadia	Bristol (V.; Kenosha Co.)	Cudahy
Ashippun	Brockway	Dale
Ashland	Brodhead	Dayton
Ashwaubenon	Brookfield	Deerfield
Baldwin	Brown Deer	DeForest
Baraboo	Buchanan	Dekorra
Barron	Burke	Delafield
Barton	Burlington	Delavan
Bass Lake	Caledonia	Denmark
Bayside	Campbell	De Pere
Beaver Dam	Cedarburg	Dodgeville

Urban/Urbanized Areas – Cities, Towns, & Villages, cont.

Dover	Greenfield	Lake Geneva
Dunn	Greenville	Lake Hallie
Eagle	Hales Corners	Lake Mills
Eagle Point	Hammond	Lancaster
East Troy	Harmony	Lawrence
Eau Claire	Harrison	Ledgeview
Edgerton	Hartford	Lima
Elkhorn	Hartland	Lincoln
Ellington	Hayward	Linn
Ellsworth	Hobart	Lisbon
Elm Grove	Holland	Little Chute
Evansville	Holmen	Little Suamico
Empire	Horicon	Lodi
Erin	Hortonville	Lomira
Evansville	Howard	Luxemburg
Farmington (T; Wash. Co.)	Howards Grove	Lyons
Farmington (T. Waupaca Co.)	Hudson	McFarland
Fennimore	Hull	Madison
Fitchburg	Ixonia	Maine
Fond du Lac	Jackson	Manitowoc
Fort Atkinson	Janesville	Marinette
Fox Crossing	Jefferson	Marshall
Fox Point	Johnson Creek	Marshfield
Franklin	Juneau	Mauston
Freedom	Kaukauna	Mayville
Friendship	Kenosha	Medford
Fulton	Kewaskum	Menasha
Genesee	Kewaunee	Menominee
Geneva	Kiel	Menomonee Falls
Genoa City	Kimberly	Menomonie
Germantown	Koshkonong	Mequon
Glendale	Kronenwetter	Merrill
Grafton	Lac du Flambeau	Merton
Grand Chute	La Crosse	Middleton
Grand Rapids	Ladysmith	Milton
Green Bay	Lafayette	Milwaukee
Greendale	Lake Delton	Mineral Point

Urban/Urbanized Areas – Cities, Towns, & Villages, cont.

Minocqua	Pelican	Salem Lakes
Mondovi	Peshtigo	Saratoga
Monona	Pewaukee	Sauk City
Monroe	Pine Lake	Saukville
Mosinee	Pittsfield	Scott
Mount Horeb	Platteville	Sevastopol
Mount Pleasant	Pleasant Prairie	Seymour (T; Eau Claire Co.)
Mukwa	Pleasant Springs	Seymour (C; Outagamie Co.)
Mukwonago	Pleasant Valley	Shawano
Muskego	Plover	Sheboygan
Neenah	Plymouth	Sheboygan Falls
New Berlin	Polk	Shelby
Newbold	Portage	Sherwood
Necedah	Port Washington	Shorewood
New Holstein	Poynette	Slinger
New Lisbon	Prairie du Chien	Somers
New London	Prairie du Sac	Somerset
New Richmond	Prescott	South Milwaukee
North Fond du Lac	Pulaski	Sparta
North Hudson	Racine	Springfield
Norway	Randall	Stanley
Oak Creek	Raymond	Star Prairie
Oak Grove	Reedsburg	Stephenson
Oakland	Rhineland	Stettin
Oconomowoc	Rib Mountain	Stevens Point
Oconto	Rice Lake	Stockton
Oconto Falls	Richfield	Stoughton
Omro	Richland Center	Sturgeon Bay
Onalaska	Richmond	Sturtevant
Oneida	Ripon	Suamico
Oostburg	River Falls	Sugar Creek
Oregon	Rochester	Summit
Osceola	Rock	Sun Prairie
Oshkosh	Rome	Superior
Ottawa	Rothschild	Tomah
Pacific	St. Francis	Tomahawk
Paddock Lake	St. Joseph	Trenton

Urban/Urbanized Areas – Cities, Towns, & Villages, cont.

Troy	Watertown	West Salem
Twin Lakes	Waukesha	Wheatland
Two Rivers	Waupaca	Whitefish Bay
Union	Waunakee	Whitewater
Union Grove	Waupun	Williams Bay
Vernon	Wausau	Wilson
Verona	Wauwatosa	Windsor
Viroqua	Wescott	Winneconne
Wales	West Allis	Wisconsin Dells
Walworth	West Bend	Wisconsin Rapids
Washington	West Milwaukee	Wrightstown
Waterford	Weston	Yorkville
Waterloo	Westport	

Definitions:

- “Urban/Urbanized Areas” include 2021 U.S. Census Bureau “Urban Clusters” (densely developed areas with at least 2,500 people but less than 50,000 people), U.S. Census Bureau “Urbanized Areas” (densely developed areas with 50,000 or more people), and all incorporated cities.
Note: While cities, towns, and villages are included, townships are assumed to be of insufficient density to be considered “Urban/Urbanized” and have therefore been excluded from this list.
- “Urban/Urbanized Areas – Counties” include counties with a population of 50,000 people or more.

Data Sources:

- U.S. Census Bureau Reference Library: <https://www.census.gov>
- Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services Center. 2024. Official Final Estimates, 1/1/2024, Wisconsin Counties, with Comparison to Census 2020. [DOA Population and Housing Unit Estimates \(wi.gov\)](#)
- Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services Center. 2024. Official Final Estimates, 1/1/2024, Wisconsin Municipalities, with Comparison to Census 2020. [DOA Population and Housing Unit Estimates \(wi.gov\)](#)

APPENDIX A

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Local Assistance Program Grants, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

2025 APPLICATION MATERIALS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grants. Please make yourself familiar with the grant process, project eligibility requirements, and the terms and conditions of these grants. Please contact a [regional Project Manager to discuss your project before you submit an application](#).

All application materials are located at: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG>

If you cannot open the application forms, or you are getting an error message rather than a grant application form, it's likely due to an incompatibility issue between your web browser and the PDF format. Troubleshooting tips are available here: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/site/pdf>.

Application deadlines – DNR will rank and evaluate complete applications received by **11:59 pm on May 1, 2025**.

Timing of grant evaluation and award – If your project is selected for funding, you will be notified of a *tentative* award approximately 4 months after the application deadline. Final award and payment will be subject to several additional required reviews, including, in some cases, approval of the Natural Resources Board. The time between submitting a complete application and receiving a grant contract ranges from **six to eighteen months**. While we strive to make application review as efficient as possible, we advise applicants to factor this into their timelines.

From the Stewardship, LWCF, and RTP grant staff, thank you!

What's new?

Please read this, even if you're a seasoned applicant...

Some important and new notes about 2025 project evaluation

- 1. GRANT DEADLINE CHANGE FOR 2026:** Beginning in 2026, the grant deadline will change to March 1. Please make note of this deadline change.
- 2. PLEASE CONTACT US BEFORE APPLYING:** It is helpful for staff to know what applications will be forthcoming. Please contact your regional Project Manager to alert us to new applications and to discuss your project before applying. That is especially true in the following circumstances:
 - **Acquisition projects north of State Highway 8** require supporting resolutions from each municipality affected by this project.
 - **Projects proposing the value of another property as match** – Please review guidance about eligibility and discuss property to be used as match with your regional Project Manager before you contract an appraiser.
- 3. RANKING CRITERIA REVISIONS:** Repeat applicants will notice that questions have been revised and new questions have been added. Please read through the ranking questions carefully.
- 4. CHANGES TO THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF) PROGRAM:**
 - The National Park Service (NPS) is now reviewing splash pad projects on a case-by-case basis to determine whether they are considered infrastructure and are required to follow the BABA requirements. If your splash pad project receives a tentative award, a project review form will be submitted with the formal application to NPS.
- 5. CHANGES TO THE RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP):**
 - The RTP grant program falls under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) so acquisition applications are not being accepted for State Fiscal Year 2025 due to the timeframe that must be met.
 - The RTP grant award maximum is \$100,000.
 - The RTP section now includes useful life information.
- 6. PLEASE SUBMIT ELECTRONIC FILES FOR EACH DOCUMENT** rather than one large file of the whole application package. Grant staff do not have the software to break apart big files. Complete grant applications should be submitted electronically (e.g. email, zip files, wibox.wi.gov/dropbox) to your Regional Project Manager by 11:59 pm on **May 1, 2025**.
- 7. APPRAISALS:** Please contact Greg Hicks, DNR Appraisal Reviewer, prior to hiring an appraiser. Greg can be reached at 608-640-7241 or gregory.hicks@wisconsin.gov.