



RTCA: Community Assistance Arm of the National Park Service

Accepting Applications through August 1

Who We Are:

A program to share expertise of the National Park Service across America

The National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) works with community groups, nonprofit organizations, tribes or tribal governments, and local, state, and federal government agencies to achieve locally-defined goals for natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation. Projects include natural area preservation, rivers conservation and development of recreational trails and greenways in urban, suburban and rural settings. RTCA carries out the natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission of the National Park Service in communities across America.

A network of 70 community-based planning professionals delivers the RTCA Program nationwide, helping communities to help themselves achieve on-the-ground success. Through RTCA, the National Park Service offers conservation assistance to communities in every state.



Northwest Discovery Water Trail: ID, WA, OR. A year-long celebration of dedication events is launching the Northwest Discovery Water Trail, a 367-mile water route through three states. Here, at Hat Rock State Park, The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation present peace medals to the Water Trail Steering Committee at a "Trace the Trail" Lewis & Clark Bicentennial event. RTCA is helping with public outreach and development of a trail management plan. Photo: Sarah Krueger.

We measure our success by our ability to help our local partners make their rivers, trails, greenways and open spaces a vital, life-enhancing part of their communities. With well under one percent of the National Park Service budget, RTCA each year helps create over 1,400 miles of trail, protect more than 700 miles of waterways, and preserve some 63,700 acres of open space.

What We Do:

Help move your ideas into action

By invitation, RTCA works collaboratively to assist your natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects. While RTCA is not a grant program, we offer staff assistance in conceptual and master planning, organizational development, project coordination, facilitation, and public involvement, tailoring our assistance to meet the needs of our partners.

Whether you are a group of committed citizens launching a new project, a team of local government agencies aiming for a multi-jurisdictional effort, or a public/private committee with a community vision, RTCA can help you catalyze ideas into actions. Working side-by-side with grassroots groups and local governments throughout the country, the National Park Service is helping to create local, regional and state networks of parks, rivers, trails, greenway and open spaces. We invite you to discover more about how RTCA can help your community achieve its own goals.

Other National Park Service Assistance Programs

The National Park Service can also assist community-based conservation and recreation projects through the following programs:

- **Challenge Cost Share Program (CCSP):** The CCSP provides matching fund amounts to facilitate joint projects of National Park Service units, other NPS programs, and their partners. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/ccsp/
- **Hydropower Recreation Assistance:** Provides technical assistance on recreation access and facilities, instream flows for recreation, and riparian corridor protection to all participants in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) hydropower licensing and relicensing proceedings. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/hydro/
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):** Provides 50% matching grants to state and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Grants are administered through the states and are contingent on annual appropriation. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/lwcf/
- **Federal Lands to Parks:** Helps state and local agencies acquire, at no cost, surplus federal land and facilities for parks and recreation. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/flp/
- **Cultural Resources:** The NPS administers a number of very successful federal historic preservation funding programs. Information about grants, tax credits and other forms of assistance can be found by visiting www.cr.nps.gov/helpyou.htm

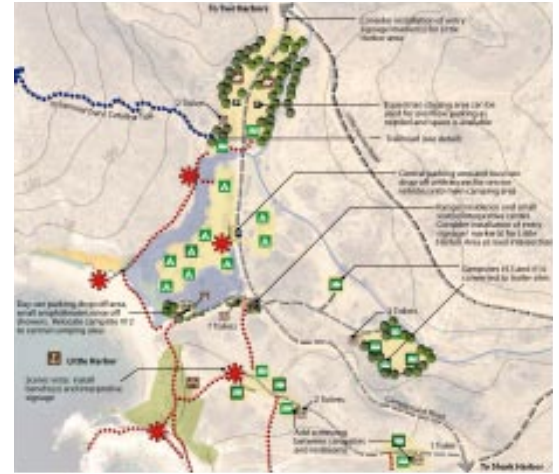
Project Highlights...



Humboldt Bay Trail, Eureka to Arcata, CA. Humboldt Bay, rich in ecological and recreational resources is the natural, cultural, and political center of California's north coast. RTCA is working with a multi-agency planning team to assess and define directions for a proposed 7-mile Humboldt Bay rail-with-trail for bicyclists, hikers, and other recreational users. Photo: Barbara Rice.



Hahamongna Watershed Park: CA. RTCA is assisting the City of Pasadena with community-based planning for a 30-acre addition to this park. Leaders of the Gabrieleno/Tongva Band of Mission Indians of San Gabriel participated in an open house event. Photo: Anne Dove.



Windward Beaches Conservation & Recreation: CA. The four windward beaches found on Santa Catalina Island are among the Island's most accessible and ecologically-sensitive beaches. A community-based working group generated recommendations for balancing resource protection and recreation which RTCA helped to develop into a master plan for the Catalina Island Conservancy. Map: Anne Dove.



Hawai'i Capital Cultural District Open Space, HI: Once the capital of the Hawaiian Kingdom, this Honolulu district houses the state capitol and many museums, historic sites and open spaces. A public-private coalition is working to enliven the district, encourage pedestrian use and highlight cultural and historic assets. RTCA is helping develop a master plan including five miles of designated routes and enhancements linking 188 acres of urban parks to cultural destinations such as the 'Iolani Palace, shown above. Photo: Helen Felsing.



Searchlight Trails: Searchlight, NV. Through a series of community trail mapping workshops and field classrooms, the Searchlight Trails Task Force is developing approximately 10 miles of multi-use trails that will connect significant area destinations including Lake Mead National Recreational Area. RTCA is assisting community members with the development of the Task Force. Photo: Liz Smith-Incer.

Current Project List: California, Hawai'i & Nevada

CALIFORNIA

- Ahwahnee Hills Regional Park
- Cooley Landing Nature Center
- Coyote Creek Regional Bikeway
- Deer Creek Tribute Trail & Restoration
- Delta Waterfront Trail
- Fort Bragg Waterfront Park
- Groundwork Trust Oakland
- Groundwork San Diego
- Hahamongna Watershed Park
- Humboldt Bay Area Trails
- Newport Bay Watershed
- Northeast Los Angeles Open Space
- Orange Coast River Park
- Peach Butler Community Park
- Reagan Meadows and Trail Linkages
- Redlands Emerald Necklace
- San Francisco Blue Greenway
- Santa Catalina Island Ways
- Trails Forever (Golden Gate)
- Tujunga Wash Revitalization
- Windward Beaches Conservation and Recreation

HAWAI'I

- Hawai'i Capital Cultural District Open Space
- Maui OHV Trails
- Mauna Loa Trail System

- Pu'u Mali Habitat Restoration
- Waihe'e Preserve

NEVADA

- Baker Village and Basin Trails
- Heritage Greenway Trail-West
- Searchlight Trails
- Southern Nye County Regional Trails
- Vias de Vegas- Trail Connectivity
- Yellow Pine Railroad Rail Trail

In addition to the projects above, RTCA has provided consultation-level assistance to over 12 additional efforts throughout California, Hawai'i and Nevada.



Indian Creek, Caldwell, ID. RTCA worked with the City of Caldwell, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), and other partners to develop a city Trails Plan and a restoration plan for Indian Creek, once buried under downtown streets. The newly “daylighted” section of the creek has played a major role in revitalization of the historic downtown, allowing residents and visitors direct access to one of their most important natural resources. Photo: Deb Willis.

Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe Trail System, WA. This one-mile fitness loop trail, illustrated above by artist Sandra Noel, is the first phase of an integrated 8-mile trail system on the Port Gamble Reservation. RTCA worked with the Tribe to develop a plan that will provide safe places to walk and bike and promote physical fitness.



Northern State Recreation Area: WA. RTCA partnered with Skagit County and the ASLA's state chapter to provide a two-day charrette (design workshop) to create a Master Plan for transforming 700 acres of fallow farmland and wetlands into the largest county-owned recreation site in the region. Community members were invited to provide feedback at an open house. Photo: Dan Miller.



Upper Nisqually Trail: WA. RTCA helped Pierce County and local citizens develop a vision for the Upper Nisqually Trail, an 8-mile multi-use trail connecting Elbe and Ashford, two gateway communities of Mt. Rainier National Park. The new trail is envisioned to follow a railroad right-of-way with 3-miles designed as a 'Rail-with-Trail' located adjacent to an active rail line. Artist: Audrey Stout.



Willamette River Water Trail: OR. RTCA is assisting the Mid-Willamette River Connections Group, a public-private coalition, in developing the 187-mile Willamette Water Trail in western Oregon. The ribbon-cutting ceremony for a portion of the trail was attended by NPS Deputy Director Rory Westberg, Governor Ted Kulongoski, Congresswoman Darlene Hooley, and Salem Mayor Janet Taylor and included an inaugural paddle trip with 50 boats. Photo: Dan Miller.

Current Project List: Idaho, Oregon, Washington

IDAHO

- Northwest Discovery Water Trail (ID, OR, WA)
- Shafer Butte Trail System
- Teton Creek Greenway

OREGON

- Astoria Urban Forest Trails
- Basin & Range Birding Trail
- Beaverton Creek Regional Trails
- Corvallis to the Sea Trail
- Crown Zellerbach Multi-Use Trail
- Eugene Ridgeline Recreation and Open Space Area
- Five Rivers Estuary Water Trail

- Illinois Valley Trails & Greenway
- Keizer Regional Park
- Lake Ewauna Trail
- Mill Creek Greenway
- Oakridge-Westfir Community Trails
- Ontario Pathways and Trail WA
- Sandy Basin Watershed Project
- Siuslaw Estuary Water Trail
- Upper Willamette River Water Trail
- Warrenton Multi-Use Trails

WASHINGTON

- Carbon River Communities Historic Walking Trails
- Delridge Neighborhood Trails

- Lake Sawyer Park Development
- Maxwellton Valley Preserve Trail
- North Bellingham Trails and Greenway
- Pierce County Trail System
- Port Gamble S'Klallam Reservation Trail System
- San Juan Island Community Trails
- Skagit River Trail
- Spokane County Regional Trails
- Toledo Trails and Riverfront Park

In addition to the projects above, RTCA has provided consultation-level assistance to 10 additional efforts throughout Idaho, Oregon and Washington.



Application Guidelines

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program works collaboratively, by invitation, with partners on a wide variety of conservation and recreation projects. These partners include nonprofit organizations, community groups, tribes or tribal governments, and local, state, or federal government agencies. RTCA provides a variety of assistance tailored to the partner's needs, but does not provide direct grants.

RTCA often acts as a catalyst to help assemble the necessary pieces to achieve on-the-ground conservation success. RTCA helps identify what types of aid a partner needs and either supplies or locates sources for the assistance. RTCA helps partners navigate the planning process, converting ideas into actions, and often provides assistance in conceptual and master planning, organizational development, project coordination, facilitation, and public involvement.

A project is a partnership effort between local, state, or national agency or organization partners and the RTCA Program with specific goals and outcomes that lead to tangible natural resource conservation and/or outdoor recreation results.

We recommend that you contact our local program staff to discuss your interest and seek guidance before applying.

Project Selection Criteria

Applications for RTCA assistance are competitively evaluated based on how well the applications meet the following criteria:

1. Initial project partners are identified and a lead project partner is designated. Note: *The lead partner may be a federal agency, state or local agency, tribe, non-profit organization, or citizens' group. Federal*

agencies, including the National Park Service, may be the lead partner only in collaboration with a nonfederal partner.

2. Project has specific, partner-defined goals and anticipated measurable results that are: clearly stated; support the National Park Service mission and RTCA mission and strategic plan goals; protect important natural resources or enhance outdoor recreation opportunities; and will have results that occur within an appropriate timeframe.
3. There is a commitment by lead project partners to significant public involvement and outreach in the project.
4. Roles and contributions of initial project partners, including RTCA, are identified. There is a commitment by initial project partners to cooperate and to provide or obtain the resources necessary to implement the project.
5. There is evidence of broad support for the project.

Preference is given to a Project that also:

- a. provides physical connections among resources;
- b. includes an NPS area as an actively involved project partner;
- c. includes both natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation;
- d. partners with a health organization.

Consultation with an RTCA staff before an application for assistance is made helps clarify RTCA roles and contributions and also helps identify how the selection criteria might apply to your conservation and outdoor recreation goals.

Projects are locally-requested and led and should include significant public involvement and outreach. Projects should also include the commitment, cooperation and cost-sharing of all partners. Assistance is for one year and may be renewed for a second year if warranted. The RTCA

RTCA Vision

A network of parks, rivers, trails, greenways and open spaces that promote quality of life and links people to their natural and cultural heritage.

RTCA Mission

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout the country and the world.

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program implements the natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission of the National Park Service in communities across America.

involvement in these partnerships requires all partners to monitor progress and measure success during and after completion of the project.

How to Apply for RTCA Program Assistance

Application letters (one to three pages) should include the following information:

1. Contact Information:

Please provide information about the initial project partner(s), including name of a primary contact, organization, address, phone, fax, and e-mail. Designate a lead project partner.

2. Project Description and Anticipated Results:

- Provide the name of the project and project location.
- Identify what populations in your community will be served by the project.
- Identify anticipated on-the-ground

(continued on back)

