

Rivers, Trails and Conservation
Assistance Program

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Natural Disasters

Assisting communities with natural disaster recovery

The National Park Service assists communities in restoring their conservation areas, parks and outdoor recreation resources following a natural disaster. We help communities develop climate change mitigation strategies to better thrive after severe storms and fires.



NPS-RTCA

The National Park Service **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program**

About Us

The **National Park Service**, through the **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance** program (NPS-RTCA), has supported locally-led conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the United States for more than 30 years. NPS-RTCA assists communities in developing or restoring parks, conservation areas, rivers, and wildlife habitats, as well as creating outdoor recreation opportunities and programs that engage future generations in the outdoors. Through an annual application process, community groups, nonprofit organizations, tribal governments, national parks, and local, state and federal agencies can apply for NPS-RTCA technical assistance.

Our Model

Across the country, NPS-RTCA staff pair their professional planning, design and technical expertise with your team and knowledge experts from the community. Together, our 1 to 2 year-long partnership works to achieve your conservation and outdoor recreation vision. Based on the complexity of the project, we tailor our assistance to meet your needs and help you navigate a path to success. Although NPS-RTCA is not a grant-funding program, we can help your organization identify potential funding sources for your project.

Community Engagement

As a collaborative partner, we strive to achieve successful project outcomes by engaging communities in the visioning, planning and implementation of each project. We encourage strong community partnerships and facilitate meaningful engagement to ensure your conservation and outdoor recreation projects last into perpetuity.

Assisting Communities After Natural Disasters

As a changing climate increases the intensity and frequency of hurricanes, floods and wildfires, NPS-RTCA has extended our services to communities who are recovering from natural disasters. In recent years, NPS-RTCA has helped 29 communities across the country in restoring 58 parks and outdoor recreation facilities as well as in evolving climate resiliency strategies. NPS-RTCA, in collaboration with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, continues to adapt our recovery work with a focus on sustainability and resiliency.

Today, NPS-RTCA is often asked to assist with conservation projects that help communities better adapt to a changing climate. In the Lower 9th Ward, a neighborhood in New Orleans that was devastated by Hurricane Katrina, NPS-RTCA partnered with the city and the Sankofa Community Development Corporation in transforming a 40-acre vacant site into a wetland park that will improve neighborhood resiliency to heat, flooding and future hurricanes.

The NPS-RTCA model of community assistance is not that of a “traditional consultant” – our projects can take two to four years to complete. NPS-RTCA aligns the planning, design and technical expertise of our staff with the skills and knowledge of community and land management partners to achieve successful conservation, climate resiliency and outdoor recreation outcomes.

NPS-RTCA natural disaster recovery projects include:

- Evolving climate change resiliency strategies
- Implementing phytoremediation strategies to remove, contain and control contaminants to improve water quality and protect public health
- Developing county-wide recreation economy strategies around conservation and outdoor recreation
- Planning and designing greenways and parks
- Reassessing destroyed parks and developing master plans to guide restoration efforts that meet the demographic characteristics of a community
- Reestablishing local and regional trail networks
- Developing vegetation plans that use hurricane-resilient and water-absorbing plants and trees
- Engaging communities in the development of natural disaster recovery plans
- Facilitating regional tourism strategies

Florida

NPS-RTCA helped 9 cities and counties with restoration plans and designs for parks damaged by Hurricane Michael. In Springfield, Florida, NPS-RTCA worked on recovery projects for 7 parks, 2 streetscapes and a multi-purpose trail.

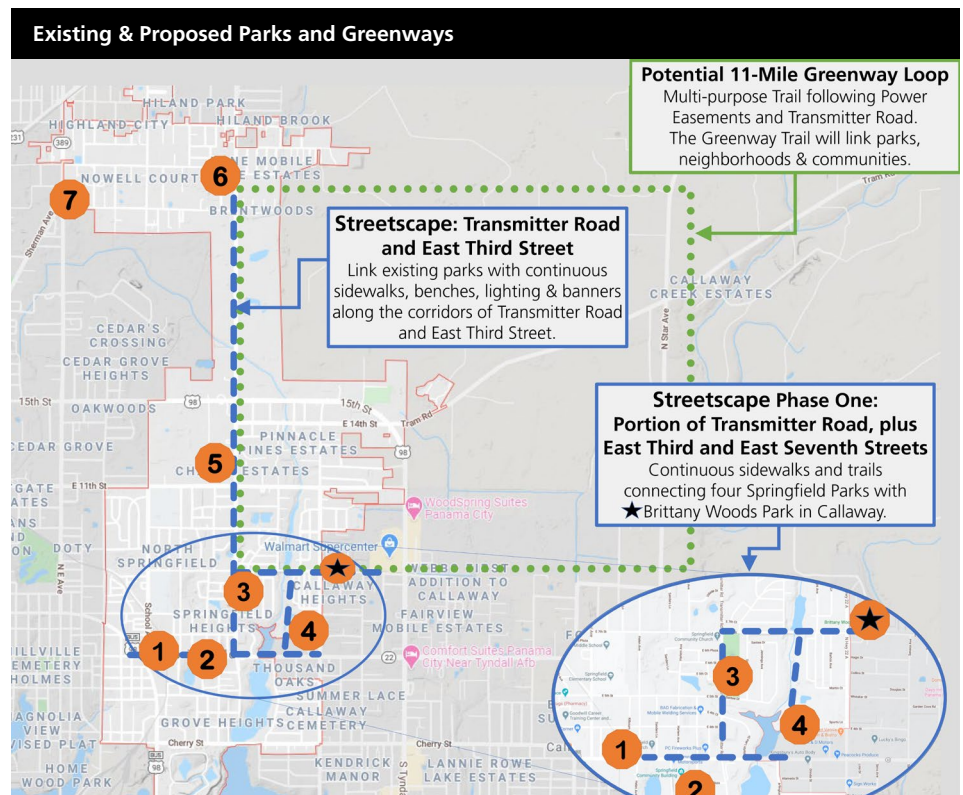
1. Henry Brooks Memorial Park
2. Buddy McLemore Park
3. Garden Walk Park
4. Sports Complex
5. Nature Park at new City Complex
6. Neighborhood Park
7. Douglas Ave. Dog Park

●●● Potential 11-Mile Greenway Loop

— Streetscape: East 3rd/ Transmitter Rd.



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Frequently Asked Questions

Who are we?

The **National Park Service – Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program (NPS-RTCA)** assists communities, public land managers and nonprofit organizations with conservation and outdoor recreation projects. NPS-RTCA provides professional planning, design and technical expertise to help achieve your conservation and outdoor recreation vision.

Does NPS-RTCA provide funding?

No. NPS-RTCA is not a grant-funding program, but we can help you identify potential funding sources for your project.

What kind of projects does NPS-RTCA support?

Our program staff support locally-led projects that develop or restore parks, conservation areas, rivers, and wildlife habitats, as well as create outdoor recreation opportunities and programs that engage future generations in the outdoors.

Are NPS-RTCA staff contractors?

The NPS-RTCA model is to combine the skills of our staff with those of your organization. It's a partnership – we work alongside your team and local knowledge experts to assist with the work that you are leading.

How much time do NPS-RTCA staff spend on each project?

Typically, NPS-RTCA staff collaborate with communities for 1 to 2 years on conservation and outdoor recreation projects. Depending on the complexity of the project and our staffing capacity, the time frame may be extended.

Who can apply for assistance from NPS-RTCA?

NPS-RTCA provides services to established community groups, nonprofit organizations, tribal governments, national parks, and local, state and federal agencies.

How can you apply for assistance from NPS-RTCA?

NPS-RTCA support is provided when we are invited to assist you on a conservation or outdoor recreation project. We encourage you to contact us to discuss your project before applying. The application is available on our website: www.nps.gov/RTCA

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