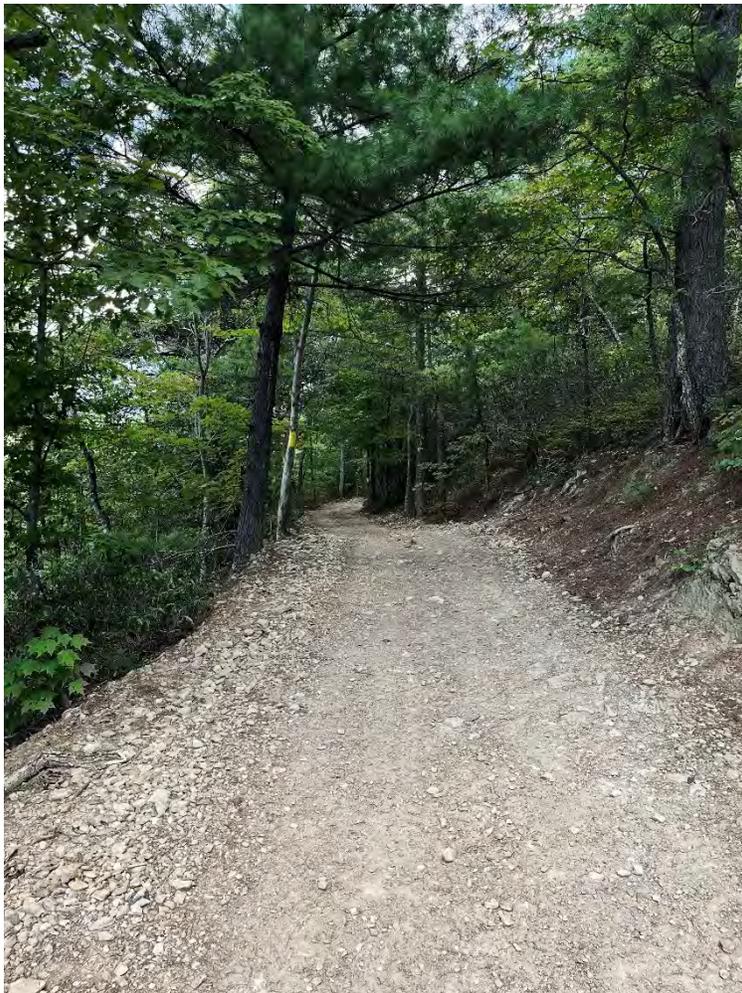


# Virginia Recreational Trails Program 2023 Trail Maintenance and Amenity Grants Application Manual



RTP grant information produced by the Virginia Recreational Trails Program is guidance. This document can be updated or changed at any time pending input or program changes by the Federal Highway Administration.

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The following documents, available at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/trailfnd>, should be referenced or used along with this manual:

- **2023 RTP Procurement Procedures**
- **2023 RTP Environmental Review and Public Comment Requirements**
- **2023 Recreational Trails Program Application**
- **2023 Recreational Trails Program Application Certification Form**
- **2023 RTP Scoring Criteria**

# I. Virginia Recreational Trails Program Overview

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is an 80%-20% matching reimbursement program established for the purposes of developing and maintaining recreational trails and trail-related facilities. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) allocates funds to each state and provides oversight to state agencies who administer the program within each state. The agency responsible for administering the program in Virginia is the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

The RTP program requirements mandate that each year's funds be divided among three categories: 30% for motorized trail uses, 30% for non-motorized trail uses, and 40% for multi-use/ diversified trail uses.

Entities eligible to receive funding include town, city, and county governments, tribes, recreation agencies and authorities, and state agencies. Non-profit organizations, with support from the local governmental body, are also eligible to compete for funding.

The RTP is a reimbursement program, meaning that the applicant must be capable of financing the project upfront while requesting periodic reimbursements. The program will reimburse up to 80% of eligible project costs. Recipients are responsible for at least 20% of project costs. Selected applicants enter into a grant agreement with DCR that outlines the maximum funding amount, scope of work, and project requirements for their project.

Projects are selected and recommended for funding through a competitive call for proposals. All proposals are reviewed and scored by the Virginia RTP Advisory Committee.

Projects recommended for funding must complete an environmental analysis prior to construction in accordance with federal and state regulations. Projects must also be undertaken in accordance with Buy America and Presidential Executive Order 14005.

The application deadline for the 2023 RTP grant cycle is **4:00PM on Tuesday, May 9, 2023**. All applications must be submitted electronically via email to [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov) by this deadline. Applicants are responsible for delivery by the deadline; late submissions will not be accepted.

## **Programmatic Changes for 2023**

Applicants should familiarize themselves with this manual in its entirety, however the following list outlines the **most significant** changes to the RTP program from the 2022 RTP grant round. Each of these points is discussed in further detail within this manual:

- **Only trail maintenance, amenity projects, and/or accessibility improvements to existing trails are eligible for funding this year.**
- Iron, steel, and construction materials, including aluminum and lumber, now all must be Buy America compliant.
- Entities that are already underway with a current RTP grant are eligible but there is a scoring advantage for those without current grants.
- Changes have been made to the application questions and scoring criteria.

## II. Eligibility

**Eligible Entities** - RTP funding may be awarded to any of the following\*:

- Municipalities (cities, towns, counties, etc.);
- Tribes;
- State agencies (Dept. of Forestry, Wildlife Resources, etc.);
- Federal government agencies (combined total of RTP funds and matching federal agency funds cannot exceed 95% of project cost in certain circumstances);
- Other government entities (regional park authorities, etc.);
- Non-profit organizations [requires letters of support from landowner (if property not owned by applicant) and local government body].
  - If selected, non-profit organizations may be asked to provide additional financial records and documentation on land use agreements.

**Eligible Projects** – RTP funding may be used for:

- Maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails;
- Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and/or amenities;
- Provision of features that facilitate access and use of trails by persons with disabilities;
- Lease of recreational trail maintenance equipment; and
- Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance.

**In-eligible Projects** - The following project types will not be funded in this grant round. We anticipate these project types to be eligible again in 2024:

- Construction of new recreational trails (with certain limitations for trails on federal lands);
- Development of trail linkages;
- Lease of recreational trail construction equipment; and
- Acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors.

Recreational trails are defined in the RTP regulations as a thoroughfare or track across land or snow used for recreational purposes. These recreational purposes can include:

- traditional pedestrian-oriented activities such as hiking and jogging;
- skating and skateboarding;
- equestrian activities;
- bicycling and mountain biking;
- activities on water trails such as kayaking and canoeing; and
- motorized recreational activities such as all-terrain, utility-terrain, or other off-road vehicle riding, motorcycling, motor boating on water trails, and electric biking.

**Uses Not Permitted** - RTP funding may not be used for:

- Condemnation of any kind of interest in property.
- Upgrading, expanding, or otherwise facilitating motorized use or access to trails that prior to May 1, 1991, were predominantly used by non-motorized trail users, and on which motorized use was either prohibited or had not occurred.
- Planning proposals, gap analysis, and feasibility studies.
- RTP funds cannot be used to provide sidewalks along or adjacent to public roads or streets. The Virginia Department of Transportation may have funding available to assist with these types of facilities.

### III. Project Categories and Available Funding

**Categories**

RTP Legislation (23 U.S.C. 206) dictates categorical requirements for the use of each state's RTP apportionment: 40 percent of funds apportioned be used for diverse recreational trail use, 30 percent for motorized recreation, and 30 percent for non-motorized recreation.

- **Diversified use project:** A project primarily intended to benefit more than one mode of recreational use such as: walking, bicycling, and skating; or both pedestrian and equestrian use; or pedestrian and mountain biking. A diverse use project may also include both motorized and non-motorized uses where motorized use is not the predominant use or when the motorized and non-motorized uses are separated by season, such as equestrian use in summer and snow sports use in winter.
- **Non-motorized project for a single use:** A project primarily intended to benefit only one mode of non-motorized recreational trail use, such as pedestrian only, or equestrian only, or mountain biking only. RTP projects serving various pedestrian uses (such as walking, hiking, running, bird-watching, nature interpretation, backpacking, etc.) constitute a single use for the purposes of this category.
- **Motorized use project:** A project primarily intended to benefit motorized use. A project may be classified in this category if the project serves only one mode of motorized recreational use or more than one mode of motorized recreational use. A project may be classified in this category if the project also benefits some non-motorized uses (it is not necessary to exclude non-motorized uses), but the primary intent must be for the benefit of motorized use.

**DCR staff can aid applicants to determine the category their project fits into.**

## **Available Funding by Category**

The approximate funds available for the 2023 grant round are as follows:

- **Diversified category** - \$580,000
  - Minimum request - \$25,000, maximum request - \$250,000
- **Non-motorized single use category** - \$435,000
  - Minimum request - \$25,000, maximum request - \$250,000
- **Motorized category** - \$435,000
  - Minimum request - \$25,000, maximum request - \$435,000

It is anticipated that 3-6 grants may be awarded in the diversified category, 3-6 grants in the non-motorized category, and 2-4 grants in the motorized category. **The actual number of grants awarded and dollar value of the award is contingent upon committee evaluation and the amount of RTP funding available to Virginia at the time of grant award selections.**

## **IV. Application Procedures and Selection Process**

### **Application Procedures**

1. Read this manual in its entirety. It reflects the most recent guidance on the RTP program and supersedes previous guidance materials distributed by DCR.
2. Review the scoring criteria and application resources posted with this manual.
3. Download the RTP application and certification form via the DCR website at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/trailfnd>. The application is a fillable Microsoft Word document. Questions are answered by typing or pasting into the space provided. The certification form is a fillable PDF.

*If you are unable to download or use the documents, please contact [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov) or 804-786-1119 to obtain an alternative format of the application.*

4. Complete the application. All questions should be answered in the space available. Be clear and concise. Only attach additional pages when instructed to do so (listed at the end of each section of the application). Failure to follow these instructions may disqualify the application.
5. Submit the certification form, application, and attachments as a single PDF via email (max email size 25MB) to [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov) by **Tuesday, May 9th, 2023 at 4:00 pm.**

*If your email with attachments exceeds 25 MB, contact [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov) at least two business days prior to the deadline to discuss using an alternative submission method.*

*If you do not receive a reply acknowledging receipt of your electronic submission within one business day of submission, please contact DCR at the email or phone number listed above to ensure your application was received.*

### **Selection Process**

1. Applications received by the deadline undergo a preliminary review by DCR staff to verify application completeness and project eligibility.
2. All eligible and complete applications are sent to the Virginia Recreational Trails Program Advisory Committee for review and scoring.
3. The Virginia Recreational Trails Advisory Committee meets to review all scores and recommend projects for funding.
4. Applicants of projects recommended for funding are contacted by DCR and a site inspection is scheduled.
  - a. Applicants not recommended for funding will be also be notified at this time.
5. DCR staff conduct a site inspection to ascertain field conditions and suitability for recommendation to FHWA.
6. DCR staff work with the applicant to prepare the necessary forms to submit the project for FHWA approval and authorization.
7. Projects authorized by FHWA are issued a project agreement that allows 3 years to complete the required environmental review process, design plans (if applicable), permitting, and project construction.

## **V. Award Timeline**

The anticipated timeline for the 2023 grant cycle is as follows:

March 14, 2023	Grant round opens
May 9, 2023 4:00PM	Application deadline
May – June 2023	Applications reviewed by DCR and Advisory Committee
Late June 2023	Applicants of projects recommended for funding are contacted
July 2023	Applicants not recommended for funding are notified
July 2023	Site inspections and preparing documents for FHWA authorization request
August 2023	Project authorizations and release of grant agreements
September 2023	Agreement execution

## VI. Programmatic Requirements

### **Right of Way**

Applicants should have the right of way secured (deed, easement, license agreement, etc.) *prior* to applying for RTP funding. The preference for federal-aid investments is that access to the trail should be in perpetuity, however DCR will prioritize projects with legal access to the project right of way for at least a 20 year period.

- **Work on Public Lands**

Applicants submitting proposals for work on lands owned by another public entity are required to enter into a separate legal agreement with that public entity to undertake the work described in the RTP application. A copy of this agreement, or a draft if the agreement is pending, must be included with the RTP application.

- **Work on Private Lands**

Public access to private lands must be secured at the time of application. A right of way agreement must already be in place prior to application. Applicants submitting proposals for work on privately owned land must submit a copy of the relevant recorded deed, easement, license, or agreement with the RTP application.

### **Access for People with Disabilities**

Recipients of federal financial assistance, including subgrantees, must comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794). This legislation states that:

*No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States...shall, solely by reason of...disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, service, or activity receiving federal financial assistance.*

There is also a nearly identical mandate in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which applies to state and local governments and public accommodations of businesses and non-profit organizations. Most entities applying for RTP funding must follow both this provision and the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design.

While there currently are no minimum standards for trails and related outdoor recreation amenities in the ADA standards, entities must not discriminate against people with disabilities in the programs and activities they offer, which includes trails. The best available guidance is to follow, at a minimum, the federal outdoor accessibility standards of the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA). The ABA Accessibility Standards (ABAAS) can be found at <https://www.access-board.gov/aba/>. In most cases, ABAAS are identical to the 2010 ADA Standards. However, ABAAS includes additional provisions for outdoor recreation areas including trails, trailheads, campgrounds, picnic areas, and viewing areas. A guide for these standards can be found at <https://www.access-board.gov/aba/guides/chapter-10-outdoor/>. Exceptions are only permitted in limited circumstances. For technical assistance on the ABA Standards, contact the U.S. Access Board at 202-272-0080 (voice), 800-993-2822 (tty), or

[ta@access-board.gov](mailto:ta@access-board.gov). For technical assistance on the ADA, contact the Department of Justice at 800-514-0301 (voice) or 1-833-610-1264 (tty).

The ADA and ABA standards primarily address access for people with disabilities that impact mobility. Entities will also need to demonstrate how their project provides equitable experiences for users with sensory, cognitive, neurological and/or mental health disabilities.

Additional accessibility resources can be found in Appendix B.

Note that these requirements do not preclude any state or local accessibility laws or standards that provide greater accessibility than those discussed above.

**Project applications must describe *how* a project will provide access for people with disabilities, not simply state that the project will comply with all legal requirements.**

### **Facility Life**

The preference for federal-aid investments is that the public interest in and access to the trail should be in perpetuity. However, it is understood that facilities and features will have associated life expectancies/ lifespans. The greater the amount of federal funding involved, the greater expectation for a long facility life. All RTP projects should be designed and built for longevity and must submit maintenance plans with the application.

### **Environmental Review**

All projects must complete an environmental analysis prior to construction in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and at a minimum compliance with the Endangered Species Act, Historic Preservation Act, and Executive Orders 11988 and 11990: Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection. A Federal Consistency Determination in accordance with the Coastal Zone Management Act may also be required. Additional information is provided in the RTP Environmental Review Guidance document posted on the [DCR RTP website](#).

## **VII. Eligible Project Costs and Applicant Share**

### **Eligible Project Costs**

The following list represents costs that *may* be eligible for reimbursement on a project. All project costs must be outlined in the project proposal and budget and approved in the project agreement.

- Costs to conduct required environmental review for NEPA and Section 106 compliance
- Costs associated with project engineering and design
- Construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance work on trails
- Construction of bridges, railings, ramps, fences, and retaining structures
- Bank stabilization, re-vegetation (excluding ornamental landscaping), erosion control
- Trailhead development including parking, restrooms, and related facilities
- Signs and interpretive aids

- Consultant/ contractor services
- Equipment rental
- Bid advertisements for contracted work
- Employee salary for on-the-ground project work in the field
- Administrative costs to administer the project and the grant when agreed upon up front and documented correctly (does not include general overhead costs)
- Environmental review and engineering costs incurred less than 18 months prior to FHWA authorization *may* be counted towards the applicant's 20% share in limited circumstances. These services must have been procured following the procurement requirements outlined in the RTP Procurement Procedures document, and require documentation including invoicing and proof of payment specific to the project to prove this. Discuss with the DCR grant administrator if you wish to include these costs. **No other costs incurred prior to authorization are eligible.**

### **20% Share Requirement**

Of the eligible project costs, the RTP program will reimburse 80% of approved costs. The other 20% remains the responsibility of the applicant. This 20% contribution from the applicant is referred to as the non-federal share.

The simplest way for entities to provide their 20% share is to directly pay for eligible items, and the program will then reimburse the entity at 80%, leaving the 20% share. However, many other items can be used to cover the 20% share with appropriate documentation, including:

- Force account labor (employees of entity working on the project, either in-field or in project/grant administration);
  - Timesheets, proof of salary, and proof of payment to the employee are required.
- Donation of private funds;
- Value of volunteer and/or in-kind labor, donated and/or in-kind equipment, donated and/or in-kind materials, at fair market value;
  - These items may only be used to cover recipient's 20% share and are never a reimbursable expense, i.e. cannot receive cash reimbursement for item that was not actually spent in cash. Volunteer, in-kind, and donation values exceeding the 20% share will not be reimbursed.
  - General volunteer labor rate calculated using current independentsector.org rate for Virginia. The 2022 rate was \$30.80 per hour.
  - In kind equipment costs will require a time log, other items require proof of fair market value determination.
- Other federal, state, local, and private grants;
  - Eligible as long as the requirements are not in conflict RTP regulations.
  - In some cases, combined federal funds cannot exceed 95% of the total project costs. Any projects planning to use federal funds for more than 95% of the total project costs should consult with DCR prior to submission.

**All volunteer or in-kind labor; donated or in-kind materials, equipment, and services; and in-house or consultant administrative costs must meet three primary requirements to be eligible:**

- 1. They must be clearly outlined in the project application narrative and proposed budget.**
- 2. They must be included in the FHWA authorization and signed agreement, and**
- 3. They must have proper documentation.**

**The value of donations and in-kind items cannot be added to the budget after authorization.**

The two examples below illustrate how donated labor and materials can be used to cover the non-federal share:

#1	<u>Total Project Cost</u>	<b>\$40,000</b>
	Cost of materials	\$20,000
	Cost of county work forces (Force Account)	\$12,000
	Value of private volunteer labor	\$8,000

Maximum RTP reimbursement on the above project is \$32,000. The sponsor actually spend \$32,000 on materials, services, and work forces, and then added the volunteer labor to the local match. The recipient would receive a grant reimbursement of \$32,000 cash cost which is also the full 80% of overall project cost.

#2	<u>Total Project Cost</u>	<b>\$40,000</b>
	Cost of materials	\$8,000
	Cost of county work forces (Force Account)	\$8,000
	Value of donated materials	\$12,000
	Value of private volunteer labor	\$12,000

Maximum RTP reimbursement on the above project is \$16,000. The total paid expenditures on the project equal \$16,000. The total value of donated materials and labor is \$24,000. Therefore, the maximum allowable reimbursement amount is \$16,000 or the cost of materials and work forces. The recipient does not receive the full 80% of the project cost because only \$16,000 of the costs were paid in cash.

## VIII. Procurement

All RTP projects must comply with [2 CFR 200.317-327](#), the [Virginia Public Procurement Act](#) (VPPA), and local entity procurement standards, as well as other applicable state and federal procurement regulations. Please review the **RTP 2023 Procurement Procedures** document available at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/traifnd> for additional details on required procurement procedures. Important points include:

- **Small, Women-owned and Minority-owned Businesses (SWaM) and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE)** - all RTP recipients must take appropriate and reasonable steps to provide SWaM and DBE with the maximum opportunity to compete for and perform contracts for trail projects receiving aid through the program. Documentation of SWaM and DBE outreach efforts must be submitted. RTP recipients shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex or national origin, in the awarding of RTP funded projects.
- **Construction Bidding** - At least two bids must be received for construction contracts, otherwise the project must be re-bid.
- **Buy America** – All iron, steel, and construction materials for the project must comply with Buy America requirements. Material certification documentation proving it was sourced and manufactured in the U.S may be required. These requirements generally make equipment purchases ineligible for RTP funding.
- **DCR Administrative Review** - Select procurement documents must be submitted for DCR administrative at various steps of the procurement process.
- **Recordkeeping** - The subgrantee must maintain records sufficient to detail the history of all procurements, and is responsible for submitting certain procurement records to DCR. These records should include: final solicitation/advertisement, final Invitation for Bid or Request for Proposals, bid/response spreadsheet listing all bids/responses received, executed contract, and summary of the RTP recipient's efforts to comply with the RTP DBE and SWaM Policy.

**Recipients are responsible for ensuring that all contracts are in compliance with federal and state laws concerning the solicitation of supplies, equipment, and services. When conflicts exist, DCR must be contacted for consultation with the FHWA. If any project components or services are not procured per the applicable standards, those expenses will not be eligible for RTP reimbursement and the project may be withdrawn and any previous payments returned to FHWA.**

## IX. Reimbursement Procedures

RTP is a reimbursement program; therefore, the RTP recipient must pay 100% of the cost of any item before submitting a request for reimbursement of 80% of costs. The recipient must have either the cash on hand or other financing available to incur all project expenses.

Reimbursement requests can be submitted as soon as documentation of the payment (cleared check, ACH statement, bank statement) is available. However, since banks sometimes only release that documentation monthly, there can be a 1-3 month delay between incurring the expense, the availability of payment verification documentation, document submission to DCR, DCR and FHWA processing, and receiving reimbursement.

Reimbursement requests must be submitted via email. Regular reimbursements requests must be submitted maintain the project in active status. Specific deadlines will be provided in the grant agreement.

### **Reimbursement request submissions must include:**

1. Signed certification cover sheet (template provided);
2. The following summary sheet/s, as applicable (templates provided):
  - a. Data sheet summarizing invoices,
  - b. Data sheet summarizing employee labor,
  - c. Data sheet summarizing volunteer labor,
  - d. Data sheet summarizing in-kind equipment records;
3. Documentation of each expense specific to the RTP project (invoice, billing statement, signed timesheets, signed daily volunteer work log, documentation of value determination for donated materials, volunteer time, etc.);
4. Proof of payment for each expense (cleared check- front and back, or other document confirming vendor receipt of payment such as: ACH statement, bank statement, or payroll ledger);
5. Additional documentation as requested by DCR.

Once received, DCR reviews the request and follows up with the recipient if any additional documentation is needed. DCR then prepares the forms and submits to FHWA to process the reimbursement. Once approved, FHWA releases the funds to DCR, and then DCR sends the reimbursement to the recipient.

Additional guidance on reimbursement procedures and templates of forms used in the reimbursement process can be found under “Documents and forms for grant recipients” on the DCR RTP website: <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/traifnd>.

## X. Project Administration

### **FHWA Authorization and Grant Agreements**

DCR will collect the necessary information from applicants to submit a project to FHWA for approval and authorization. FHWA will review the project and if found to meet all program requirements, will authorize the project and project scope for a specific amount of funding.

Once a project is authorized by FHWA, a grant agreement between DCR and the applicant (now called the *subgrantee*) is created and signed by both parties. This agreement outlines program rules and regulations, approved scope of work, approved budget, approved non-federal share items, and reporting requirements. **Do not incur costs that you are submitting for reimbursement until project is authorized by FHWA and a DCR-subgrantee agreement is signed.**

RTP projects have two phases. The first phase is preliminary engineering (PE). The preliminary engineering phase provides time and funding to assist in completing the required environmental review, final design plan specifications, and permitting.

- **Preliminary Engineering Phase** – the PE phase assists with the cost associated with performing the studies and analysis needed to address the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other environmental laws. PE phase grants also assist with the completion of design plans and specifications, and obtaining required permits. A completed environmental review and supporting documents, including all agency correspondence, must be submitted to DCR for a NEPA pathway recommendation to FHWA. Additional information about the environmental review process can be found in the RTP Environmental Review Guidance document posted on the [DCR RTP website](#).

Once the PE phase is complete, then construction may proceed. **No bidding or on-the-ground work may begin before the NEPA pathway document is signed by FHWA and the other PE requirements are complete.**

- **Construction Phase** – the construction phase is for the cost of bid advertisement for construction, construction costs, and may assist with obtaining permits if the permits were not included in the PE phase. Bid documentation must be reviewed by DCR prior to advertisement. In limited cases, if a project has already completed all the necessary environmental reviews they will be issued only a construction agreement.

The PE phase should be complete within the first 18 months of the project period, based on project timeline. Overall project period for completion is a maximum of three years from initial project authorization. Projects unable to complete both PE and Construction in three years may be terminated and funds returned for reauthorization to other projects.

### **Project Management**

One person should be assigned as the project coordinator. This person will then have the overall responsibility for all aspects of the project for construction, accounting, and for submitting reimbursement requests to DCR. All deliverables should be submitted to [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov).

### **Quarterly Reports**

Recipients of RTP funding must submit quarterly reports providing the status of the trail project. A template is provided that also indicates the required information. Reports are due via email every three months (end of March, June, September, December). The first report due date will be identified in the project agreement. It is the responsibility of the recipient to submit the status reports to DCR.

### **Administrative Review of Project Documentation**

Plans, environmental analysis documents, and bid documentation must be administratively reviewed by DCR prior to the start of construction on the project. Administrative review is defined as a review of bidding documents, construction plans, specifications and/or contractual documents to determine consistency with the approved Recreational Trail Program scope of work. DCR's administrative review of these items and permission to proceed shall not be considered a professional architectural, engineering, or legal review or an endorsement of design practices and standards.

Plans which include the design of structural components, such as trail bridges, tunnels, or scenic overlooks, must be stamped, signed and dated by a Licensed Professional Engineer. RTP recipients may be required to state and defend the design standards they will use.

### **Record Retention**

All program and financial records shall be retained by the subgrantee for state and federal audit purposes during and following completion of the project for a minimum of 3 years.

### **Changes to Approved Scope of Work**

Requests for changes to the project scope outlined in the project agreement must be submitted in writing to DCR. Changes in scope must be approved by DCR and FHWA; FHWA has final authority on eligibility issues and modifications or amendments. If approved, an amendment to the project agreement will be prepared and forwarded to the subgrantee for signature.

### **Phase and Project Completion**

Two requirements must be met to close out the PE phase. First, all PE deliverables must be sent to DCR, including the environmental analysis documents. These will be forwarded to FHWA who must approve them before construction is authorized. Second, DCR must be notified in writing that no more reimbursements will be sought for the PE phase. Once both of these are complete, construction activities can begin.

To close out the construction phase, a DCR staff site inspection of the completed work is required. The last reimbursement request should be submitted prior to the project end date that includes a written statement of project completion and notice of final reimbursement request. The project completion statement must describe the actual work accomplished, how it differed, if at all, from the original scope of work, and the percentage and dollar value of volunteer, in-kind, donated, and cash contributions. It should also include a report on the total DBE and SWaM, if any, involvement in the project.

**Note that if a project is not able to be constructed as agreed upon, RTP funds provided for the project may need to be returned to FHWA. If the subgrantee has any reason to believe construction cannot be completed DCR must be notified immediately.**

### **Extension Policy**

RTP project agreement extensions may be considered, on a case by case basis, based on the following conditions:

1. Unforeseeable *severe* weather conditions prevented project implementation as scheduled; please contact DCR promptly when the project is delayed.
2. Unexpected staff turnover during the project period and after beginning construction, which resulted in new personnel being hired or trained to meet project deliverables; DCR must be notified immediately when the primary contact for RTP project administration changes to ensure proper contact and procedures can be established.
3. Delays due to unexpected environmental concerns.

Conditions that do not warrant an extension include, but are not limited to:

1. Project delays resulting from lack of attention;
2. Extension request on projects where program reporting requirements have not been met;
3. Failure to complete project deliverables in accordance with the project schedule established in grant application and project agreement scope of work;

### ***Administrative Procedure for Extensions***

At least **90 days prior** to the agreement expiration date, the RTP recipient must provide a written request to DCR that specifies the reason for the project extension, supporting documentation, and the necessary time period needed to complete the project. Only one extension request per project agreement will be considered. If an extension is approved by DCR, then DCR will request an extension for the project from the FHWA. Final approval of extensions or project modifications are at the discretion of the FHWA. Updates to DCR and FHWA RTP program guidelines may also result in an extension request being denied.

# **XI. Appendices**

## **Appendix A - Application Guidance**

This appendix is provided as a supplement to the 2023 VA RTP Application. Please refer to this information while completing the application. It provides instructions on answering specific questions, including directions on how to access web-based mapping software referenced in the application and source links for other data-based questions.

### **Application Certification Form**

#### **Question 2**

Provide the contact name and title of the person who will be responsible for direct communication with DCR.

#### **Question 11**

If you do not know your organization's Federal Information Processing Standards code, you can use the Virginia Department of Taxation Locality Code Lookup feature at <https://www.business.tax.virginia.gov/fips/index.cfm>.

### **Application Form**

#### **Section A**

#### **Question 3**

Category maximum requests are listed in Section III. of this manual.

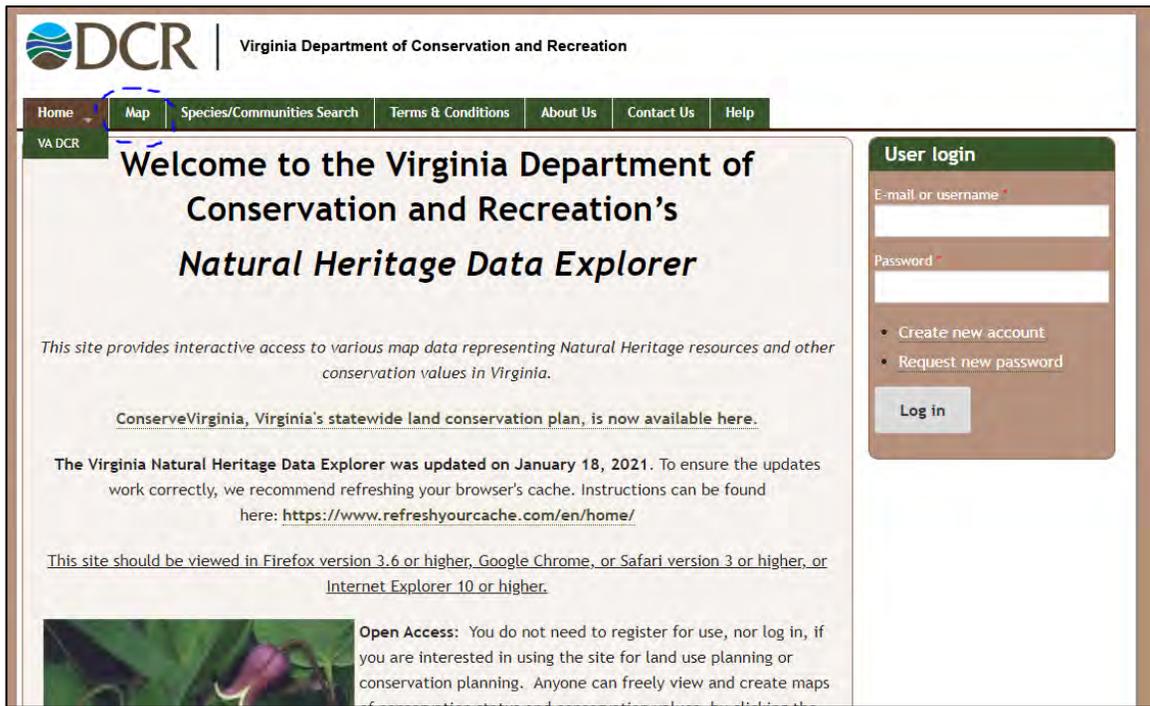
#### **Question 5**

RTP project categories are defined in Section III. of this manual.

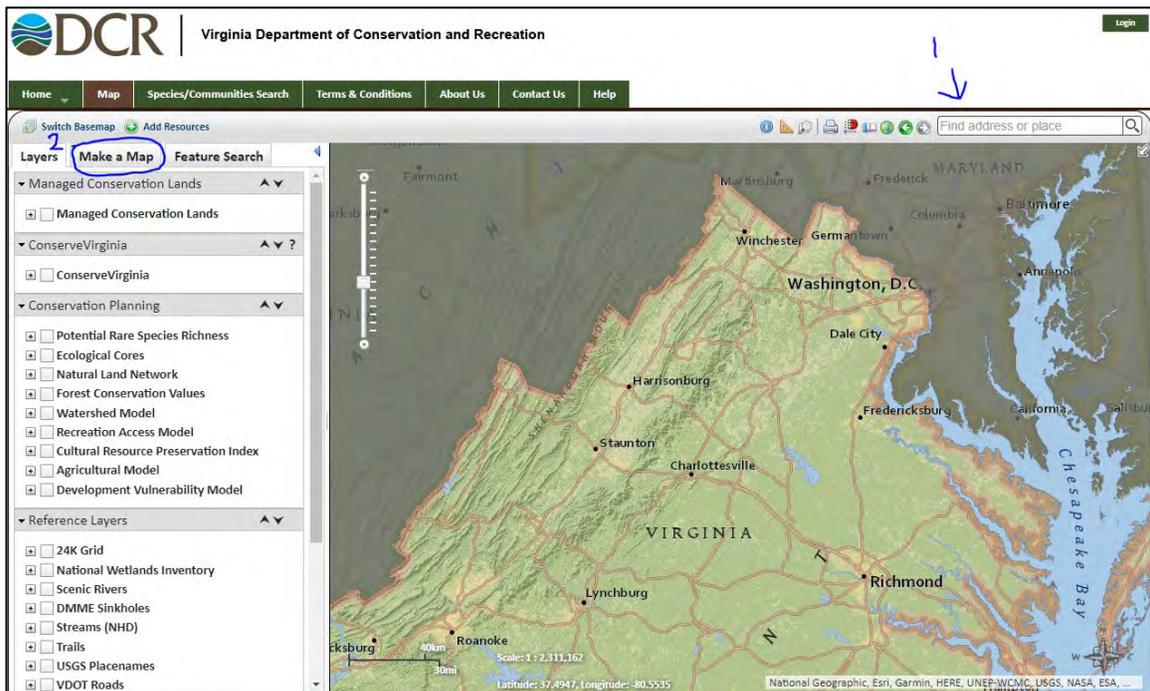
#### **Section A attachments**

Location maps can be generated using Google Maps or similar screen captures with pins or arrows identifying the project location. If you do not have an existing trail map, you can make one using DCR's Natural Heritage Data Explorer:

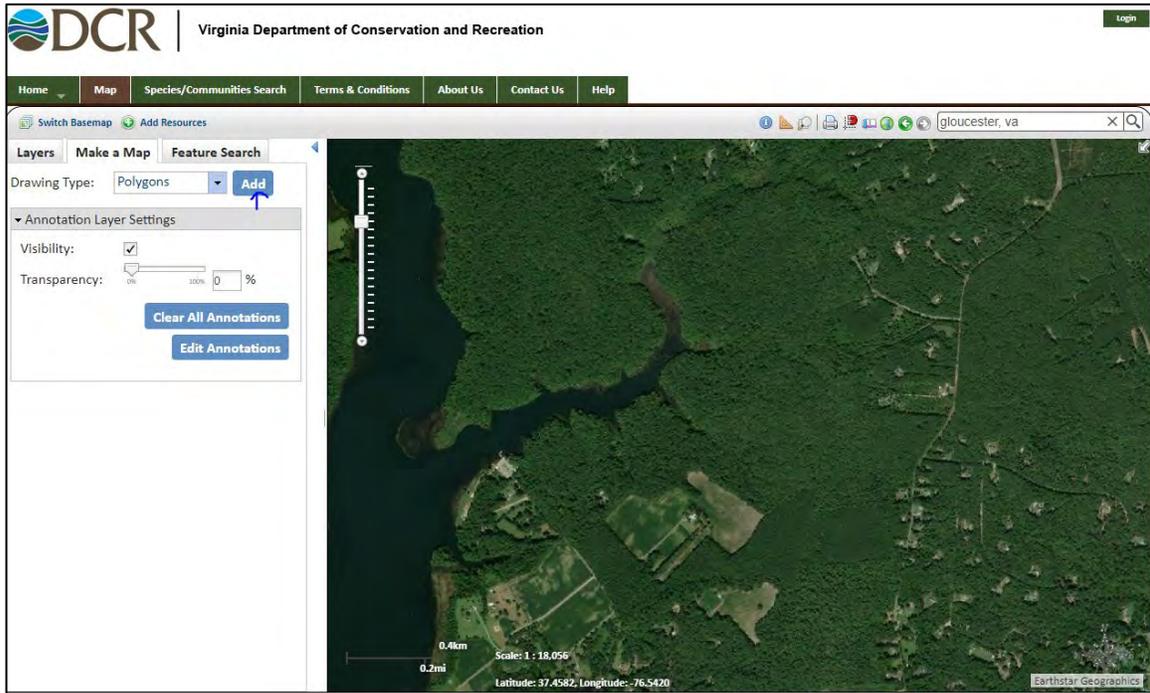
1. To access the Natural Heritage Data Explorer, visit: <https://vanhde.org/> and click on the "Map" tab. A separate browser tab will open. Please read and accept the Terms of Use.



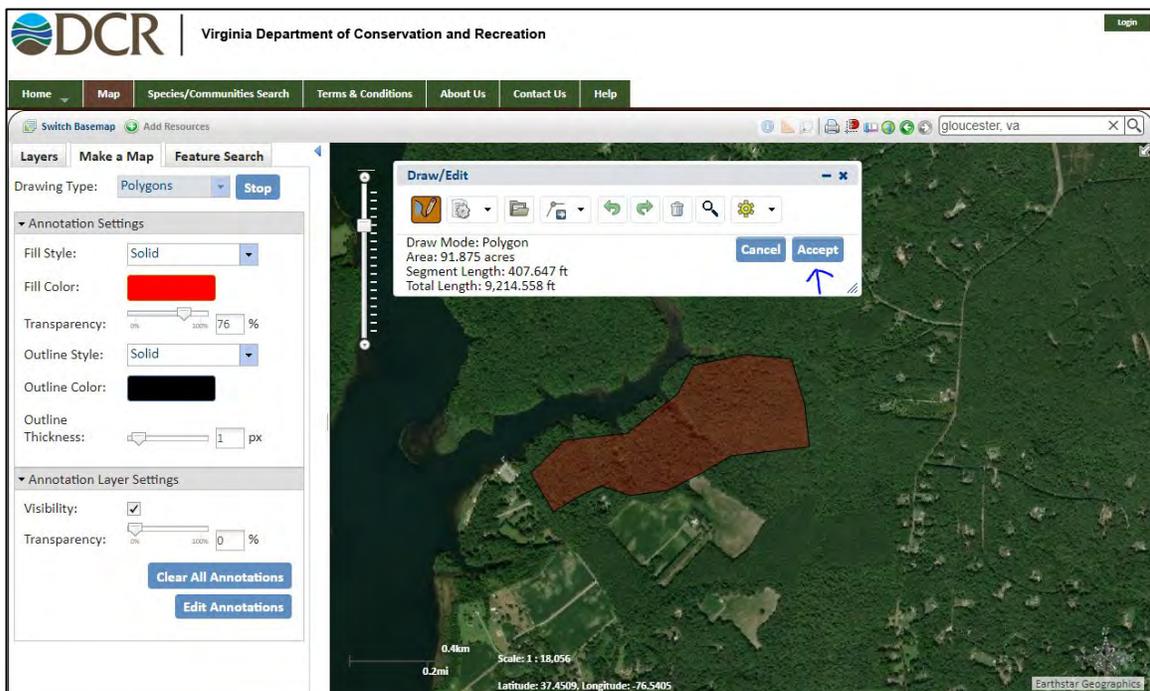
2. Navigate to your location by either using the map's zoom feature, or entering an address into the box in the upper right side of the screen labeled "find address or place"
3. Once your area is located, select the "Make a Map" tab. Note you can switch the basemap to an aerial view by clicking "Switch Basemap" directly above the "Layers," "Make a Map," and "Feature Search" tabs.



- To create a polygon that defines the subject property, select “Polygons” from the Drawing Type drop-down and click “Add.” A drop-down Annotation Settings menu will appear allowing you to adjust the color and transparency of the polygon shape.

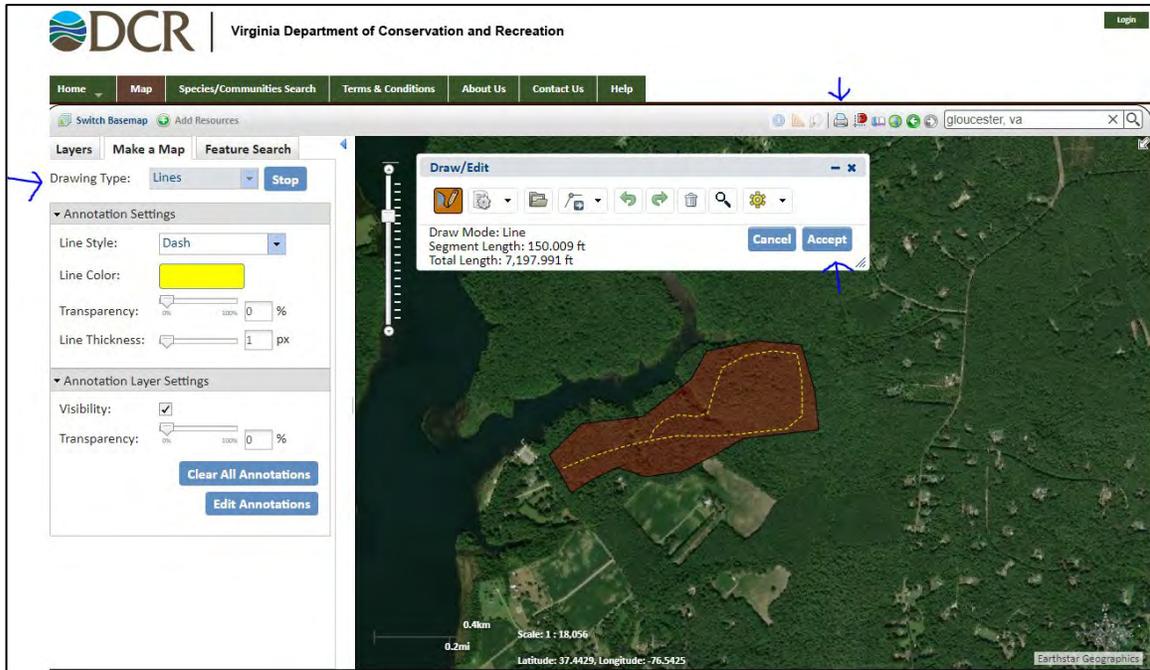


- Draw your polygon by clicking around the edge of your parcel on the map. When the shape is complete, double-click and then click “Accept.”

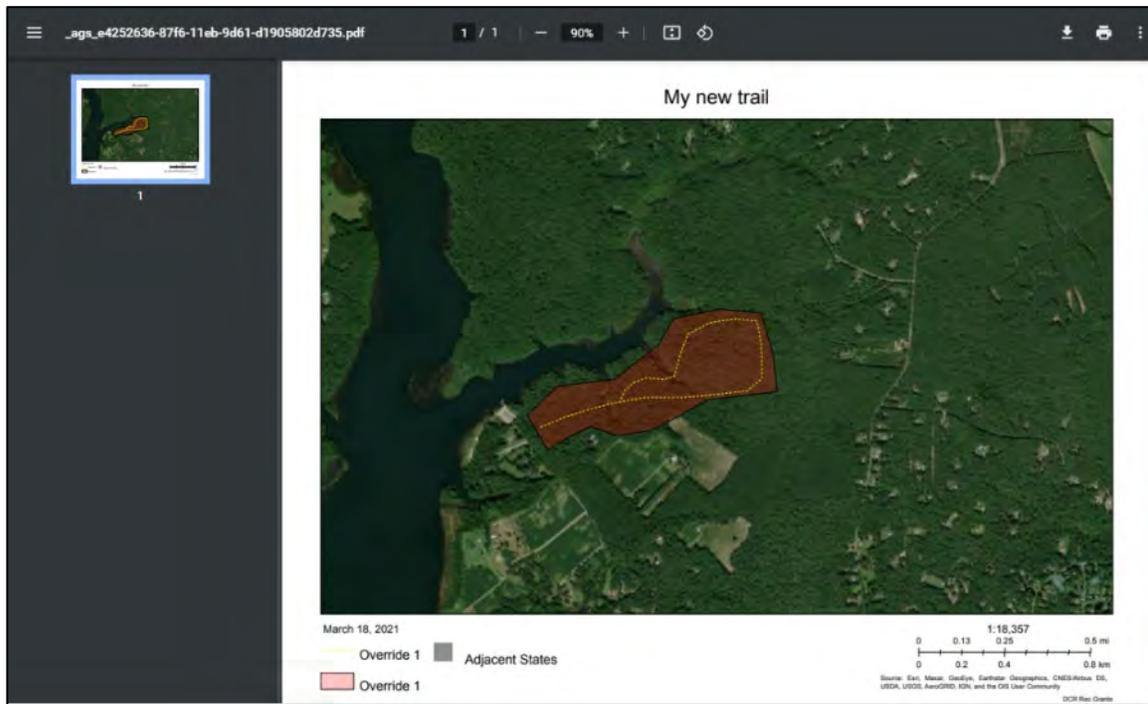


- If you wish to also add a line to indicate the trail layout, select “Line” from the Drawing Type drop-down menu and click “Add.” You can select from the same options to change the color and transparency of the line. Once you have drawn the line, double click to complete the line and click “Accept.” You can then print your map by either

using the “Print” option on the top right side of the screen, or using your computer’s “Snip” tool.



7. If you use the “Print” feature, enter your project details and click “Print.” When the map is ready, the “Print” box will change to “Printout.” Click this and a new window with your map will open. This can be attached to your application.



## **Section B**

### **Question 14**

The Virginia Outdoors Plan can be found at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/vop>.

### **Question 16**

One resource that can be used to identify populations that may be impacted by the project is the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJSCREEN) found at <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>. If you use other sources, please provide a website link, if available, or attach source documents to your application.

See Appendix B of this manual for a list of online accessibility resources.

## **Section D**

### **Question 21**

Review the RTP Environmental Review Guidance document available at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/trailfnd> for overview of agency correspondence and procedures required to comply with NEPA and Section 106 requirements.

### **Question 22**

Review the RTP Procurement Procedures document available at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/trailfnd> for overview of procurement procedures required for RTP projects.

## Appendix B - Accessibility Resources

The following resources may aid entities in planning for inclusive trail experiences and understanding legal obligations. As you plan your trail project, consider how your entity will provide equitable experiences for all users, including people with mobility, sensory, cognitive, and mental health disabilities.

### **2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design** <https://www.access-board.gov/ada/>

Full text of the technical standards that apply to state and local governments, non-profits, and businesses.

### **ABA Accessibility Standards** <https://www.access-board.gov/aba/>

Full text of the technical standards that apply to federal government agencies and some recipients of federal funds.

### **U.S. Access Board Guide to the ABA Accessibility Standards (Outdoor)**

<https://www.access-board.gov/aba/guides/chapter-10-outdoor/>

Illustrated guide to the technical requirements of the ABA Outdoor Developed Area standards, which include trails, viewing areas, picnic areas and camping areas.

### **U.S. Forest Service Accessibility Resources Website**

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/national-forests-grasslands/accessibility/resources>

Contains links to numerous documents, including the Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines, and other guides, summaries, and best practices.

### **American Trails Trail Accessibility Hub**

<https://www.americantrails.org/resources/accessibility-hub>

Summary collection of accessible land and water trail articles, webinars, guides, bulletins from a variety of sources.

### **AccessibilityOnline Webinar Archives** <https://www.accessibilityonline.org/ao/archives>

Archive of recorded webinars presented by the U.S. Access Board on ADA and ABA standards, including Recreation Facilities and Outdoor Developed Areas.

### **Massachusetts Audubon Accessible Trails Manual**

<https://www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/accessibility/accessible-projects-and-partners/accessible-trails-manual>

Summary and recommendations from Mass Audubon detailing their experiences in creating multisensory and inclusive trail environments.

### **Trails for All People: Guidance for Accessibility and Inclusive Design**

<https://conservationtools.org/guides/115>

Guide from WeConservePA with overview of legal requirements and summary of best practices.