
BUDGET UNIT BRIEF – FY 2020

Fiscal Services Division

July 1, 2020



Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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State Recreational Trails Program — RIIF

Purpose and History

The State Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is managed by the Department of Transportation (DOT). During the 1987 Legislative Session, the General Assembly created the State Recreational Trails Program, now codified in Iowa Code chapter 465B. The intent was for the State to acquire and develop 2,000 miles of new recreational trails and to complete existing trails before the year 2000. As of 2012, the DOT estimates the trail system to comprise approximately 1,800 miles. This includes developed multiuse recreational trails and off-road paths throughout the State, but does not include the trails owned by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in State parks.

There are other funding sources for trails in addition to the State Recreational Trails Program. For example, the DOT administers three main trail programs that provide funding for trail development, including the State Recreational Trails Program, the federal Recreational Trails Program, and the federal Transportation Alternatives Program. The DNR also administers programs and funds grants through the Resource Enhancement and Protection Fund and the Snowmobile and All-Terrain Vehicles Grant Program. If funding were enacted, trails receive 10.0% of the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund. Trail funding is also available through grant programs such as the Community Attraction and Tourism Program under the Iowa Economic Development Authority.

State Recreational Trails Program Grants

Grants funded through the State Recreational Trails Program require a minimum local match of 25.0%. Trails that receive funding must be maintained for public use for a minimum of 20 years. State and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. Applications for funding are submitted to the DOT Office of Systems Planning. The DOT provides recommendations for projects to the Transportation Commission for approval.

Funding requests generally exceed the available resources. For example, for the FY 2015 July funding cycle, the DOT received 43 applications requesting a total amount of \$23.4 million. At times, the General Assembly has directed a portion of the funding to specified projects. These projects bypass the normal application and approval process by the Transportation Commission.

State Funding

The Recreational Trails has received a total of \$15.9 million from the RIIF from FY 2014 to FY 2018.

Related Statutes and Administrative Rules

Iowa Code chapter [465B](#)

Iowa Administrative Code [761—165](#)

Budget Unit Number

645038S0017

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More Information

Department of Transportation – State Recreational Trails Programs:

www.iowadot.gov/systems_planning/fedstate_rectrails.htm

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