

Outdoor Recreation Grant Program

2022 Program Manual



I. PROGRAM INFORMATION

[Deadline](#)
[Funding](#)
[Grant Awards and Match Requirements](#)
[Eligible Applicants](#)
[Eligible Projects](#)
[Eligible Recreation Facilities](#)
[Eligible Recreation Support Facilities](#)
[Ineligible Facilities and Expenses](#)

II. APPLICATION PROCESS

[Public Participation and Use](#)
[Appraisal Requirements](#)
[Competitive Review and Selection Process](#)
[Minnesota's 2020-2024 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan](#)
[Selection Priorities](#)
[Award of Funds](#)
[Reimbursement of Funds](#)
[Grants and Public Information](#)

III. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

[Accessibility Requirements](#)
[Land Retention Requirements](#)
[Conversion of Use](#)
[Deed Restriction Requirement](#)
[Native Restoration Requirements](#)
[Review for Potential Impact on Historical/Archeological Resources](#)
[Water Permits](#)
[Campground Plan Approval](#)
[Reporting Requirements](#)
[Monitoring Requirement](#)
[Conflicts of Interest](#)
[Closeout Procedures](#)
[Acknowledgment Sign](#)
[Availability to Users](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Audrey Mularie
Grants Specialist Coordinator
Southern MN, East Metro
(651) 259-5549
audrey.mularie@state.mn.us

Mai Neng Moua
Grants Specialist Coordinator
Northern MN, South Metro
(651) 259-5638
mai.n.moua@state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Division of Parks and Trails
500 Lafayette Road, Box 39
Saint Paul, MN 55155
1-888-646-6367

I. PROGRAM INFORMATION

The [Outdoor Recreation Grant Program](#) assists local governments in acquiring parkland and developing or redeveloping outdoor recreation facilities in local and community parks throughout the state.

Metro Regional Parks and Greater Minnesota Regional Parks are not eligible for funding under this program. Funding for designated regional parks and trails is available from the [Metropolitan Council](#) and the [Greater Minnesota Regional Park and Trails Commission](#).

For answers to frequently asked questions about this program, please see our [FAQs](#).

DEADLINE

Applications must be submitted by March 31, 2022, to be eligible for funding assistance for the current year. You are encouraged to submit a draft application by March 10th for review and comments by program staff.

FUNDING

There are two sources of funding for the Outdoor Recreation Grant Program: federal and state funds. Federal funds come from the [Land and Water Conservation Fund \(LWCF\)](#). Federal funding available for FY 2023 has not yet been allocated but should be at least \$2 million for the Outdoor Recreation Grant Program and the [Natural and Scenic Areas Grant Program](#).

State funding available for FY 2023 is a portion of \$1.1 million from “In Lieu Of” Lottery proceeds available for three Park and Trail grant programs and \$250,000 in general funds. Additional state Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund dollars may be recommended by the [Legislative Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources \(LCCMR\)](#). Other state funding may be available but are subject to Legislative approval. Final amounts available will not be known until after the application deadline.

GRANT AWARDS AND MATCH REQUIREMENTS

Grants are reimbursed based up to 50 percent of the total eligible costs. The maximum grant award is \$300,000 (for a total project of \$600,000). The match can consist of cash or the value of materials, labor and equipment usage by the local sponsor or by donations or any combination thereof. Applicants that provide, at least 20% of the match from their own resources and/or have their match committed at the time of the application will receive additional consideration in the review.

Unskilled volunteer labor is valued, for this grant program, at \$9.00 per hour. Skilled volunteer labor is valued at its going rate. The invoice/letter must be on a company letterhead, detailing

the work completed and the amount of the donation.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Cities, counties, and townships.

Note: The applicant must be the current or intended owner and manager of the property to be acquired or developed. Multi-organization collaboration is not required for this program.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- Acquisition of land for future development of outdoor recreation facilities. Public access, including park and funding acknowledgement signs must be posted prior to close of the grant. Recreation facilities must be developed within three years from the date of acquisition.
- Development, redevelopment, or rehabilitation of outdoor recreation facilities on land owned by the applicant.
- A combination of land acquisition and development, redevelopment, or rehabilitation of outdoor recreation facilities.

ELIGIBLE RECREATION FACILITIES

One or more of the following major recreation facilities must be included in a proposed project:

- Boat/Canoe Access Sites
- Campgrounds
- Fishing Piers/Shore Fishing Areas
- Skating Rinks/Parks
- Nature Study/Observation Areas
- Picnic Shelters
- Playgrounds, including nature playgrounds
- Sports Fields and Courts
- Swimming Beaches and Outdoor Pools
- Splash Pads
- Trails (non-motorized internal park trails)

It is our expectation that all existing and proposed facilities have accessible walkways to them. Please account for this in your project/budget.

ELIGIBLE RECREATION SUPPORT FACILITIES

The following support facilities are also eligible for funding as part of a grant application that contains at least one facility from the eligible recreation facilities list above.

- Change houses, restrooms, shower buildings and warming houses.
- Fencing, lighting and signs.

- Does the proposed project restore and reconstruct natural communities that have been degraded or lost due to agriculture or development?

Additional Non-SCORP Review Components (40%)

- Project Specific Criteria including cost vs. benefit, application and project quality and local match.
- Park and Facility Design: Use & design are compatible with site, makes good use of available space, avoids conflicts among facilities and avoids conflicts with adjacent uses.
- Health and Safety: Consider health and safety risks.
- Appropriate Design Standards: All facilities must be accessible and designed consistent with standards.
- Environmental Intrusions: All non-recreational intrusions are documented, and the impact has been considered in the park design. All power lines serving the park facilities must be placed underground.

AWARD OF FUNDS

All applicants will receive official written notification regarding their request for funding in the summer. If your proposed project has received preliminary approval for funding, you will be contacted regarding additional information requirements needed before a grant agreement can be processed. These requirements may include State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) review, permits and other details.

The project start date will be the fall of 2022 or later depending on requirements for environmental resources, historical and archeological resources, and federal approval, if applicable. All work must be completed by June 30, 2024. Most of our funding does not allow for a project extension beyond this date. Applicants should focus on projects that will be completed during the 2023 construction season. Any project costs incurred prior to the start date of the grant agreement will not be eligible for reimbursement.

REIMBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

Payment of grant funds to the local sponsor is on a reimbursement basis. The grant recipient must initially expend funds that are then reimbursed under the terms of the grant agreement. Applicants may request reimbursement up to four times during the contract period using the [Reimbursement Manual](#). A portion of the grant funds will be retained until an on-site final inspection has been completed.

GRANTS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

Under [MN Statute 13.599](#), responses to a request for proposal are nonpublic until the

application deadline is reached. At that time, the name and address of the Grantee, and the amount requested becomes public.

After the application evaluation process is completed, data (except trade secret data) becomes public. Data created during the evaluation process is nonpublic until the negotiation of the grant agreement with the selected Grantee(s) is completed.

[MN Statute 13.44](#) categorizes estimated or appraised value of real property prior to purchase and sale as confidential data on individuals or protected nonpublic data. See also [Minnesota Government Data Privacy Act](#) for more information. This information, along with corresponding budget information, will be redacted from the applications before making them public.

III. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

All facilities improved with this grant project must meet current Americans with Disabilities (ADA) standards. All critical components of the park listed below must be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Critical components include:

- Accessible parking spaces serving each area of the park.
- Accessible restrooms, if restrooms are provided.
- Accessible drinking water, if drinking water is provided.
- Access routes to all recreation facilities provided in the park. If your facilities do not have access routes to them, you need to include the cost in your Cost Breakdown. For this program, an access route must be a minimum of five feet wide, slip resistant, firm and stable.

If a grant is awarded, part of the grant will be withheld pending verification of access compliance by an on-site final inspection.

The following guidelines will help you design your facilities. Copies can be ordered from the U.S. Access Board at (800) 872-2253 or downloaded from their website at [United States Access Board](#).

1. [ADA Accessibility Standards for Buildings and Facilities](#)
(For buildings and certain recreation facilities including playgrounds, recreational boating facilities, and fishing piers)
2. [Final Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas September 26, 2013](#)
(For outdoor developed areas such as campgrounds, picnic areas, trails, and beaches. These

guidelines, developed for federal facilities subject to the Architectural Barriers Act, are to be used for facilities improved by this Outdoor Recreation Grant Program.)

LAND RETENTION REQUIREMENTS

All land improved or acquired with assistance from this grant program must be retained and operated solely for outdoor recreation into perpetuity.

The Recreational Site Plan submitted with your application will delineate and establish the property boundaries subject to the grant agreement. Therefore, it is very important that any existing public facilities and any known future public facilities (e.g., wells, lift stations, roadway improvements, etc.) are clearly identified and excluded from the boundaries of the project. **All** rights-of-way, easements, reversionary interests, etc. within the proposed boundary area should also be designated. The site boundaries should include only the property that the project sponsor plans on managing for outdoor recreation uses in perpetuity.

DEED RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

The Grantee will be required to record a condition with the deed of the real property funded by the grant agreement that notifies the public of the grant and the grant program requirements. The specific deed restriction language varies depending on the source of grants and will be outlined in the grant contract. This requirement is for all projects acquisition and development.

CONVERSION OF USE

The Grantee shall not, at any time, convert this property to non-outdoor recreation uses without the prior written approval of the State acting, through the DNR and, for federal grants, the NPS. The DNR will consider a conversion request only after the following pre-requisites have been met:

1. All practical alternatives to the conversion have been evaluated and rejected on a sound basis.
2. The Grantee has agreed to replace the converted lands with other lands of, at least, equal fair market value and reasonably equivalent recreational usefulness as determined by the State.

The DNR shall have the authority to approve or disapprove state conversion requests. For federal grants, the NPS will approve or disapprove the conversion requests. Approval of a conversion request is dependent on completion of the [Conversion of Use](#) process.