

OUTDOOR RECREATION GRANT PROGRAM

2026 PROGRAM MANUAL



*South Valley Park Pavilion, Inver Grove Heights
2021 Outdoor Recreation Project*



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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](#).

DEADLINES

- **Draft review** is available to all potential applicants. If you would like feedback on your draft application, please submit it to DNR staff **by 11:59pm, February 27, 2026**. Drafts received after this deadline are not guaranteed a review.
- **Final applications are due by 11:59pm, March 31, 2026**. Submit your completed application package to Parkgrants.DNR@state.mn.us.

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 \(LWCF\)](#), provided by the National Park Service (NPS). Federal funding available for FY 2026 has not yet been allocated but should be at least \$3.5 million for the Outdoor Recreation Grant Program and the [Natural and Scenic Areas Grant Program](#).

State funding available for FY 2027 is a portion of \$1.1 million from “In Lieu Of” lottery proceeds available for three Park and Trail grant programs. 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 is subject to Legislative approval. Final amounts available will not be known until after the legislative session ends.

GRANT AWARDS AND MATCH REQUIREMENTS

Grants are reimbursed up to 50 percent of the total eligible costs. The maximum grant award is \$500,000 (for a total project of \$1,000,000). The minimum grant is \$50,000 (for a total project cost of \$100,000).

This program requires a one-to-one match. The match can consist of cash, the value of

materials, labor and equipment usage by the local sponsor, donations or any combination thereof. Applicants who 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. Match costs must be incurred within the project period stated in an awarded grant agreement. Costs incurred outside the project period will not be eligible as match.

Unskilled volunteer labor is valued, for this grant program, at \$32.00 per hour. Skilled volunteer labor is valued at its going rate. Skilled volunteer labor donations must be documented on an invoice or letter with company letterhead, detailing the work completed and the amount of the donation.

State or federal grants may be eligible for match under this program; however, this may impact the type of award you receive. If you plan to use state or federal funds as part of your match, please contact a Grant Coordinator prior to submission of your application.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Cities, counties, and townships.

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.

Please reach out early to DNR Grant Coordinators if there is any question about project or facility eligibility.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- Acquisition of land for future development of outdoor recreation facilities. Before the close of the grant, there must be public access, including parking and funding acknowledgement signs. Recreation facilities must be developed within three years of the date of acquisition.
- Development, redevelopment, or rehabilitation of outdoor recreation facilities on land owned by the applicant. Ownership must be fee title or permanent easement.
- A combination of land acquisition and development, redevelopment, or rehabilitation of outdoor recreation facilities.

ELIGIBLE RECREATION FACILITIES

Eligible recreation facilities are identified based on priorities outlined in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The list of eligible recreation facilities listed below is exhaustive. 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 – e.g. hiking, biking, mountain biking within a park boundary)
- Fixed-in-place Skate Parks
- Dog parks will be considered on a case-by-case basis (before applying, please reach out to a DNR Grants Coordinator.)

All existing and proposed facilities must have accessible routes leading to them. Please account for this in your project scope and budget.

ELIGIBLE RECREATION SUPPORT FACILITIES

If the grant application contains at least one facility from the eligible list above, the following support facilities are also eligible for funding:

- Change houses, restrooms, shower buildings and warming houses
- Fencing (not including backstops), lighting and signs
- Landscaping and natural area restoration
- Park roads and parking areas (may not exceed 40% of the total project cost)
- Fixed-in-place park furnishings such as benches, drinking fountains, grills, picnic tables, trash receptacles and fire pits
- Walkways or accessible routes that connect facilities to one another

Applicant parks must have accessible walkways leading to all facilities. If restrooms, drinking water, parking, or walkways are available, they must be ADA compliant. If these critical components are not accessible, upgrades must be included in the project scope and budget.

INELIGIBLE FACILITIES AND EXPENSES

Ineligible facilities or expenses are items that may not be funded by the grant or included as part of the local match requirement. The following list includes common types of ineligible facilities. Please note that this list is not exhaustive, and a determination of eligibility will be made by the DNR. **If there are any questions on whether a project, or part of a project, is eligible, please reach out to the Grant Coordinators to discuss and confirm.**

- Construction of any facility on land not owned by the applicant/grant recipient
- Acquisition of land already in public ownership
- Any expenditure that occurs outside the project period dates of the grant agreement

(grant award and match)

- Facilities not available for general public use
- Administrative expenses such as indirect costs, contingency allowances, archaeological surveys, and legal fees
- Design and engineering fees more than 10% of the total construction cost
- Construction of indoor recreational facilities (i.e. ice arenas, enclosed swimming pools, etc.), concession-only buildings, press boxes, golf courses, shooting ranges and motorized trails
- Decorative fountains, statues, and plaques
- Non-permanent skate park ramps
- Sewer to individual campsites
- Historic signage

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 Boundary Map 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 boundary area should also be indicated. The Boundary Map should include only the property that the project sponsor plans to manage for outdoor recreation uses in perpetuity.

DEED RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Before final reimbursement is made and the grant closed, the Grantee will be required to record a condition with the deed of the real property funded by the grant contract that notifies the public of the grant and the grant program requirements. This requirement is for all projects, acquisition and/or development. The specific deed restriction language varies depending on the source of grants and will be outlined in the grant contract. This deed restriction is filed at the county-level. Be sure to send a copy of the filing to DNR Grant Coordinators for record-keeping.

Final reimbursement will not be paid until proof of a filed deed restriction is provided to your DNR Grant Coordinator.

CONVERSION OF USE

Grantees shall not convert grant-funded property to non-outdoor recreational uses without written approval of the State. Contact your DNR Grant Coordinator immediately if land-use changes are planned or have been discovered.

The Grantee shall not, at any time, convert this property to non-outdoor recreation uses without the prior written approval of the State, or 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 request. Approval of a conversion request is dependent on completion of the [Conversion of Use](#) process.

II. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Use the 2026 Grant Application template, as requirements have changed. Using prior templates places applicants at risk of excluding required information.

Please keep the application intact. DO NOT delete questions that are irrelevant to your project or change numbering.

The application is available to download from the [Outdoor Recreation Grant Program website](#). We urge applicants to begin the application process early to allow time to complete application requirements such as obtaining community involvement and completion of appraisals (for land acquisition projects).

Only one park may be included in an application and only one application per park. Applicants are eligible to submit more than one application and receive more than one grant. Significant progress must be completed on active projects before an additional proposal can be submitted. Outstanding or unresolved conversions may also prevent an applicant from being eligible for this program.

DEADLINE: 11:59pm March 31, 2026

Staff are available to discuss your project. If you would like feedback on your draft application, submit it by **11:59pm, February 27, 2026**. Drafts submitted after this date are not guaranteed a pre-review.

Use the form provided for each item or reproduce it in the same format. Use the [Application Checklist](#) as your cover sheet. To submit your application, format the entire application, including all attachments, as one “pdf” and email it to Parkgrants.DNR@state.mn.us by **11:59 pm, March 31, 2026**. Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline will not be eligible for funding consideration. Email submissions with multiple PDF attachments applications are accepted on an as-needed basis. Email Parkgrants.DNR@state.mn.us to alert staff.

Paper submission of applications via postal mail are accepted on an as-needed basis. Send an email to Parkgrants.DNR@state.mn.us to notify Grant Coordinators your hard-copy submission will arrive by mail. Hard copy submissions must be post-marked by March 31, 2026, and sent to:

MN DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant Program
Attn: Parks and Trail Division Grant Coordinator
500 Lafayette Road, Box 39
Saint Paul, MN 55155

After submission, make sure you receive a confirmation email that your application arrived in a useable form by the due date. Applications submitted in an unusable format will not be

considered for funding.

COMPETITIVE REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

The program is competitive and requires a review and selection process to make funding determinations and awards. This will take place after the grant deadline, and funding announcements will be made in summer (by June 30). Program staff will review applications based on priorities set in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and project specific criteria identified below.

Please note that if your project advances to final selection review and is \$50,000 or more, financial documentation will need to be provided in accordance with Minn. Stat. §16B.981/Chapter 62 - MN Laws, Article 7, Section 11. This will include recent financial statements and audit as well as a statement of financial position.

A Natural Heritage Review will also be required if your project is selected.

MINNESOTA'S 2026-2030 STATE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (SCORP)

Applications are assessed to ensure that the proposed project is consistent with identified priorities established in Minnesota's [State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan](#) (SCORP). The SCORP provides guidance and direction to the state's outdoor recreation providers for their work in protecting, maintaining, and enhancing outdoor recreation opportunities for the state's residents and visitors. As of the date of this posting (December 2026), 2026-2030 SCORP is under review by the National Park Service. The SCORP website will be updated once it is approved. Although there have not been significant changes to the strategic priorities, there are changes you will need to review for this year's application, which has been updated to align with the 2026-2030 SCORP.

The SCORP identifies current and future trends affecting outdoor recreation in Minnesota including issues around public health; addressing the needs of people of all abilities and backgrounds; demographic changes in Minnesota's population; long-term changes in Minnesota's weather patterns; and accessibility. Taken together, these trends and the strategies within the Strategic Directions represent both challenges and opportunities for Minnesota's outdoor recreation providers for the next five years. The intention is that the 2026-2030 SCORP will aid these agencies and organizations as they plan for and invest in facilities and programs to meet the outdoor recreation interests of Minnesota's residents and visitors.

SELECTION PRIORITIES

SCORP Plan (60%) - Selection criteria are based on priority actions identified under the following three strategic directions in the SCORP.

How Does the Project Connect People to the Outdoors?

- How does the proposed project design and redevelop outdoor recreation facilities so they accommodate varying forms of transportation to your park (driving, walking, biking, canoe/kayaking, snowmobiling, and ATV riding)?
- How does the proposed project provide outdoor recreation facilities to encourage use by people with all abilities and diverse backgrounds (e.g., accessible seating, bathrooms, drinking water, shade opportunities, informational signs, safety features)?
- How does the proposed project provide high-quality experiences to visitors through thoughtful design, programming, and interpretation (e.g., does the project develop or expand facilities to provide high quality experiences and/or interpretive signs)?
- How are the proposed outdoor recreation facilities and experiences affordable for people with different economic means?

Does the Project Acquire Land and/or Create Opportunities?

- Is the proposed project located in an area lacking near-home recreation opportunities, including both densely settled urban areas and the surrounding rapidly growing areas, and regional population centers located throughout rural Minnesota?
- Does the proposed project preserve high-quality natural resources? (such as ecological subsections not represented in the state park system or other comparable land holdings; exceptional one-time opportunities of unique, high-quality natural resources that meet critical needs near population centers; important water resources including lakes, rivers, wetlands, shoreline and critical watersheds; corridors that connect other protected high-quality natural resources areas)?
- How does the proposed project design, develop, and/or redevelop facilities that meet the differing outdoor recreation needs for people of all abilities (e.g., a quality natural setting for a high-quality recreational experience, universal design, family friendly facilities, more separation of uses, tent and RV and privacy between campsites, etc.)?
- How does the proposed project create an accessible environment that is open and flexible to accommodate new and emerging nature-based recreation uses (e.g., facility design that supports numerous activities, maintains large open play areas, incorporates emerging nature-based activities, etc.)?
- How does the proposed project develop infrastructure and amenities that meet a broad spectrum of community needs and interests and consider future generations (e.g., develop group-based opportunities such as group campsites, group picnic areas, and gathering spaces used by all communities. Offers amenities that meet the lifestyles of our target markets such as wireless internet, playgrounds, family bathrooms, areas for specialized interest, etc.)?
- Is the proposed project designed and constructed with sustainable and resilient infrastructure (e.g., rely on up-to-date green infrastructure and best practice designs, is energy efficient, easy to maintain and uses recycled/recyclable materials, conserve the use of water at facilities and/or design facilities to effectively manage storm water onsite.)?

- Does the park design take into consideration emergency preparedness and resilience to changing environments (i.e. flooding events, floodplain changes, shade and water availability, plant adaptivity, and invasive species management)?

Does the Project Take Care of What We Have?

- Does the proposed project result in redevelopment, renovation or rehabilitation of existing infrastructure to ensure high-quality and safe experiences for the public (e.g., roof replacement, structural replacement, trail resurfacing, trail head amenities refurbished, campgrounds rehabbed and updated, bring facilities up to modern codes and standards, and/or make it easy for everyone to access and enjoy parks and trails)?
- Does the project sponsor maintain a capital asset management plan to ensure protection and full utilization of the proposed facilities?

Note: Capital Asset Management Plans cover all assets owned by the project sponsor, including parks. The plans include budgets and schedules for asset maintenance and replacement. An operating budget is NOT a Capital Asset Management Plan.

- Does the proposed project preserve existing high-quality natural areas and water resources?
- Does the proposed project restore and reconstruct natural communities that have been degraded or lost due to invasive species, 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.
- Population indicators: density and growth indicators

PROJECT SITE EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS

This program requires all applicants to prepare the Project Site Evaluation within the application. This evaluation will provide information necessary to determine the impacts of the project, if any, on the environmental and cultural resources of the project area. It is very important that the project site evaluation identify all possible impacts of the proposed project. This will help determine whether any changes in project scope or design may be required or

whether mitigation measures must be undertaken. Use the resources below to help you fill out the evaluation.

ENDANGERED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT RESOURCES

US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) [Information for Planning and Consultation \(IPaC\) Report](#) provides a list of species and other resources such as critical habitat (collectively referred to as trust resources) under the USFWS' jurisdiction that are known or expected to be in or near the project area. The list may also include trust resources that occur outside of the project area but have potential to be directly or indirectly affected by activities in the project area. However, determining the likelihood and extent of effects a project may have on trust resources typically requires gathering additional site-specific (e.g., vegetation/species surveys) and project-specific (e.g., magnitude and timing of proposed activities) information.

MINNESOTA LIST OF ENDANGERED AND THREATENED ANIMAL SPECIES

Additional information on animals and plants that are endangered, threatened or merit special consideration or management is available from the Minnesota Natural Heritage Program/Nongame Wildlife Program, Section of Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources (DNR). [Minnesota's List of Endangered and Threatened Animal Species](#), identifying all species of Minnesota's animals and plants listed under the provisions of the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, Public Law 93-205, and/or Minnesota Statute 84.0895, is available [online](#), or from the DNR by calling (651) 296-6157 or (888) 646-6367, or via the DNR website [Minnesota's Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species](#).

Additional information may be obtained by calling the Division of Ecological Resources information number at (651) 259-5100. The DNR is also developing biological surveys on a county-by-county basis on sensitive natural habitats and rare plant and animal species. Several publications are available which provide detailed information on these subjects. Additional information about county biological surveys is available at Minnesota Biological Survey (link to Minnesota Biological Survey | Minnesota DNR).

WETLANDS RESOURCES

Minnesota has adopted a "no-net-loss" wetlands policy. Each state agency must ensure that its activities, including state sponsored, financed, or assisted projects, do not contribute to the loss or diminishment of the many important values of wetlands. Unavoidable impacts must be minimized, and compensatory mitigation must be provided for all values that have been lost or diminished. The basic reference for wetland determination will be the [National Wetlands Inventory](#) produced by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and available at the DNR. Questions regarding implementation of the "no-net-loss" policy and identification of wetlands may be directed to the Ecological Resources Division, DNR at (651) 259-5100.

USFWS INFORMATION FOR PLANNING AND CONSULTATION (IPAC) REPORT

The program requires the review of your project by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) [Information for Planning and Consultation \(IPaC\) Report](#) to provide a list of species and other resources such as critical habitat (collectively referred to as trust resources) under the USFWS' jurisdiction that are known or expected to be in or near the project area, as well as a determination of the project's impact on the list of species and other resources (consistency letter). The list may also include trust resources that occur outside of the project area, but that could potentially be directly or indirectly affected by activities in the project area. However, determining the likelihood and extent of effects a project may have on trust resources typically requires gathering additional site-specific (e.g., vegetation/species surveys) and project-specific (e.g., magnitude and timing of proposed activities) information.

From the website, click on "Get Started" then enter a location, define the area, and confirm the area where the project activities will occur. Then click on "Continue," and a printable resource list will be generated. Once you have the provided list of species and resources, follow the [IPaC Determination Key guidance](#) to receive the consistency letter for each listed species and resource.

MINNESOTA CONSERVATION EXPLORER

A Conservation Planning report (free of charge) is required with your application to provide information on ecologically significant areas.

Go to: Minnesota Conservation Explorer (MCE)

- Click on EXPLORE Tab
 - Define Area of Interest (draw, select layers, or upload shapefile)
 - Ensure the defined area covers **both** the entire project area plus any potentially impacted areas.
- Click on "CONSERVATION PLANNING REPORT"
 - The report may take several minutes to generate
- Save and **attach to your grant application**

If your application is funded, the DNR will require you to request and submit a **Natural Heritage Review** letter. There is a fee to conduct this step. **Please do not conduct a Natural Heritage Review unless you have been selected for funding.** The cost of this review is not an eligible grant expense.

REVIEW FOR POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

[Minnesota Statute 138.665 Subd. 2](#) states, "Before carrying out any undertaking that will affect designated or listed properties, or funding or licensing an undertaking by other parties, the state department or agency shall consult with the State Historic Preservation Office pursuant to the society's established procedures to determine appropriate treatments and to seek ways to avoid and mitigate any adverse effects on designated or listed properties."

MINNESOTA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE (SHPO) DATA SEARCH

SHPO research request procedures have changed with the launch of the Minnesota Statewide Historic Inventory Portal (MnSHIP). Please visit [MnSHIP](#) and the Office of the State Archaeologist ([OSA Portal](#)) to perform research yourself. You can also visit <https://npgallery.nps.gov/nrhp> to obtain National Register of Historic Places nominations and information. Although this process allows for quick turnaround of results, please allow sufficient time in case follow-up with (Minnesota Indian Affairs Council) MIAC and/or OSA is needed.

If your application is funded, the DNR will use the information from your MnSHIP and OSA Portal results to initiate the federal Section 106 and/or state review process with the SHPO. If during the Section 106 or state review process, the SHPO determines you need to complete a Phase I or Phase II survey, you will need to complete it prior to receiving a grant agreement for development projects and prior to the final reimbursement for acquisition projects.

For projects that have archaeological and or historic properties identified with potential impacts, you will need to re-engage your public review process. You will need to identify consulting parties*. The consulting parties and public need to have an opportunity to review and comment on the park plans in relation to the historic and archaeological resources and potential impacts. The views of consulting parties and the public are essential to informed decision making. We encourage you to start consultation as early as possible.

* Consulting party: individuals or organizations with demonstrated interest in the project. This interest could be legal, economic or interest in the project's effects on historic properties. The NPS, in concurrence with the SHPO and the appropriate Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), will evaluate and determine who will become a consulting party to the federal Section 106 review process.

***NEW PROCESS IN 2026* COMMUNITY INFORMATION**

- Visit [FRB Census Geocoder](#)
- Select year 2025
- Type the park address into the search bar. Conduct search.
- Select print icon in the "Census Demographic Data" box.
- Use the Tract Information to provide information in Item 5, Part 6 of the application.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND USE

Prior to the submission of your application, it is our expectation that you have engaged the general public, especially homeowners and businesses near the proposed project. You may do this through public meetings, newspaper announcements, letters or flyers, newsletters, webpage announcements, emails, or face-to-face meetings. **The public must have an**

opportunity to review and comment on the proposed project for a minimum of thirty (30) days. Information detailing your public participation process and comments received are required in your application.

All facilities within the park must be designed and available for general public use and open during typical park hours. This includes restrooms, picnic shelters, campgrounds, playgrounds, and other structures. For parks that include marina or campground facilities, a minimum of 50% of the berths/campground spaces must be available for short-term rental and an equitable method of allocating long-term rentals shall be used. All personal property must be removed at the end of each use season.

AVAILABILITY TO USERS

Public property, facilities and programs shall be open to entry by all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, or sex. No person, based on disability, shall be excluded from participation in any program or activity receiving assistance from this program. Discrimination based on residence, including preferential reservation, membership or annual permit systems is prohibited except to the extent that reasonable differences in admission and other fees may be maintained. Fees charged to non-residents cannot exceed twice that charged to residents and must be comparable to fees charged at other state or local facilities.

All facilities within the park must be designed and available for general public use and open during typical park hours. This includes restrooms, picnic shelters, campgrounds, playgrounds and other structures. For parks that include marina or campground facilities, a minimum of 50% of the berths/campground spaces must be available for short-term rental and an equitable method of allocating long-term rentals shall be used. All personal property must be removed at the end of each use season.

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

All facilities improved with this grant project must meet current Americans with Disabilities (ADA) standards and the final guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas. 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.
- Restrooms, if provided, must be accessible.
- Drinking water, if provided, must be accessible.
- Access routes to all recreation facilities must be provided. For this program, an access route must be a minimum of five feet wide, slip resistant, firm and stable.

If the restrooms and/or drinking water are not accessible to persons with disabilities or access routes are not provided to all facilities, you will need to include these costs in your Cost Breakdown.

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.

In your application, you must describe how your proposed project meets the requirements under the ADA Standards, Final Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas and all critical components.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

It is the policy of the State to work to deliberately avoid actual or potential conflict of interests related to grant-making and grant administration at both the individual and organizational levels.

A conflict of interest occurs when a person has actual or apparent duty or loyalty to more than one organization and the competing duties or loyalties may result in actions which are adverse to one or both parties. A conflict of interest exists even if no unethical, improper, or illegal act results from it.

- Actual Conflict of Interest

An actual conflict of interest occurs when a person's decision or action would compromise a duty to a party without taking immediate appropriate action to eliminate the conflict.

- Potential Conflict of Interest

A potential conflict of interest may exist if a person has a relationship, affiliation, or other interest that could create an inappropriate influence if the person is called on to make a decision or recommendation that would affect one or more of those relationships, affiliations, or interests.

Organizational Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest can also occur with an organization that is a grant applicant in a

competitive grant process or grantee of a state agency.

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee's objectivity in carrying out the grant is impaired or compromised due to competing duties or loyalties
- A grantee, potential grantee or grant applicant has an unfair competitive advantage through being furnished unauthorized proprietary information or source selection information that is not available to all competitors.

The grantee must maintain an adequate Conflict of Interest Policy and, throughout the term of the contract, monitor and report any actual or potential conflicts of interest to the State. Grantees are expected to follow their own documented conflict of interest policy and procedures.

APPRAISAL REQUIREMENTS (ACQUISITIONS ONLY)

For applications that will acquire land, the application must include an appraisal report by a general real property appraiser licensed by the State of MN that meets the [Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisition \(UASFLA\)](#). This is the federal ("yellow book") standards. The appraisal must include the DNR and the National Park Service (NPS) as intended users. The landowner or designated representative must be given an opportunity to accompany the appraiser during the inspection of the property. Appraisals must have an effective date within six months of the application deadline.

If your application is selected for funding, you may be required to submit a technical review of the appraisal report conducted by an appraiser who is not associated with the original appraiser and who is qualified to perform technical reviews under the UASFLA and 49 CFR Part 24.104. See [UASFLA](#) Section C-1 for further guidance on technical reviews.

NATIVE RESTORATION REQUIREMENTS

All restoration activities will require a restoration and management plan to be submitted prior to contract approval and must follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources "[Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines](#)" in order to ensure ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement.

When restoration activities are completed using grant funds, the Grantee must conduct evaluations on parcels where activities were implemented both 1) initially after activity completion and 2) three years later as a follow-up. Evaluations should analyze improvements to the parcel and whether goals have been met, identify any problems with the implementation, and identify any findings that can be used to improve implementation of future restoration efforts at the site or elsewhere. Evaluation reports must be submitted to the DNR.

The Grantee should consider contracting with the [Conservation Corps](#) for restoration activities.

WATER PERMITS

Development or alteration of shoreline adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes, and other public water bodies may require a written permit issued by DNR. In addition, projects involving work within waters and wetlands may require a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Grantees will be required to determine whether a water permit is required by visiting the USACE Regulatory Request System (RRS) (found at [Regulatory Request System \(RRS\)](#)) and the MNDNR Permitting and Reporting System (MPARS) (found at [DNR Water Permits | Minnesota DNR](#)).

CAMPGROUND PLAN APPROVAL

All new and existing campgrounds and marinas must adhere to the [Local Grants Program Campground/Marina Rental Policy](#) and the state laws and rules set by the Minnesota Department of Health, available at [Summary of General Requirements for Recreational Camping Areas](#). Grantees must submit plans and receive approval for the development of a recreational camping area to the MN Department of Health or your local health authority before construction begins. Upon completion of the campground, a license application, license fee and inspection by the area health inspector is required. A copy of the license must be submitted with your final payment request.

AWARD OF FUNDS

All applicants will receive official written notification regarding their request for funding in the summer (by June 30). 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, NHIS review, permits and other details.

The earliest anticipated project/grant agreement start date will be fall, 2026. However, this can be later depending on requirements for environmental resources, historical and archaeological resources, and federal approval, if applicable. All work must be completed by June 30, 2028. 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 2027/2028 construction seasons. Any project costs incurred prior to the start date of the grant agreement will not be eligible for reimbursement or match considerations.

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 Applicant, 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. ADMINISTERING THE GRANT

Now that you've been awarded the grant, you have to administer it. The first thing to do is read the grant agreement contract to make sure you understand all the requirements (e.g., grant end date). If you have questions or concerns, contact program staff.

REQUESTING REIMBURSEMENTS

A Reimbursement Manual and appropriate forms will be provided to each grantee.

Attachment A – Budget of the grant agreement contract outlines the different items of the project. All budget items must be completed as proposed by the grant end date. To be reimbursed for the full amount of the grant, you must spend the total cost of the project by the grant end date. This includes both grant award and match.

Any changes to the project description or significant changes to the cost breakdown must be submitted to and approved by the state's authorized representative identified in the grant agreement. Failure to notify your State grant representative prior to initiating a change in the project could jeopardize receipt of the funds approved for the project.

Payment of grant funds is by reimbursement. You must initially pay project expenses and then claim reimbursement under the terms of the grant agreement. You may request no more than four reimbursements, if you anticipate needing more than four, please contact your DNR Grant Coordinator.

ELIGIBLE PROJECT COSTS

To be eligible for reimbursement and match, costs must be:

- Necessary for the completion of the project
- Incurred during the project period stated in the grant agreement

- Listed in the Cost Breakdown section of the Attachment A - Budget. There is flexibility between approved budget line items.

To submit reimbursements, email the signed and dated Reimbursement Request Form and the Project Cost Summary Sheet along with copies invoices and evidence of payment to your Grants Manager. For project-related expenses incurred through direct use of your staff, equipment, or materials, use the “Force Account” forms: Force Account Labor, Force Account Equipment, Force Account Materials. For donations, use the Volunteer Labor Record, Volunteer Labor Summary, and Donated Equipment forms.

Please consult the Reimbursement Manual for more in-depth information or contact your Grant Coordinator.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

It is the policy of the State to monitor progress on state grants by requiring Grantees to submit written progress reports, at least annually until all grant funds have been expended and all of the terms in the grant agreement have been met. Toward the end of the calendar year, a progress report will be requested by your Grant Coordinator. Grant reimbursements shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless program staff have given the Grantee a written extension.

MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

It is the policy of the State to conduct, at least, one monitoring visit per grant period on all state grants of over \$50,000 and to conduct, at least annual monitoring visits on grants of over \$250,000.

FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGMENT SIGN

All projects acquired or developed with assistance from this program must display a state approved funding acknowledgment sign at the main entrance to the park. Grant Coordinators will provide the sign information specific to your project.

FINAL ONSITE INSPECTION

When you have completed your project as proposed and outlined in Attachment A - Budget, inform your Grants Coordinator. They will schedule an onsite final inspection with your staff. The inspection will focus on ensuring the project was completed in accordance with the grant agreement contract, facilities are accessible, and funding acknowledgment signage is installed. Any issues discovered during the final onsite inspection must be corrected prior to final

reimbursement.

CLOSEOUT PROCEDURES

Prior to final reimbursement of your grant and official closeout notification of your project, the deed restriction must be filed at the county level and a copy sent to the Grants Manager. After outstanding issues have been addressed* and the Grants Coordinator has a copy of the filed deed restriction, they will send you a Closeout Letter, officially closing the grant.

* Final reimbursement not exceeding 10% of the total grant award may be withheld until final completion of services, including the installation of funding acknowledgement signs, any outstanding activities discovered during final inspection, or documented proof of a deed restriction.

All expenditures are subject to verification by an independent state audit and, therefore, you must retain all project records for a period of at least six years after you receive the official closeout notification letter.

IV. POST-COMPLETION GRANT RESPONSIBILITIES

Congratulations! You've successfully completed your grant.

Regardless of the extent of assistance, these post-completion responsibilities apply to the parkland in the Boundary Map (Attachment B of your grant agreement). Your post-completion grant responsibilities include maintaining a funding acknowledgment sign at the entrance of the park, maintaining and operating the facility so it is safe and inviting to the public, and retaining the land funded with this grant solely for outdoor recreation into perpetuity. *That's right...into perpetuity!* Although funded facilities may become obsolete over time, the parkland must be maintained and used for outdoor recreation into perpetuity. Make sure you keep the grant agreement contract in a place staff can find.

As part of post-completion responsibilities, state staff will periodically inspect the parkland to ensure that the site is being properly operated and maintained and that no conversion of use has occurred. Any changes to assisted sites must be approved in advance.