

# **MISSISSIPPI RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM**

**Manual**

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS  
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# MISSISSIPPI RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

## 2025 RTP MANUAL January 2025

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# MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

## INTRODUCTION

The [Fixing America's Surface Transportation \(FAST\) Act](#) reauthorized the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) for Federal fiscal years 2016 through 2020 as a set-aside of funds from the [Transportation Alternatives \(TA\) Set-Aside under Surface Transportation Block Grant Program](#) (STBG).

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is an assistance program of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The RTP provides funds to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail uses. Each State administers its own program, usually through a State resource agency.

### Each State

- receives funds apportioned by statutory formula
- administers its own program, usually through a State resource or park agency develops its own procedures to solicit and select projects for funding
- has a State Recreational Trail Advisory Committee to assist with the program that must meet at least one time each fiscal year
- in some States, the committee selects the projects
- in others, the committee is advisory only

### Eligible Projects

- Construction of new trails (with restrictions for new trails on Federal lands).
- Maintenance and restoration of existing trails.
- Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages.
- Development and dissemination of publications and operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection related to trails (including supporting non-law enforcement trail safety and trail use monitoring patrol programs, and providing trail-related training) (limited to 5 percent of a State's funds).
- State administrative costs related to this program (limited to 7 percent of a State's funds).

Although the U.S. Department of Transportation manages the RTP through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the administration of the program lies at the state level. On January 5, 1992, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) was designated as the agency to administer the RTP.

A RTP Advisory Committee, where both motorized and non-motorized trail users are represented, is tasked to advise the MDWFP on the criteria for administering the state's RTP grant process.

### **Program Purpose**

The purpose of the program is to provide and maintain recreational trails and trails-related facilities identified in, or that further a specific goal of, a Recreational Trails Plan, or the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), as required by the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCF). The program will encourage the construction of new trail projects that benefit the environment and the redesign, reconstruction, non-routine maintenance, or relocation of trails that mitigate and minimize the impact to the natural environment. Project sponsors are encouraged to work in partnership with trail-user groups, volunteer groups, the business community, local, state, and federal agencies to develop projects that benefit the various modes of trail uses in a safe and satisfying manner.

### **Reimbursement Funds**

The MDWFP will provide funds received under this Act as reimbursement grants to federal and state agencies, local governments, legally constituted authorities or commissions, and non-profit conservation organizations for projects on publicly held lands and/or lands held by non-profit organizations. All lands on which RTP funds are expended must be open and operated as an outdoor recreation area for use by the general public. Non-profit organizations must provide documentation proving the organization which funds are to be expended have been operated as an outdoor recreation area and have been open for public use for at least 5 years.

### **Project Applications**

Local sponsors submit project applications for funding award. Project applications are reviewed, scored, and ranked by appropriate MDWFP staff and reviewed by RTP Advisory Committee. Approved projects will then be included in the MDWFP's recommendation for project selection and submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for final federal approval. After FHWA approval, MDWFP will present each grant recipient with a "Project Agreement" which must be signed by an appropriate official and returned to MDWFP. *After Finalized Project Agreement has been signed, work is to begin on site within 120 days.*

### **Grant Accounting and Records**

The Recreational Trail Program is subject to the Single Audit Act of 1984, P. L. 98-502, and the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996, P.L. 104-156. This Act set forth standards for obtain consistency and uniformity among Federal, State, and local governments, and non-profit organizations which are expending Federal awards (Grants).

The Sub-recipient must maintain an accounting system that accurately reflects fiscal transactions, with the necessary controls and safeguards. The system must provide accounting data so that the total cost of each individual Grant Project can be readily determined. Grantees must keep accurate records of all RTP Project expenditures including, but not limited to, receipts, progress payments, invoices,

and timecards. These records must be retained for a period of three years after final payment is made by the State.

Pursuant to federal law, any entity that expends \$750,000 or more of combined federal funds in its fiscal year is required to have a Single Audit performed in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and your grant agreement. Federal financial assistance includes funds received from all federal resources, not just funds from the Recreational Trails Program.

## **GRANT AMOUNT AVAILABLE**

The minimum grant award will be \$8,000 and the maximum grant award will be \$120,000 for non-motorized projects and there is no cap for motorized projects. Out of Mississippi's apportionments, up to seven percent of the monies received can be used for Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks administrative costs and up to five percent for environmental protection and safety education expenses relating to recreational trails.

This program is unique in that, legislatively it is specified that the funds must be expended for projects that are strictly motorized as well as projects that are strictly non-motorized, while at the same time encouraging the development of projects that provide for both. The law specifies that 30 percent of the funds must be used for motorized projects, 30 percent for non-motorized and 40 percent for diverse projects that can be utilized by both. Additionally, the MDWFP reserves the right to exceed the maximum grant award amount stated herein, when, in the discretion of the MDWFP, a project of unique scope will require more funding.

Diversified trails as defined by the RTP Advisory Committee are "projects that provide for the greatest number of compatible uses, or provide for innovative recreational trail corridor sharing to accommodate both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use."

## **APPLICANT MATCH**

The RTP is a *reimbursement program*; therefore, the **grant recipient must pay 100% of the cost of an item before submitting a request for reimbursement for 80% of eligible costs.** The program encourages the donation of private funds, materials, and services at fair market value. These donations can be counted toward the applicants required match. However, a project sponsor cannot donate existing materials, or services. The RTP may allow other federal funds, materials, programs (AmeriCorps, etc.), or services to be used as the applicants match. Federal applicants are required to have a 5% (minimum) local/non federal match. The match formula would then be 80%-15%-5%.

## **RTP AT-A-GLANCE OUTLINE**

**January** - MDWFP - Outdoor Recreation Grant (ORG) staff releases RTP Program Applications and publicizes the grant program by mail outs and on MDWFP Website.

**Deadline for Applications – 4:00 PM, April 3, 2025**

### Phase I

Submitted applications will be reviewed and scored by ORG Staff.

During the review process on-site inspections are made of the proposed trail projects by ORG staff.

Applications are reviewed with Advisory Committee and FHWA personnel.

Selected projects are finalized and applicants are notified by ORG staff.

### Phase II

ORG staff will notify finalists to submit a Request for Cultural Resource Assessment to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History for a Section 106 Review.

Upon completion of the review by the MDAH, the FHWA will administer a federal environmental review. FHWA will notify MDWFP of the approved projects.

### Project Award

MDWFP – ORG staff notify applicants of approval and pre-award required forms will be provided to local sponsors for signatures.

Recreational Trail Project Agreement is finalized and executed with local sponsor.

### Project Implementation and Completion

Once Project Agreement is executed, work is to begin on site within 120 days, if MDWFP ORG Staff determines that work progression is not satisfactory, funding may be pulled from Grantee. No reimbursement for any expenses incurred during this time frame will be considered.

### Date of Approval to End of Project Period:

Quarterly Progress Reports will be submitted by local sponsor to ORG.

All work shall be completed and related invoices paid.

A request for reimbursement and a final progress report shall be submitted by local sponsor with required supportive documents to ORG.

A final on-site inspection will be conducted by ORG staff of the completed project.

Reimbursement will be processed for payment to local sponsor.

## **SECTION I. PERMITTED/NON-PERMITTED USES**

### **A. Permissible Uses**

1. Construction of new trails (with restrictions for new trails on Federal lands). National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 43231 et seq.), the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1600 et seq.), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).
2. Maintenance and restoration of existing trails.
3. Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkage. Facilities could include provision of drinking water, latrines, safety rails, signs, guide maps, benches, vehicle parking areas, etc...
4. Facilitating access and use of trails by persons with disabilities. The requirements of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) and the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) must be provided on trails projects to the extent feasible. Whenever possible, trails intended for use by pedestrians should be accessible to people using wheelchairs, whether manual or motorized. Additional information can be found at [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov).

### **B. Uses Not Permitted**

1. Condemnation of any kind of interest in property.
2. Construction of trail within Right of Way of a road, street or highway.
3. Construction of any trail on National Forest Service lands for motorized use unless such lands:
  - (a) have been allocated for uses other than wilderness by an approved agency resource management plan or have been released to uses other than wilderness by an Act of Congress, and
  - (b) such construction is otherwise consistent with the management direction in such approved land and resource management plan
4. Upgrading, expanding or otherwise facilitating motorized use or access to trails predominantly used by non-motorized trail users, and on which, as of May 1, 1991, motorized use is either prohibited or has not occurred.
5. Planning or environmental documentation only.



## SECTION II. TRAIL FUNDING PRIORITIES

The Recreational Trails Program is an assistance program of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Recreational Trails Program provides funds to the State to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. The funds are broken down in the following percentages and projects.

### 30% Motorized Projects

Projects that accommodate all-terrain vehicles, trail motorcycles, four-wheel drive vehicles, and other off-road vehicles. (Single Use or Multi-use)

### 30% Non-Motorized Projects

Projects that accommodate trail activities such as hiking, equestrian, biking, fitness/exercise, canoeing/kayaking activities, and multi-use pathways. (Single Use or Multi-use)

### 40% Diversified Projects

Include both motorized and non-motorized projects that accommodate the greatest number of compatible uses, or provide for innovative recreational trail corridor sharing to accommodate both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. (Multi-use)

**Site Amenities and Improvements** - Funding will be limited for the following items:

Restroom Facilities: must primarily serve the trail user

Trailside Weather Shelters: limited to size of 10'x 10'

Parking: primarily serves trail user, ADA compliant with access to trail head

Trail Lighting: electrical wiring to be underground

Trailside Benches: permanently affixed to be unmovable

Landscaping: primarily tree planting that is directly related to the trail, such as trees planted for shade along the trail. How landscaping will be watered should be explained in project narrative.

Fencing: is not eligible for RTP funding.

**Note: Applicants with active RTP projects can not apply for funding for new projects.**

Only one (1) project application per sponsor will be considered. (Exceptions are made for State and Federal Agencies – one application per recreation area.)

The Recreational Trails Program **does not fund** activities or facilities for **non-trail related** activities. These include but are not limited to: Baseball, Basketball, Football, Golf, Disc Golf, Tennis, Soccer, Picnic Pavilions, Picnic Tables, Grills, Picnic Areas, Playground Equipment, Amphitheaters, Fishing Piers, Splash Pads, Sidewalks, Streets, etc.

Additional information can be obtained at the FHWA web site:

- [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/guidance/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/guidance/)
- [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/publications/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/publications/)

### SECTION III. TRAIL WIDTHS AND ACTIVITIES

The following are recommended trail widths and related activities.

\*Nature / Hiking Trails – 3'-6' wide with natural surface, gravel, or paved. For two people to walk side by side a trail width of 6' is needed.

Walking / Jogging and Exercise / Fitness Trails: 8' -10' wide typically paved trail surface. An 8'-10' width allows for users to walk or jog side by side and safely pass each other. In some circumstances, a width of 6' can be used if less user demand is anticipated for the trail. Trail should be at least 1/2 mile in length. For Exercise / Fitness trails exercise equipment or stations must be along the trail.

Multi –Use Paved Trails (walkers, joggers, cyclists, in-line skating): 10'-12' wide. A 12' wide path is recommended as the minimum width for in-line skating as the skating motion requires a greater trail width. Trail should be at least 1/2 mile in length.

Skate board Trails: Paved width can vary to accommodate users and obstacles. Careful consideration should be given when combining skateboarding with other users.

\*Mountain Bike Trails: 4'-6' width for "single track" with a natural trail surface. Trail direction is generally one way. A width of 6' is needed for passing when going the same direction. An 8'-10' width is needed to accommodate two-way use.

Bicycle Trails: Trails designed to accommodate cyclist should be paved with a 10'-12' width. A 10-12' width allows side by side riding. 12' width recommended for two-way use.

\*Equestrian Trails: 10'- 12' trail width is needed for passing, side by side, or two-way use. One way use or single path can be a lesser width. Vertical vegetative clearance should be 12'.

\*ATV Trails: 6' wide single lane trail on native surface or aggregate. Width may need to increase to 8' or more for trail turns.

\*Motorcycle (Dirt Bike) Trails: 4'-6' wide single lane trail generally on native surface. Width may need to increase for trail turns.

\*Trail surfaces of native material can be subject to erosion and increased trail maintenance if not designed and constructed properly.

Trail design, construction, and maintenance need to incorporate not only the trail surface area (tread) but also the trail corridor. The trail corridor encompasses the trail tread, trail shoulders, maintained area on sides of the trail and any vertical clearances.

## SECTION IV. PAVED TRAIL CONSTRUCTION SPECIFICATIONS

### Asphalt Trail Specification

- 2.5 inch Hot Mix Asphalt or Warm Mix Asphalt, ST, (12.5 MM mixture), (1@2.5") required.
- Asphalt Prime Coat, Emulsified EA-1
- 4 inch Compacted Crushed Limestone (#610) compacted to 95%
- Geo-textile (See note)
- Subgrade compacted to 90%

Note: Geo-textile shown for areas determined in the field to require stabilization

### Concrete Trail Specification With Crusher Base

- Provide Crack Control Joints at 4 ft. centers.
- Expansion Joints at 20 ft. centers
- 6x6x#10 Wire Mesh Required
- 3000 psi Concrete Required
- 3 ½ inch Concrete
- 4 inch compacted crusher base compacted to 95%
- Subgrade compacted to 90%

### Concrete Trail Specification Without Crusher Base

- Provide Crack Control Joints at 4 ft. centers.
- Expansion Joints at 20 ft. centers
- 6x6x#10 Wire Mesh Required
- 3000 psi Concrete Required
- 5 inch Concrete
- Subgrade compacted to 90%

Note: Shoulder of trail should be sloped to top of trail surface to prevent potential tripping and/or twisting of ankle, and to provide positive drainage.

## SECTION V. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

### A. General Procedures

The Recreational Trails Program stipulates that the State may provide monies received under this Act as grants to trail project sponsors. Mississippi provides grants to Municipal Agencies, State Agencies, Federal Agencies, Other Governmental Agencies and Non-Profit tax exempt organizations. *All lands on which RTP funds are expended must be operated and open for use by the general public. Non-profit organizations must provide documentation proving the area which funds are to be expended has been operated as an outdoor recreation area, open for public use for at least 5 years and assure the area will continue to be open to the public. Proof of ownership of property on which the RTP funding will be used is required.*

Applicants with active RTP projects **cannot** apply for funding for **new** projects. (Exceptions are made for State and Federal Agencies.)

Federal applicants are required to have a 5% (minimum) local/non federal match. The match formula for federal applicants would be 80%-15%-5%.

Only one (1) project application per sponsor will be considered. (Exceptions are made for State and Federal Agencies – one application per recreation area.)

Applicants shall submit - one (1) original and two (2) copies of the application with the applicable supporting documentation. **Do not staple applications**, only paper clips or binder clips should be used.

The applications will be reviewed, scored, and coordinated with appropriate MDWFP staff and RTP Advisory Committee. Applicants will receive written notification of conditional approval or disapproval. Projects receiving conditional approval will be given a deadline to complete all applicable environmental compliance requirements and obtain all required permits and approvals.

Finalists who meet the deadline for completing environmental compliance issues and obtain all required permits and approvals will receive a Project Agreement from MDWFP to complete the agreement process. The grant recipient may then initiate site development activities and procurement of materials as needed to complete the project.

## B. Documents Submitted with Application

Documents		Required by
1.	Transmittal Letter signed by the Agency Head, President, Chairman, etc...	All Applicants
2.	Resolution/Letter by the appropriate governing body authorizing the submission of the application and funding authorization in budget.	All Applicants
3.	Documentation that verifies not for profit status.	Non-profit Organizations Only
4a.	Statement of Compliance - If applicable, a signed statement by the Federal Agency that the construction of new trails crossing Federal lands is in compliance with all applicable laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act, the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.	Projects on Federal Land
4b.	Certified Statement of Uses - If construction of any trail on National Forest System lands for motorized uses is proposed, a signed statement certifying that the lands have been allocated for uses other than wilderness by the approved agency resources management plan or have been released to uses other than wilderness by an Act of Congress, and such construction is otherwise consistent with the management direction in such approved land and resources management plan.	Projects on National Forest Service Land
5.	Location Map – Regional/County Map and Street Level Map indicating location of proposed trail site. <i>Include written directions to site starting from 1505 Eastover Drive Jackson MS.</i> (no larger than 11 X 17 or smaller than 8 ½ x 11)	All Applicants
6.	Site Plan – legibly indicate proposed trail, area of construction, trail access, parking areas, proposed facilities and utilities. Identify existing facilities, utilities, and roads. <b>Include name of person and date prepared.</b> (no larger than 11 X 17 or smaller than 8 ½ x 11)	All Applicants
7.	Property Deed - Copy of deed showing proof of ownership of property	All Applicants
8.	Photos – include photos of the area and route where trail development is proposed. Indicate approximate location and direction of each photo on a Site Map. Include a caption with each photo.	All Applicants
<i>Note: Other documentation may be requested/required during the review process</i>		

## C. Application Review, Ranking, and Selection

### 1. Review of Application

The MDWFP will initially evaluate and score each project application. ***Applications not properly completed will be considered incomplete and will not be included for further competition.***

### 2. Application Scoring

Applications shall be scored by MDWFP staff according to the Project Narrative, Project Cost Estimate and Schedule Information, and Projection Selection Criteria sections of the RTP application as adopted by the RTP Advisory Committee.

### 3. Application Ranking and Selection

Applications will be ranked and selected in order and in conformance with the 40% diversified - 30% non-motorized – 30% motorized formula and Funding Priorities.

## SECTION VI. GRANT AWARD PROCESS

### A. Grant Award

MDWFP will notify applicants of conditionally approved and non-approved projects. Local sponsors of conditionally approved projects will be required to submit a Request for a Cultural Resource Assessment to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History for a Section 106 Review within 30 days of approval notice with a copy sent to ORG office.

Upon receipt of the MDAH Assessment letter, the sponsor shall retain a copy and mail the letter to the ORG office. ORG staff will review the letter from MDAH and submit it to the Federal Highway Administration for their environmental review.

All permits or other approvals that may be required as a result of the proposed project must be obtained from the appropriate agencies by the local sponsor. A copy of all environmental documents must be forwarded to MDWFP prior to receiving a Project Agreement.

Following approval by the FHWA, MDWFP will notify each grant recipient of approval and will provide local sponsor with required forms and assurances that are to be signed by the local sponsor and returned to MDWFP. When the signed required forms and assurances are received by ORG staff, Project Agreements will be prepared and mailed to local sponsor for execution.

## **B. Project Implementation**

Upon receipt of a fully executed Project Agreement, the grant recipient may initiate activities to undertake the approved scope of work. Costs incurred by grantees prior to receipt of a fully executed Project Agreement will **not** be eligible for reimbursement.

If local sponsor intends to utilize in-kind labor, in-kind equipment, volunteers, are donations in the construction of the project, the local sponsor should request In-Kind forms from ORG staff in order to properly document in-kind costs as the costs occur. Local sponsor is required to provide proof of costs when requesting reimbursement. For required reimbursement documents see Section V. Reimbursement Procedure.

On-site construction shall begin within 120 days of project approval. A Quarterly Progress Report will be submitted by the local sponsor documenting progress. The Quarterly Progress Report shall include a narrative of progress and pictures of progress. ORG staff will provide the forms for these reports.

## **C. Request for Extension of Project Expiration Date**

The completion date for the project will be reflected in the Project Agreement. Requests for an extension of time will be considered with proper justification. Expenses incurred after the Project Agreement expiration date will not be eligible for reimbursement. Therefore, a written request for a time extension must be received by MDWFP, a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the project expiration date. A properly justified request for an extension will be granted via an Amendment to Project Agreement. This will alleviate the possibility of expenses being considered ineligible.

## **E. Request for Change(s) in Scope of Work**

If the grantee desires to accomplish additional work or otherwise deviate from the scope of work included in the Project Agreement, a properly justified, written request must be submitted to the MDWFP. MDWFP will determine if an Amendment to Project Agreement is needed. However, approval by MDWFP **must** be granted **prior** to initiating the proposed work regardless of whether an amendment is needed.

## **SECTION VII. PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING PROCEDURES**

As a part of RTP, grantees must comply with federal regulations regarding Disadvantaged Businesses Enterprises (DBE) in situations where trail construction or maintenance is contracted.

### **A. Procurement**

1. For federal and state agency projects, the normal agency procurement procedures, unless otherwise waived by proper authorities, shall apply to all procurement activities and contract work, provided that the procurement procedures do not violate rules for Federal Grants and Cooperative Agreements and Sub awards to State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments (2 CFR 200).
2. For local government projects, the normal agency procurement procedures, unless otherwise waived by proper authorities, shall apply to all procurement activities and contract work, provided that the procurement procedures do not violate rules for Federal Grants and Cooperative Agreements and Sub awards to State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments (2 CFR 200).
3. For non-profit conservation organization projects, the same procurement process for local governments will be required.

### **B. Installation of Materials**

Materials purchased must be in accordance with federal grants rules and must be installed prior to the project completion date. MDWFP will not reimburse the grantee for the cost of materials that are not installed within the Project Agreement period. MDWFP will not reimburse for the purchase of tools associated with installation.

## **SECTION VIII. REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE**

### **A. Reimbursement Guidelines**

The RTP is a **reimbursement** program; therefore, the grant recipient must complete the project and pay 100% of the cost of the project before submitting a Request for Reimbursement for eligible costs. Requests for reimbursement are handled expeditiously. Grantees are usually reimbursed within three weeks of a properly documented request.

A Request for Reimbursement is submitted at the completion of the project and made only for those items, which are listed in the Project Agreement and/or subsequent approved amendments.



**Although reimbursement occurs at the end of the project, documentation for reimbursement needs to begin at the start of the project.** The local sponsor must determine if any in-kind services will be used and if so, the in-kind service must be properly documented on forms provided by MDWFP. These forms should be requested at the beginning of the project and filled out as the project progresses. In-kind services can include personnel time, and equipment time. If volunteers or donations are to be used, they are to be also documented on forms provided by MDWFP. In addition, all project expenses are to be recorded in an excel spreadsheet provided by MDWFP.

A request for reimbursement includes a letter from the local sponsor stating that the project is complete and requesting a final inspection and reimbursement of project costs. A final (quarterly) progress report is included as well as supportive documents. If an engineer or other professional was used on the project, As-built drawings will also be provided showing the constructed trail development.

Supportive documents include: contractor's payment applications, invoices, processed checks (front and back copies), copies of contracts, any in-kind forms, time and activity sheets, shall be included with the reimbursement request. If in-kind personnel time is submitted, then a check detail needs to be included, so the hourly rate charged can be confirmed. Items requested for reimbursement shall be matched with items listed on applicant's Proposed Budget.

In addition, a summary of all expenses shall be prepared and submitted on an excel spreadsheet. The excel spreadsheet will be provided by MDWFP. The spreadsheet shall indicate the vendor, invoice date, invoice amount, check number, check date, and check amount. Any in-kind or volunteer costs will also be shown on the spreadsheet. The completed spreadsheet shall be submitted in excel format to ORG staff by email. The spreadsheet can be emailed for review prior to formal submission of request for reimbursement.

## **B. Cost Sharing Provisions**

Grantees will be required to contribute not less than 20% of the total project cost. Any State, local government, or private funding may be used toward the 20% match. In addition, a project sponsor may provide in-kind services such as labor and equipment that can be credited toward the local match. Materials and services, if part of an approved project and obtained at a documented cost to the State or local government, may be used as part of the match. The value of state or local government land cannot be used toward the non-Federal Share. A "person" (private individuals, entities, organizations, or corporations) is allowed to donate funds, materials, or services (including donated labor) toward the non-federal share. The fair market value of donated materials or services must be properly documented. The grantee's 20% share will be credited once the project is complete and proper documentation has been submitted for review.

Although this is a federally funded program, RTP allows for certain federal funds, materials, programs (AmeriCorps, etc.), or services to be credited toward the local match.

Federal applicants are required to have a 5% (minimum) local/non federal match. For federal applicants the match formula would be 80%-15%-5%.

Design or engineering cost incurred after Project Agreement is executed, can be reimbursed, however, eligible amount cannot exceed 8% of RTP Total Agreement Cost or if total construction cost is less than RTP Total Agreement Cost it can only be 8% of that amount and will be reimbursed at 80%. Applicants may negotiate a higher percentage with engineers/architects; however it does not count towards the applicants required match. Design or engineering cost associated with portions of the project not completed or constructed are not eligible for reimbursement. Design or Engineering fees include design, surveys, plans and specifications for construction, bidding, review of bids, construction administration and inspection. Only the elements listed on the Project Agreement are eligible for reimbursement.

## **SECTION IX. PROGRESS REPORTS AND INSPECTIONS**

### **A. Project Progress Reports**

All grantees must submit a Quarterly Progress Report. Reports shall be submitted by the 10th day of the month following the last day of each calendar quarter (i.e. January 10, April 10, July 10, and October 10). The first quarterly progress report is due the first quarter after the executed project agreement is sent to the grantee from MDWFP. Pictures of progress are required.

A Final Progress Report must be submitted with the final request for reimbursement. Final reimbursement will not be made until the Final Progress Report is received.

### **B. Compliance and Construction Inspection Reports**

MDWFP representatives and/or the federal government will conduct program compliance and project inspections.

MDWFP representatives may interview and review the grantee's RTP records and files as needed for adequacy; inspect projects for their environmental impacts, workmanship and scheduled progress; and prepare a written report containing findings based upon information and observations, including recommendations for corrective actions, if appropriate. A copy of the report will be sent to the grantee. Deficiencies, if any, shall be corrected and reported in writing to MDWFP within two weeks of receipt of the inspection report.

### **C. Record Retention**

All program and financial records shall be retained by the grant recipient until officially audited by the state or federal government or for a period of five years after the final close-out date, whichever occurs last.

At a minimum, the following records shall be maintained and made available for audit:

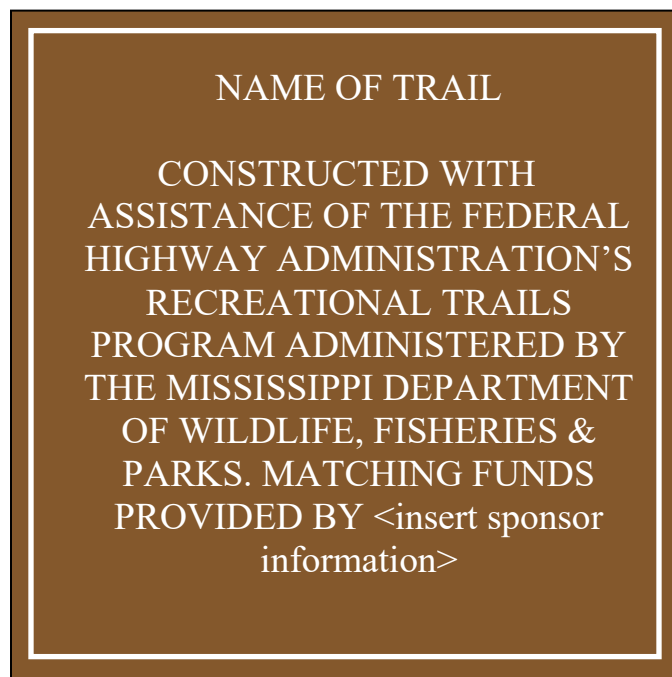
- ◆ Payroll register by pay period showing names, hours worked, hourly rate, benefits, deductions, gross pay, and net pay. Final Cost Summary of all payroll registers.
- ◆ Time Sheets signed by both employees and their respective supervisors.
- ◆ Invoices for purchased materials with processed checks or copies thereof.
- ◆ Invoices for contractor payments with processed checks or copies thereof.
- ◆ Invoices for all design/construction costs with processed checks or copies thereof.
- ◆ Contracts awarded, including change orders and award process.
- ◆ Documentation of DBE Compliance.
- ◆ Documentation for volunteers' time.

## SECTION X. PROGRAM ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RTP SIGN

During trail construction, a temporary sign must be placed along the trail to acknowledge receipt of RTP funds and notifying public what is taking place.

**Upon completion of the project**, a permanent Recreational Trail Program Site sign must be in place at all times and be in a visible location ([at the trail entrance](#)), acknowledging the Federal/State/Local Partnership. Proper maintenance and replacement of this sign is sponsor's responsibility in perpetuity.

Permanent Sign shall be metal and measure at least 3 feet by 3 feet with Brown background and white text.



All RTP project sites are inspected at least once every 3-5 years for operation and maintenance compliance.

## **DEFINITIONS - Mississippi Recreational Trails Program**

*Greenways* - are corridors of protected open space managed for conservation and/or recreational purposes. They may include trails which are larger in size and whose purpose is to connect wildlife habitats. They often follow rivers, stream valleys, ridges, abandoned railroad corridors, utility rights-of-way, canals, scenic roads and other linear features. Greenways link recreational, cultural and natural features, provide pathways for people and wildlife, and protect forests, wetlands, and grasslands.

*Green space* - is permanently protected land and water, including agricultural and forestry land, whose development rights have been severed from the property, that is in its undeveloped natural state or that has been developed only to the extent consistent with the green space program.

*Trails* - are thoroughfares across land or water, used for recreational purposes such as walking, jogging, hiking, bicycling, equestrian activities, mountain biking, backpacking, water activities, and vehicular travel by motorcycle, four-wheel drive, all-terrain, off-road vehicles or motorized watercraft. Trails may be located within parks or greenways, or they may stand alone. A trail is the actual facility that provides for a particular trail use.

*Motorized Trails* - are those involving all-terrain vehicles, trail motorcycles, four-wheel drive vehicles, and other off-road vehicles.

*Non-Motorized Trails* - are those involving hiking, jogging, walking, inline skating, equestrian, biking, canoeing, or kayaking activities, etc.

*Diversified Trails* - as defined by the state Advisory Committee are "projects that provide for the greatest number of compatible uses, or provide for innovative recreational trail corridor sharing to accommodate both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use."

*Trailhead Facilities* - are designated starts or ends of a trail. They are often accompanied by various public facilities, such as horse unloading areas, parking areas, toilets, water, directional and informational signs, and trail use registers.

*Active Recreation Parks* - are parks with ball fields, tennis courts, soccer fields, etc.