

National Recreational Trails Federal Program

FY2004 Request: \$695,000
Reference No: 6854

AP/AL: Appropriation
Category: Transportation
Location: Statewide
House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)
Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2003 - 06/30/2006

Project Type: Construction
Contact: Nico Bus
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Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

All across Alaska, Alaskans rely on trails for recreation, subsistence, and travel between communities. These trails need constant maintenance to ensure they are safe for passage and to ensure that they remain open and available for use. Funds are distributed by 80-20 matching grants for recreational trail and trailhead development and maintenance, and for education programs relating to trail safety and environmental protection. Grants are awarded to organizations, businesses, agencies, and local governments.

Funding:	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	Total
Fed Rcpts	\$695,000	\$695,000	\$695,000	\$695,000	\$695,000	\$695,000	\$4,170,000
Total:	\$695,000	\$695,000	\$695,000	\$695,000	\$695,000	\$695,000	\$4,170,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

SSSLA01/CH1 - \$695,000
 SLA01/CH61 - \$710,000
 SLA00/CH135 - \$710,000
 SLA99/CH2 - \$650,000

Project Description/Justification:

As more and more residents and visitors turn to Alaska's vast trail system for recreation, subsistence, and basic transportation between communities, the need for a more extensive and well-maintained trail system continues to grow. The growing population is also putting development pressure on the existing trail system and many trails are being lost as property is subdivided or sold to private owners. We can assist in slowing the loss of our existing trail system through this granting program and will sustain and improve that system as well.

State funds are saved by the availability of these federal grant funds for development and maintenance of Alaska's public recreational trails. Public safety is improved by having well maintained trails. Trespass is reduced by securing trail easements with grant funds. Search and rescue costs are reduced by having well marked and maintained trails that are easy to follow. Because this is a matching grant program, grantees provide cash, labor and equipment to match at least 20 percent of grant funds, effectively stretching state funds. Public recreational trails contribute to Alaska's economy by providing construction and maintenance jobs, attracting tourists and visitors, and by stimulating the business of outfitters, guides and tour companies.

Why is this Project Needed Now:

Alaska's trails are gradually being lost due to community expansion and development pressure. The grant program provides an opportunity to establish new trails and reserve existing recreational access throughout the state.

Specific Spending Detail:

One hundred percent of the grant amount will be spent as follows: 7% for program administration; 5% for education; and of the remainder, 30% is available for non-motorized trail projects, 30% for motorized trail projects, and 40 percent for projects with both motorized and non-motorized trail uses.

Prior Funding History and Status:

The first recreational trails grant funds, originally called Symms Grants, were available in 1993 through the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. Alaska received \$110,000. The program has subsequently been funded in slowly increasing amounts each year from 1996 to the present (see below). Applications for 2003 grants are currently being accepted and evaluated. Grants will be awarded in February 2003 to successful applicants.

Previous Funding Levels:

FFY96 \$167,700

FFY97 \$169,300

FFY98 \$365,075

FFY99 \$486,800

FFY00 \$616,600

FFY01 \$610,374

FFY02 \$654,750

Project Support:

This program receives between 60 and 70 applications each year from communities and local trail organizations across Alaska. Approximately 25 grants are given each year. Every community and organization receiving a Recreational Trails Grant benefits and supports this program. In addition, this program is supported by the Governor's Trails and Recreational Access for Alaska (TRAAK) Program, local state park advisory boards, and local communities.

Project Opposition: none**State Match Required:**

No state match is required. Grantees are required to provide a minimum of 20% match. The actual match often reaches 50%.