

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.