Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC)
Administrative Policy/Grant Guidelines

Subject: Trails Design Only Grant Administrative Instructions and Process

Effective Date: 3/15/2016, 12/13/18

Background:

The following is an overview of the Bureau’s grant process for implementing trail design only projects. The term “Grantee” refers to an applicant that has been awarded a grant. The Local Project Coordinator designated on the grant application will be the Bureau’s primary contact and the person to whom Bureau correspondence will be sent. We rely on the Local Project Coordinator to keep the appropriate local parties informed and involved in the process on behalf of the Grantee. If the Local Project Coordinator changes, the Bureau must be notified immediately in writing with the name and contact information for the new Local Project Coordinator.

The Bureau assigns a staff member to serve as the Project Manager to work with the Local Project Coordinator to successfully complete the grant project. It is the Bureau Project Manager’s responsibility to provide information and assistance to the Grantee to ensure that the project is completed, that grant program requirements are met, and that the project can be successfully closed out. All correspondence and communications regarding the project should be in an electronic format and directed to the Bureau Project Manager.

At several points during the grant management process the Bureau Project Manager must review and approve documents before the Grantee may proceed to the next stage. The standard process for implementing a trail design only project is outlined below.

1. Bureau Award Notification and Contracting

   • The Bureau sends a “notice-of-selection” letter to the Chief Elected Official listed in the grant application.

   • Bureau Project Manager conducts a pre-contracting call with the Grantee to confirm the designated Local Project Coordinator, cash and/or non-cash match, project scope, grant agreement dates, ownership and/or control, and next steps in the grant process.

   • If ownership/control is not feasible, the grantee has up to six months after the grant award to provide ownership or control documentation. The grant agreement will not be processed until the title/easement/lease is submitted and approved by your Bureau Project Manager.
• A fully executed copy of the Grant Agreement/Contract is sent electronically, via email, to the Local Project Coordinator. This signifies the beginning of the project management process.

2. **Initial Project Start-up Letter and Initial Conference Call**

• The Bureau Project Manager sends a start-up letter electronically, via email, to the Local Project Coordinator. This letter provides guidance information and is accompanied with DCNR required forms and attachments.

• Upon receipt and review of the start-up letter, the Grantee is to contact the Bureau Project Manager to schedule an initial conference call. During this conference call, the grant process, project issues and related comments from the start-up letter and attachments will be discussed. The Grantee should review these documents with their solicitor/attorney prior to the initial conference call with the Bureau Project Manager.

• After the grant agreement is fully executed, Grantees are eligible to receive an initial partial payment. This is outlined and discussed in the initial project start-up letter and during the conference call. Grantees are strongly encouraged to complete the *Partial Payment Request* form requesting 50% of the total grant amount and return to the bureau’s Fiscal Unit via the email address on the form within two weeks of receiving the fully executed grant agreement.

• The Grantee submits a completed Bureau *Trail Project Progress Report* form to the Bureau Project Manager in January and July throughout the Grant Agreement period.

3. **Initial Submission Review and Approval**

• The Grantee submits the following documents electronically to the Bureau Project Manager for review and approval:
  - Draft RFP
  - Updated Timeline
  - Updated Budget
  - Certification of Title form(s)
  - Local and County Planning agency comments
  - Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) Receipt

• The Bureau Project Manager provides written approval of required documentation and authorizes Grantee to solicit for proposals.

4. **Notice to Proceed with Design Stage**

• The Bureau Project Manager receives, reviews, and approves the selected consultant Professional Services Agreement.

• The Bureau Project Manager provides written approval to proceed with the design process and instructions for submission of preliminary design.
• The Grantee may request additional project payments after this step (up to 90% of the total grant amount).

5. **Preliminary Design Review and Approval Stage**

• The Grantee submits preliminary design to the Bureau Project Manager for review.

• The Bureau Project Manager provides written comments and approval to proceed with final design.

6. **Final Design Approval and Project Close Out Stage**

• The Grantee submits electronic and 11” x 17” paper copies of the final design documents that are signed, sealed, and dated by a licensed engineer, architect, or landscape architect.

• After all consultant invoices have been paid in full, the Grantee submits a completed Final Payment Request form and requested close out documents within 60 days of project completion.

• The Bureau Project Manager reviews the Final Payment Request form and requested close out documents.

• Upon approval of the close out submission, the Bureau Project Manager provides written approval of the final payment to the Bureau Fiscal Unit and the Grantee. Once the final payment is issued, the project is closed.

All original records related to the project shall be maintained for a period of three (3) years from the date of the final payment and made available for a possible program audit. Any costs presented in the summary information, not verifiable by an audit, may be disallowed as an eligible project cost.

All trail design only forms, guidance documents, and policies may be obtained at the following links:


This policy remains in effect until revised or rescinded.