

National Forest System Legacy Roads and Trails Fund (Legacy Trails Program) Fact Sheet

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FACT SHEET

National Forest System Legacy Roads and Trails Fund (Legacy Trails Program) 2024-25 Field Season

American Trails is pleased to partner with the U.S. Forest Service in continuing the Legacy Trails Grant Program. This program is funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and supports partner trail projects that further the [Legacy Roads and Trails criteria](#) on National Forest System trails throughout the [nine Forest Service Regions](#).

Project types awarded: This program will award funds to stewardship organizations and local government entities for completing motorized and nonmotorized trail projects on National Forest System lands. This funding is not for routine annual trail maintenance. Projects must improve water quality, restore aquatic organism passages, preserve access, decommission National Forest System roads, unauthorized trails or previously closed trails, and/or provide for more resilient and sustainable National Forest System trails, trail bridges and trail infrastructure. There is wide latitude on how projects are developed and designed. Projects can include NEPA planning, trail clearing, brushing, tread repair, trail relocation, bridge and structure repair or replacement, and installation of trail signs provided they contribute to the goals of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. These activities may reduce existing trail deferred maintenance¹. All trail work must meet National Quality Standards², design parameters³, and be consistent with the Forest Service Trail Management Objectives⁴.

Who can apply: Any current nonprofit organization in good standing with the IRS or non-federal agencies may apply for this funding. A local Forest Service agreement or contract is not needed as the National Cost Share Agreement with American Trails already authorizes work to occur on Forest Service lands. The only exception is that a local volunteer agreement is needed if grant recipients do not carry their own liability insurance.

Volunteers encouraged: Projects that have a volunteer component are encouraged but are not required. Projects that rely solely on paid staff, interns, or contractors are also acceptable.

Total funding available: \$1.5 million is available to fund eligible projects each year for five years, with the first applications accepted starting in 2022. Projects are anticipated to be a minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$100,000 per organization. We hope to fund at least one

¹ Deferred maintenance is annual maintenance that wasn't completed as scheduled

² Meeting Standard infers that a trail meets the National Quality Standards for Trails in planning, constructing, and managing National Forest System trails and related trail project. The National Quality Standards for Trails is found at FSH 2309.18, Chapter 10, Section 15, available at: https://www.fs.usda.gov/im/directives/fsh/2309.18/2309.18_10_Trail%20Planning_clear.doc.

³Design Parameters are technical guidelines for the survey, design, construction, maintenance, and assessment of National Forest System trails based on their designed use and trail class and consistent with their management intent. More information available at https://www.fs.usda.gov/recreation/programs/trail-management/documents/trailfundamentals/03-TrailDesignParaHandout_Sec508_01-24-17_150dpi.pdf

⁴ Trail Management Objectives (TMOs) document the intended purpose and management of a National Forest System trail.

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project in each USFS [Region](#), but there will not be a dollar amount guaranteed per USFS Region.

Important dates: Application window for project applications opens in early October. The application window closes in early December, and funds will be available in February. Funding will be provided for two years. Any final payments and final reports will be due in January of the second year.

Match requirement: The matching contribution must be **at least 20%** of the requested funding and may be accomplished through cash, contributed funding, and/or in-kind contribution.

Project management and partners: American Trails is the lead manager for this program. We are working collaboratively with trail groups that represent a variety of trail users to review and select projects that will provide an overall benefit to the National Forest System (NFS) lands and trails network. Collaborating groups on the review team include the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance, the American Hiking Society, the Back Country Horsemen of America, the International Mountain Bicycling Association, the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council, Tread Lightly, Trout Unlimited, UpOutside, and the American Motorcyclist Association.

For more information go to <https://www.americantrails.org/> or email: trailfund@americantrails.org.