



## Funding Research Memo: Parks and Trails

Last updated: August 2015

THIS MEMO WILL BE UPDATED PERIODICALLY. IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING RESOURCES, PLEASE CONTACT THE SNC FUND DEVELOPMENT TEAM: [sncfundingteam@sierranevada.ca.gov](mailto:sncfundingteam@sierranevada.ca.gov).

***CAVEAT – Grant guidelines and deadlines are subject to periodic change. Please check the program web sites for new information. The deadlines listed are projected from the last funding round and are particularly unreliable. Check the program’s web site!***

### FUNDING SUMMARY TABLE

(\*Hyperlinks to more complete information later in memo, including links to program web sites.)

Grant	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline	Eligible Costs
<a href="#">CA Dept. of Parks and Recreation Recreational Trails Program</a>	No minimum or maximum. 12% match required	Development of non-motorized trails.	September	Acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors; development and rehabilitation of trails, trailside and trailhead facilities; and construction of new trails.
<a href="#">CA Dept. of Parks and Recreation off-highway vehicle (OHV) grants</a>	Depends on program category. 25% match required	Planning, acquisition, development, maintenance, administration, operation, enforcement, programs, restoration, and conservation of trails, trailheads, areas, and other facilities associated with the use of OHVs.	March	Very broad – all direct costs plus 15% indirect
<a href="#">CA Dept. of Parks and Recreation Habitat Conservation Fund</a>	No grant minimum or maximum. 1:1 local or private non-state match required.	Several categories of programs, including Trails and Wildlife Area activities.	October 1	Funding is for land acquisition, trail development, interpretive and educational activities.
<a href="#">CA Dept. of Parks and Recreation Land and Water Conservation Fund</a>	Grants up to \$2 million. 1:1 non-federal match required.	Acquisition or development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities.	February	Can fund acquisition or development projects but not both.

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Grant	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline	Eligible Costs
<a href="#">CALTRANS Active Transportation Program</a>	Minimum \$250,000. Match encouraged but not required	Active transportation projects, particularly walking and biking	June	Infrastructure projects (environmental, design, right-of-way, and construction), non-infrastructure Projects (education, encouragement, and enforcement activities), and development of community wide bicycle, pedestrian, safe routes to school, or active transportation plans in disadvantaged communities.
<a href="#">Environmental Enhancement Mitigation Program</a>	Up to \$500,000 (\$1 million for acquisition). Match not required but encouraged.	Urban forestry; Resource lands; Additional mitigation of transportation projects.	June	Direct project related costs (acquisition, restoration, or development) incurred during the project performance period. Indirect costs and costs incurred outside of the project performance period will not be reimbursed.
<a href="#">National Park Service Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance</a>	No funding provided, TA only.	Development of parks, trails, access to rivers, and other special places	August 1	Will provide staff assistance in form of planning, facilitation, design, etc.
<a href="#">CA State Parks Foundation</a>	\$500 - \$10,000 for Park Enrichment grants and \$2,500 to \$50,000 for Park Partnership grants.	Celebrate Heritage, Welcome Visitors, Teach Californians, Safeguard Resources, and Connect Individuals, Organizations, and Partners.	Three times per year: September, January, and May.	Services and amenities for visitors, transit initiatives, park interpretation and educational materials, preservation of historical/cultural artifacts, volunteer training, trail improvements, etc. Park Partnership grants support operating funds and other expenses of groups that have taken over State Park operations.
<a href="#">National Park Foundation</a>	Capacity building grants: \$5,000. 1:1 match. Impact grants up to \$25,000.	"Friends of" organizations focused on national parks.	August 1	Capacity building for 'Friends of' national parks groups, including strategic planning, development planning and/or consultant work, brand development, website revision, marketing and communications planning, or mailings and acquisitions.
<a href="#">American Hiking Society National Trails Fund</a>	Up to \$5,000.	Improve hiking access or hiker safety on trails	Mid-December	Volunteers, access, tools for trail development.
<a href="#">PG&amp;E Foundation</a>	Usually below \$5,000 but there are exceptions	Programs designed to promote energy sustainability, environmental conservation, and stewardship of land and resources.	Open Feb through Sept.	No specific limitations.
<a href="#">Community Foundations</a>	Various	Various	Various	Various



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### CA Department of Parks and Recreation – Recreational Trails Program

[http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=24324](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=24324)

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds annually for recreational trails and trails-related projects. This program channels federal transportation funding through the CA Department of Parks and Recreation. There are two components of the grant: one for motorized trails and one for non-motorized trails.

#### **Eligible Applicants:**

- Cities and Counties
- Districts
- State Agencies
- Federal Agencies
- Non-Profit Organizations with management responsibilities of public lands

**Maximum and Minimum Grant Request:** There is no maximum or minimum limit on grant request amounts.

#### **Eligible Projects:**

Acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors; development and rehabilitation of trails, trailside and trailhead facilities; and construction of new trails.

**Match Requirement:** The maximum amount of RTP funds allowed for each project is 88 percent of the total project cost. The applicant is responsible for obtaining a match amount that is at least 12 percent of the total project cost.

#### **Eligible Match Sources:**

- State funds, including State Grant funds
- Local funds, including general funds and bond funds
- Private funds
- Donated materials and services
- Value of donated land (for Acquisition projects only)
- Other federal funds

The 2015 deadlines are September 15 for non-motorized trails and September 30 for motorized trails.

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### CA Department of Parks and Recreation – Off Highway Vehicle program

[http://ohv.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=1164](http://ohv.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1164)

This program supports the planning, acquisition, development, maintenance, administration, operation, enforcement, restoration, and conservation of trails, trailheads, areas, and other facilities associated with the use of off-highway motor vehicles, and programs involving off-highway motor vehicle safety or education.

Relevant activities that can be funded include:

**Ground Operations** - Maintenance and/or conservation of facilities; compliance with soil standards and HMP; and protection of natural and/or cultural resources

**Development** - Construction of, or improvements to, facilities to sustain or enhance OHV recreational opportunity and experiences (trails, trailhead staging areas, parking, picnic and restroom facilities, etc.

**Planning** - Development and preparation of plans for future projects

**Restoration** - Provide ecological restoration or repair to habitat damaged by authorized or unauthorized OHV use. Restoration Projects also include scientific and cultural studies regarding OHV impacts and Restoration Planning efforts

**Acquisition** - Secure interests in land to sustain and/or expand OHV Recreation access and OHV Opportunities.

**Law Enforcement** - Provides financial assistance to local and federal agencies for protection of life and property, including natural and cultural resources, related to OHV recreation and motorized access to non-motorized recreation.

**Education and Safety** - Provide public awareness for responsible OHV Recreation and/or provide safety programs.

Matching Funds: A 25 percent match (cash or in-kind) is required. This can include volunteer services. Higher match brings in higher scores in the evaluation criteria.

Eligible Applicants by Project Types	Acquisition	Development	Education & Safety	Ground Operations	Law Enforcement	Planning	Restoration
Cities and Counties	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U.S. Forest Service	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U.S. Bureau of Land Management	X	X	X		X	X	X
Other Federal Agencies	X	X	X	X		X	X
Federally Recognized Native American Tribes	X	X	X	X		X	X
Educational Institutions			X				
Nonprofit organizations			X	X			X

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State Agencies							X
Districts	X	X	X	X		X	X

- The proposed activity must be directly related to OHV recreation. In general, the more robust the OHV opportunities (more diverse OHV options, more developed facilities, signage, education programs, monitoring and enforcement, etc.) the higher the application will score.
- A great deal of information is required about the OHV project and the information must be well-documented by reports, statistics, plans, studies, and other records maintained by the land management agency regarding the project.
- The Applicant gets more points if they have multiple partners actively involved in the proposed work.
- Projects developed with public input prior to the preliminary Application filing deadline\_score higher. The date(s) of the meetings and participants have to be documented. It is important to publically notice the meetings and to include multiple stakeholders.
- Projects will score higher if they are part of an existing land management plan or help implement such a plan.
- Because of the heavy documentation requirements (including project descriptions, site plans, maps, photos, etc.), it will probably be difficult to submit competitive applications for new projects without substantial existing planning and analysis.

Eligible Project costs are very broad – basically any costs directly related to the work identified in the Project Description. Additionally, the applicant may receive reimbursement up to fifteen percent (15%) of the requested amount for indirect costs.

### CA Department of Parks and Recreation – Habitat Conservation Fund

[http://www.parks.ca.gov/?Page\\_id=21361](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?Page_id=21361)

The HCF program allocates approximately \$2 million each year for grants to cities, counties, and districts to provide for nature interpretation and other programs which bring urban residents into park and wildlife areas, to protect various plant and animal species, or to acquire or develop wildlife corridors and trails.

Eligible applicants are cities, counties, and districts (park and open space district). Deadline is October 1 every year. Match required: 1:1 match from local, private, non-state sources. Match funds must be committed at the time of the application and must be specifically for project that is the subject of the grant.

There are several categories of funding, only two of which are relevant to this funding memo:

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	TRAILS	WILDLIFE AREA ACTIVITIES
<b>Funding types</b>	Land acquisition or trail development	Educational or interpretational activities
<b>Cost types</b>	Capital outlay	Non-Capital outlay
<b>Species impact</b>	A path or track that brings people to a park or wildlife environment	No direct species impact

There is a requirement to use the CA Conservation Corps for restoration/trail building activities if appropriate.

**CA Department of Parks and Recreation\_Land and Water Conservation Fund**  
[http://www.parks.ca.gov/?Page\\_id=21360](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?Page_id=21360)

**ELIGIBLE PROJECTS:** Acquisition or development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Priority development projects include trails, campgrounds, picnic areas, natural areas, and cultural areas for recreational use.

Eligible applicants: Cities, counties and districts authorized to acquire, develop, operate, and maintain park and recreation areas. Property acquired or developed under the program must be maintained in perpetuity for public outdoor recreation use. Grants are up to \$2 million; 1:1 non-federal match required. Match may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Funds from state local assistance programs
- Grantee's employee labor
- Local or private funds
- Gifts of real property, equipment, and consumable supplies
- Volunteer services directly related to Project completion furnished by professional and technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled and unskilled labor
- Free or reduced-cost use of land, facilities, or equipment
- Bequests and income from wills, estates, and trusts.

### Eligible Projects

- Acquisition projects (Example: To create a new wildlife corridor)
- Development projects (example – parking lots or restrooms)

The application must only be for acquisition or development. Combination projects are not eligible.

The deadline is early February. This is a very difficult, technical application, so start early.

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### **CALTRANS Active Transportation Program**

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/atp/>

The ATP consolidates existing federal and state transportation programs, including the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA), and State Safe Routes to School (SR2S), into a single program with a focus to make California a national leader in active transportation, which includes biking and walking. Eligible projects include:

- Safe Routes to School projects that improve the safety of children walking and bicycling to school, in accordance with Section 1404 of Public Law 109-59.
- Recreational trails and trailheads, park projects that facilitate trail linkages or connectivity to non-motorized corridors, and conversion of abandoned railroad corridors to trails.
- Development of a community wide bike, pedestrian, safe routes to schools, or active transportation plan in a disadvantaged community.

There is no stated maximum grant. The minimum grant is \$250,000. Matching funds are encouraged but not required. Deadlines are generally in June.

### **CA Resources Agency Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program**

[http://resources.ca.gov/bonds\\_and\\_grants/eemp/](http://resources.ca.gov/bonds_and_grants/eemp/)

The Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program is designed to fund project that contribute to mitigation of the environmental effects of transportation facilities. Eligible projects must be directly or indirectly related to the environmental impact of the modification of an existing transportation facility or construction of a new transportation facility. This means that the proposed project must be in the immediate vicinity or general area of work done on a public street, highway, mass transit guideway (trains, ports, light rail lines, city streets, airports, etc.) or their appurtenant features (e.g. park and ride facilities, high-occupancy vehicle lanes, transit stations, etc.). These are called 'Related Transportation Facilities' (RTF). Not all road work qualifies, see the guidelines. The RFT must have been constructed after January 1, 1990, or has not yet been constructed but is planned and budgeted, and has completed environmental reviews. You can identify eligible RTFs by contacting your City or County Transportation Department, Regional Transit Agency, Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), Council of Local Governments (COG), Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or Caltrans District Office. You will need a lot of documentation from this transportation agency, so contact them early in the process!

Project categories:

- A. Urban Forestry projects designed to offset vehicular emissions of carbon dioxide.
- B. Resource Lands projects for the acquisition or enhancement of resource lands to mitigate the loss of, or the detriment to, resource lands lying within or near the right-of-way acquired for transportation improvements.

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- C. Mitigation Projects Beyond the Scope of the Lead Agency responsible for assessing the environmental impact of the proposed transportation improvement.

The EEMP program encourages projects that produce multiple benefits which reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase water use efficiency, reduce risks from climate change impacts, and demonstrate collaboration with local, state and community entities.

Eligible applicants are local, state, and federal governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations.

The maximum grant is \$500,000. Match funding is not required but contributes to the competitiveness of the project.

The deadline is in June.

### National Park Service Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program

<http://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm>

This program does not provide funding, but rather National Park Service staff provide free, on-location facilitation and planning expertise for projects related to development of parks, trails, access to rivers, and other special places. They can help guide a project from conception to completion. Some of the ways they can help:

- Define project vision and goals
- Inventory and map community resources
- Identify and analyze key issues and opportunities
- Engage collaborative partners and stakeholders
- Design community outreach and participation strategies
- Develop concept plans for trails, parks, and natural areas
- Set priorities and build consensus
- Identify funding sources
- Develop a sustainable organizational framework to support the project

The application deadline is August 1 every year. It is a good idea to contact the staff several weeks in advance of the deadline to discuss your project.

### California State Parks Foundation

<http://www.calparks.org/whatwedo/grants/>

Park Enrichment Grants: These grants are focused **on State Parks only**. Grants are for projects or programs that protect, enhance, and preserve California's state parks. These grants are awarded three times a year through a competitive process and support CSPF's Park Excellence Project vision elements: Celebrate Our Enduring

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Heritage, Welcome Visitors, Teach Californians, Safeguard Resources, and Connect Individuals, Organizations, and Partners.

Some eligible projects include services and amenities for visitors, transit initiatives, park interpretation and educational materials, preservation of historical/cultural artifacts, volunteer training, trail improvements, etc. Grants range from \$500 to \$10,000. Eligible applicants are 501 (c)(3) organizations.

Park Partnership Grants are also available to assist nonprofit and governmental organizations that have stepped forward to make certain state parks would remain open and accessible to the public. These are larger grants, ranging from \$2,500 to \$50,000. Some grants are to support organizations that have taken over direct operation of entire parks. Other grantees have repaired foot bridges, installed barbeque grills in campgrounds, renovated dilapidated bathrooms, opened new trails and posted new trail signage, upgraded plumbing, cleared out hazardous trees and brush, re-opened visitor centers and launched new interpretive, educational and stewardship programs.

Applications are accepted in September, January, and May.

### National Park Foundation

<http://www.nationalparks.org/our-work/grant-applications>

These grants are only for work on National Parks. They have a \$5,000 capacity building grant for 'Friend of' groups. The deadline for that grant is August 1.

### American Hiking Society National Trail Fund

<http://www.americanhiking.org/national-trails-fund/>

Grants are for members of the American Hiking Society Alliance members and range from \$500 to \$5,000 in order to improve hiking access or hiker safety on a particular trail. Only 501(c)(3) non-profits are eligible to receive funding. Funds can be used to secure access, volunteers, tools, and materials needed to protect hiking trails. The deadline is in mid-December.

### PG&E Foundation

<http://www.pge.com/en/about/community/grants/index.page?>

PG&E gives small grants in three areas, one of which is 'environment'. It appears this is very broadly defined (take a look at the list of grantees). There is a preference for low-income and underserved communities. Grants applications are invited by PG&E employees, so the best idea is to contact your local PG&E public affairs staff. Once invited to submit a grant, the application process is done on-line.

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Grants are small, usually under \$5,000. But the corporation gives out a lot of grants, so if you just need a few thousand dollars for an event, equipment, etc. this might be worth pursuing. The funding process is open February through September.

### **Community Foundations**

<http://lccf.org/about/locate-your-local-cf>

If you have a community foundation that serves your area, look at their website (or call them up – some of these foundations are very small and don't have a web presence) and ask them if they have grant programs that would be appropriate for your project. The link above is to the League of California Community Foundation website which maintains a list of these foundations.

Most community foundations offer several different types of program, each of which has a different annual deadline. Grants are usually small. Local, visible projects are often favored.