

Non-Motorized Trails Stewardship Program



2023 PILOT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Need for Increased Non-Motorized Trail Maintenance

Over the last four years, a surge in visitation to Colorado's public lands combined with multiple severe weather events and wildfires have caused a significant growth in requests for State Trail Program funds. Specifically, the largest increase has been a demand for additional non-motorized trail maintenance funds as land managers and stewardship groups look to hire paid crews to provide much needed maintenance. Based on the conversations with land managers and partners, the need for additional funding to hire crews to perform non-motorized maintenance will continue to grow in the coming years.

To address this issue, the State Trails Program is launching a Non-Motorized Trails Stewardship pilot program. This pilot is based on the 'Good Management' concept which the OHV Program has operated successfully for trail maintenance and resource protection. Non-Motorized trails land managers and partners would adapt the same program concept.

The State Trails Program will utilize \$500,000 in funding from Great Outdoors Colorado to start this pilot. Based upon feedback from partners, Non-Motorized Trail Stewardship crews will build upon existing trail maintenance crews who work on public lands and perform similar duties as the OHV Good Management crews. These increased 'boots on the ground' trail crews will help support the Governor's Wildly Important Goals to balance conservation and recreation by increasing the number of trail crew hours funded by the State Trails Program.

Non-Motorized Stewardship Program:

A stewardship crew is made up of two to eight trail workers employed to complete work on an existing trail system. The pilot program is for one year of funding for applicants to hire paid staff to perform the continuous and routine work necessary to keep the trail surface and surrounding area in compliance with its design and construction standards. The stewardship crews are hired directly by the organization managing and/or working in the area to keep trails in a sustainable and safe condition to ensure visitor safety, protect natural and cultural resources, and preserve public investment in the trail and/or area.

This work can consist of:

- Clearing out deadfall after a severe weather event
- Rerouting unsustainable trail sections
- Brushing, clearing, and vegetation management
- Decommissioning and revegetating old and illegal trails
- Repair and/or installation of structures such as turnpikes, check steps, and drains
- Tread reestablishment, armoring, outsloping, and drain clearing
- Signage replacement and/or installation
- Deadfall and hazard tree mitigation
- Assessment, monitoring, and reporting
- User education and outreach
- Planning and mobilization
- Fencing and/or trail area delineation

Applicant Criteria:

Eligible applicants may include land managers and non-profit organizations that have a long-term relationship with a land management agency. If not a land manager, applicants need to provide a letter from any relevant land manager(s) where work would occur that outlines the existing partnership (including the number of years of the relationship) and shows support of the proposed crew opportunity.

Successful applicants will:

- Have success with retaining a paid professional staff and completing quality work.
- Have shovel-ready trail projects to work on when funding is received.
- Provide a competitive wage in the State and their community or an ability to increase based on additional funds.
- Prioritize work based on user safety and the detriment to surrounding resources and wildlife.
- Prioritize public and partner organization engagement via volunteer work and/or support letters.

Expectations for Non-Motorized Stewardship crews:

- Prior crew management
- Meeting work hours and objectives
- Detailed quarterly reports sent in prior to the deadline
- Invoices submitted in a timely manner over the course of the grant and all funding expended by the grant end date
- Long-term Organization Tracking:
 - Monitoring points of the trail to track maintenance and sustainability over time
 - Before and after photos (can be a part of monitoring points)
- Annual inspections by CPW staff

Eligible items for funding:

- Working time - boots on the ground project work
- Mobilization and prep-time
- Tool purchases and maintenance
- Equipment or vehicle rental
- Fleet vehicle(s) for trail crew members - fixed and variable expenses, fuel and fluids
- Normal maintenance and repairs on trail machines and equipment
- Per diem (backcountry projects only)

Maximum Grant Request	Crew Size	Season Length
\$75,000	2-4 paid staff	May 2024 - December 2024
\$150,000	5-8 paid staff	May 2024 - December 2024

To be eligible, applicants need to follow the pre-application submission award notification process by Tuesday, September 5, 2023. Applicants need to fill out the following form and a Non-Motorized Maintenance grant application and submit them to trails@state.co.us by Tuesday, October 3, 2023. Applicants may not apply for a separate maintenance grant if applying for the Trails Stewardship pilot for the same project.

If interested in this pilot, we recommend you reach out to trails@state.co.us to discuss this funding opportunity in more detail.