



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 DEPARTMENT of NATURAL and CULTURAL RESOURCES
 DIVISION of PARKS and RECREATION
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April 1, 2024

The Honorable Ken Weyler, Chairman
 Fiscal Committee of the General Court and

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
 and the Honorable Council
 State House
 Concord, New Hampshire 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

Pursuant to RSA 14:30-a, VI, the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation, Bureau of Trails requests authorization to accept and expend American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the purpose of improving the statewide trail system damage caused by historic rain and flooding events in 2023 across New Hampshire, effective upon Fiscal Committee and Governor and Executive Council approvals through June 30, 2025. This is an allowable use of ARPA SFRF funds under Section 602 (c)(1)(C) for the provision of government services. 100% Federal Funds.

Funds are to be budgeted in the following account: 03-35-35-351510-NEWXXXX – ARPA Trails Maintenance Grant

Class-Account- RG	Class Description	FY24 Current Adjusted Authorized	Requested Action	Revised FY24 Adjusted Authorized
000-400338-16	Federal Funds	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Total Revenue		\$0	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
040-500800	Indirect Costs	\$0	\$25,000	\$25,000
041-500801	Audit Fund Set Aside	\$0	\$1,000	\$1,000
072-500575	Grants Federal	\$0	\$974,000	\$974,000
Total Expenses		\$0	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000

EXPLANATION

The NH Division of Parks & Recreation, Bureau of Trails is responsible for the stewardship of and operation of 1,000 miles of Off Highway Recreational Vehicle (OHRV) trails, over 7,400 miles of snowmobile trails, 300 miles of multi-use rail trails, and 260 miles of roads in the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters property in Pittsburg.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, snowmobile sales and registrations were up approximately 27% in New Hampshire and in our neighboring states. Snowmobiling generates over \$500 million in revenue each year to the New Hampshire economy. Snowmobilers from other states who trailer their machines or rent them

^[1] All direct program costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602GS3503A and all administrative and indirect costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602GS3503Z. Accounting classifications may be subject to technical changes at the discretion of the Department of Administrative Services' Division of Accounting Services.

have a choice when it comes to where they want to ride which includes other northern New England states. Motorized registrations of Off Highway Recreational Vehicles and snowmobiles alone are at an all-time high in recent years, averaging approximately 45,000 and 48,000 registrations per year, respectively. An overall spike in outdoor recreation and increased use of the statewide trail system during the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced this need for safe, well maintained, and open trail networks. The trail users are part of the broader outdoor recreation economy, which accounts for 3.2% of New Hampshire's GDP.

The summer of 2023 was the wettest on record in New Hampshire, with 21 inches of rainfall in June, July, and August. New Hampshire issued 38 flash flood warnings during the month of July alone. For context, the National Weather Service had never issued more than 36 flash flood warnings in an entire calendar year prior to this historic summer. The severe July storms caused significant damage and flooding across the state which later received a federal disaster declaration by FEMA on September 14, 2023 (DR-4740-NH). July storm damage occurred in many counties, but the majority occurred within the Pittsburg and Swanzey communities, including state owned lands like the Ashuelot Recreational Rail Trail. Damage that occurred during the summer was also compounded during the significant December 18th event which caused extensive trail damage in the Berlin, Gorham and Randolph areas, particularly within Jericho Mountain State Park.

This appropriation would be distributed 100 percent as grants to assist local snowmobile and OHRV clubs in a dedicated fund for storm-related trail repair work. The funds would be distributed through the Grant-In-Aid (GIA) Program, which is normally funded through OHRV and snowmobile registration fees and unrefunded gas taxes. This user-funded program provides grants and loans to nonprofit OHRV and snowmobile clubs to maintain our trail system, which is a four-season recreational resource for tourists and Granite Staters alike. These federal funds will be made available to clubs at a 100 percent reimbursement rate for repair of storm damaged trails, with no match requirement as typically required in the GIA rules. There is currently a spring GIA round underway with a May 3rd deadline for applications from clubs. These funds would be awarded through this spring round, ensuring they are put to use quickly, both to address urgent trail repair as well as meet deadlines associated with ARPA funds.

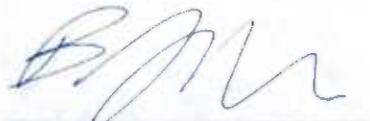
Funds are to be budgeted as follows:

Class 040 – Indirect Costs – all agencies receiving outside funding from any source are required by RSA 21-I:75 to recover a proportional share of the outside funding source to alleviate agency indirect costs.

Class 041 – Audit Fund Set-Aside – to comply with RSA 124:16 that requires all agencies which receive federal funds to set aside a percentage (0.1%) of the federal revenue amount received to pay for financial and compliance audits.

Class 072 – Grants Federal – Grants-In-Aid Program awards to OHRV and snowmobile clubs.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian J. Wilson
Director

Concurred,



Sarah L. Stewart
Commissioner

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