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Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund



[Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board Recommends 65 Projects Totaling Over \\$34 Million](#)

[The Access to Recreation Initiative funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation](#)

[Forms and Publications](#)

[All MNRTF Projects Awarded Since 1976](#)

A list of development and acquisition projects awarded since the MNRTF's inception

Program Objective(s):

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) has been in place since 1976. It provides financial assistance to local governments and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to purchase land or rights in land for public recreation or protection of land because of its environmental importance or its scenic beauty. It also assists in the appropriate development of land for public outdoor recreation.

The MNRTF is supported by annual revenues from the development of State-owned mineral resources, largely oil and gas. It is governed by [Article 9, Section 35 of the State Constitution](#) and [Part 19 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 451 PA 1994](#), as amended. The program is administered by the [MNRTF Board of Trustees](#) and the Grants Management office of the DNR. The MNRTF Board of Trustees meets six times a year and all meetings are open to the public.

MNRTF projects provide for natural resource protection and outdoor recreation. By law, no more than 25 percent of the Trust Fund revenues available for appropriation each year can be used for development, therefore the majority of funding is allocated for acquisition projects. Applications are accepted annually as follows:

- April 1 - Land acquisition and recreation development project application deadline. Development project applications must be submitted by April 1.
- August 1 - Secondary application deadline for land acquisition projects only.

Application materials are available each January for the current year application cycle. Final grant recommendations are made by the MNRTF Board of Trustees in late fall and submitted to the Legislature for approval and appropriation of funds. Local grant and DNR applications are evaluated and scored by the staff in Grants Management, using criteria and a point scale established annually by the MNRTF Board. While only state and local governments may apply to the MNRTF to acquire property, any individual, group, or organization may nominate land for consideration. A nomination is a suggestion that a land parcel be considered for DNR ownership.

As of January 2006, over \$600 million in MNRTF appropriations have been made for more than 1,200 state and local recreation projects. MNRTF-assisted project sites must be dedicated to public outdoor recreation in perpetuity. The MNRTF plaque on a park entrance sign or facility indicates that the site received MNRTF assistance.

Criteria:

Applications are evaluated on criteria established by the MNRTF Board of Trustees. Local units of government must provide at least 25% of the project's costs as local match. Recommendations are made by the MNRTF Board of Trustees to the Governor, which are forwarded to the Michigan Legislature for final approval and appropriation.

There are thirteen evaluation criteria:

1. Need for project
2. Applicant history
3. Site quality
4. Project quality
5. Protection and use of significant natural resources
6. Use of inland water resources
7. Hunting, fishing and other wildlife-related opportunities
8. Access opportunities
9. Population served by the project
10. Financial need of the applicant
11. Percentage of cash match
12. Oil and gas impacted areas
13. Special initiatives of the MNRTF Board (see below)

The Special Initiatives of the Board for 2008 are:

1. Acquisition or development of trailways that provide linkages to recreation opportunities.

2. Acquisition of lands open to hunting or development of hunting-related facilities, such as shooting ranges.
3. Acquisition of lands that provide for deer habitat with thermal cover or acquisition of land that provides a buffer area.
4. Acquisition of land or development of facilities in urban areas.
5. Development projects that provide universally accessible outdoor recreation opportunities.

Detailed descriptions of each criterion are included in the "Recreation Grant Application Guidelines" booklet, which is available for download from the forms and publications link above.

Applicant Eligibility:

The state and counties, cities, townships, villages, school districts, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, or any authority composed of counties, cities, townships, villages or school districts, or any combination thereof, which authority is legally constituted to provide public recreation. Local units of government must have a DNR-approved 5-year recreation plan on file with the Department prior to application.

Application Process:

1. Submittal of a community recreation plan
2. Submittal of grant application.
3. Evaluation by DNR staff.
4. Recommendation of funding by the Michigan Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board.
5. Appropriation of project funds by the Legislature.

Deadline(s):

Local community recreation plans must be approved by the DNR prior to the application due date. Applications must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service no later than April 1, 2008. A secondary application deadline of August 1 is for acquisition applications **only**.

Timeline(s):

Grant awards are dependent on the appropriations process, but project agreements are normally distributed within 12 to 18 months after the application submission.

Dollar Amount(s) Available:

Development project minimum/maximum grant amount: \$15,000 to \$500,000. No minimum/maximum limits on land acquisition grants.

Source(s) of Funds:

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund.

Authority:

Part 19 of P.A. 451 of 1994, as amended.

Contact(s):

Grants Management, Deborah Apostol (517-335-3046), apostold@michigan.gov.

Fiscal Year 2008 Funding Available:

Approximately \$25 - 30 million is available for grants each year. Available funds are dependent on revenue, investment earnings and interest accruing to the Trust Fund in a particular Fiscal Year.

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