

Rivers, Trails and Conservation
Assistance Program

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



State and Federal Lands

A large landscape approach to working together

The National Park Service collaborates with tribal governments and state and federal land managers on conservation and outdoor recreation projects.

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.

Utah

Lions Park: A Gateway to Natural Wonders

A small town of only 5,000 people, Moab, Utah is surrounded by miles of mountain biking trails and spectacular natural areas, including city, county, and state parks, as well as two iconic national parks – Arches and Canyonlands National Parks. With its strategic location, comes 2.5 million visitors per year which causes an influx of traffic that places a significant strain on natural resources and the visitor experience.

The community of Moab requested assistance from NPS-RTCA to help revitalize Lions Park, the central hub for all roadways, and make it a welcoming gateway to the city. In the planning process, the community and its regional park partners realized that Lions Park would make an excellent trail hub connecting to the region's mountain biking trails as well as state and national parks. NPS-RTCA assisted the community in developing a steering



ing committee of 15 partners, guided the development of design concepts and identified grant funding opportunities to implement their vision. Additionally, NPS-RTCA organized public meetings to obtain community input and support.

Lions Park was redesigned and now features ample space for parking, restrooms, a transit bus stop, and a bridge over the Colorado River that links trail users to the area's parks. Today, Lions Park offers safe, non-motorized transportation to and from Moab, the area's natural wonders and its many recreational opportunities.

Alaska

Alaska's Statewide Trails Investment Strategy

The nonprofit organization, Alaska Trails, recognized that Alaska's rich natural environment could help improve the health of residents, increase quality of life and further advance the state's recreation economy. To evolve their vision, Alaska Trails requested assistance from NPS-RTCA and 41 other public and nonprofit organizations. Together, the partnership developed the Statewide Trails Investment Strategy, a comprehensive strategic plan focused on ways to build on and expand trail infrastructure to help the state make the most of its outdoor recreation economy.

NPS-RTCA worked with Alaska Trails to evolve a statewide planning process. The planning team facilitated the participation of local communities, organizations and land management agencies, including the National Park Service. Together, NPS-RTCA helped partners navigate technical and land use issues.

The Statewide Trails Investment Strategy has been crucial in guiding state legislation, developing bond bills, and establishing community priorities and investments. There are numerous projects underway such as the Ant-



ler Ridge Trail which will link Healy, Alaska and Denali National Park to a larger system of trails. Already, \$1 million dollars has been invested in the development and infrastructure of the Antler Ridge Trail concept.

With the Statewide Trails Investment Strategy, the network of public and nonprofit partners has a shared path forward and a strategy that can evolve with changing conditions and new visions.

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

 nps.gov/RTCA

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