

Federal Transportation Funds Benefit National Trails National Scenic and Historic Trails Workshop — 2006

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The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), part of the US Department of Transportation, provides expertise, resources, and information to improve the nation's highway system and its intermodal connections.

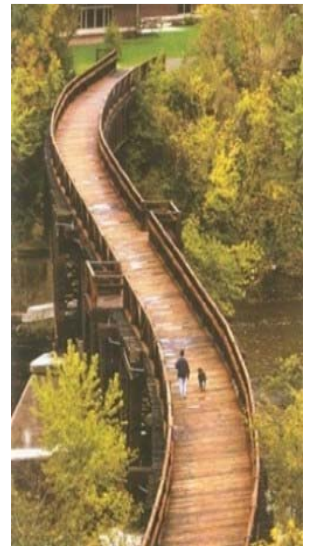
Pedestrian and bicycle projects are eligible for every major Federal-aid funding category. The Federal Surface Transportation Program is the largest single funding source for shared use paths, trails, and related projects in the United States.

Key Programs for Trail Projects

- Federal Lands Highways Program
- Transportation Enhancement Activities
- Recreational Trails Program

Transportation Enhancement Activities

- About \$800 million per year.
- 12 eligible categories for projects that relate to surface transportation.
- Administered by State DOTs. Each State has its own project selection process.
- States requirements may be stricter than the Federal requirements.
- States are encouraged to use Youth Corps.
- Contact your State TE Manager.
- See www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te and www.enhancements.org.
- No significant changes from SAFETEA-LU legislation.



Important for equestrians: **Nothing** in Federal law or regulation requires trails to be paved, although TE-funded trail projects must have a firm and stable surface to meet accessibility requirements. Project sponsors must include various interest groups in the project development process; such as equestrians and other trail users, historic preservation advocates, etc.

Recreational Trails Program

- Funds to develop and maintain recreational trails for **all** trail uses. Rises from \$60 million in FY 2005, \$70 m in FY 2006, \$75 m in FY 2007, \$80 m in FY 2008, \$85 m in FY 2009. Represents a portion of the Federal motor fuel excise tax paid by OHV users.
- Only FHWA program to support routine maintenance.
- States solicit and select projects for funding.
- States are encouraged to use Youth Corps.
- See www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails.
- RTP SAFETEA-LU Changes:
 - Allows trail assessments; expanded training and educational patrols.
 - Changed Federal share to match State highway program share (80% / sliding scale).
 - Allows RTP funds to match and be matched by other Federal funds.
 - Allows some preapproval planning and environmental costs to count toward the match.
 - Eliminated State advisory committee waiver.

Through the RTP, FHWA has worked with many partners: Federal Interagency Council on Trails; National Trails Day; US Forest Service Technology and Development Centers; National Trails Training Partnership, www.NTTP.net; Federal Interagency trail training course; national conferences for trail organizations; US Access Board, US Forest Service, and others to promote accessibility guidelines for trails; OHV, Mountain Bike, and Equestrian groups to develop trail design and management manuals; snowmobile and OHV safety information; Coalition for Recreational Trails for the RTP Database: www.funoutdoors.info/rtp/home.html.

How do I get funds for my project?

- Contact your State RTP Administrator or TE Manager: see www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/rtpstate.htm or www.enhancements.org.
- Develop a workable, realistic project.
- Get public support.
- Develop funding sources and donations: needed for matching funds.
- Consider Youth Corps involvement; seek out Corps.
- Develop a good design: consider the trail setting, community benefits, user needs, accessibility.
- **Consider potential problems:**
 - Environmental impacts: wetlands, endangered species, archaeological impacts, etc.
 - Permits
 - Public opposition: liability, property rights, safety, environmental impacts.
- Complete the project application **completely**.
- If approved, **get to work!**
- Submit an invoice if you want to get paid!

The Federal Surface Transportation Program depends on multiyear authorization acts.

- Most recent authorization: SAFETEA-LU: August 10, 2005.
- Largely continued TE and RTP intact with few changes.

Contacts

State RTP Administrator contacts: www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/rtpstate.htm.

State TE Manager contacts: www.enhancements.org.

National RTP and TE oversight:

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