



Iowa Dept of Natural Resources Iowa Water Trails

Iowa Water Trails Grant Program

Grant Application

INTRODUCTION

The Iowa Legislature annually appropriates funds under Iowa Code section 452A.79. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (Iowa DNR) Conservation and Recreation Bureau under Chapter 30 of 571 Iowa Administrative Code will target a portion of these funds toward the water trails mini-granting program. The program targets an annual total of \$50,000 to implement a water trail program. These funds are available to local governments (city, county, school) and service organizations to create water trails on rivers, lakes, sloughs and other waterways in Iowa.

What is a water trail?

Water trails enhance recreational experiences for all non-motorized water recreation enthusiasts, including but certainly not limited to canoeists and kayakers. A water trail is defined as an on-water point-to-point travel system with multiple access points, and a recommended route connecting the points. On a river or stream, this may allow for downstream travel. On a lake, a water trail might hug a shoreline and include open-water crossings at strategic points. Lake/marsh trail systems connected by portages are another possibility, as are whitewater trails that link rapids into a more adventurous journey. Improving specific attractions, such as whitewater play spots, are eligible for grants under this program.

Generally, water trails should include the following features:

- Multiple launches spaced at reasonable distances, depending on the body of water and resource management needs.
- Way-finding signage, including signs along nearby highways directing users to access points, locator signs on bridge sides visible from the waterway, warning signs for hazards, signs indicating distance to next access, and water trail signs at each access.
- Informational kiosks with maps that clarify and enrich the water experience for recreational users.
- Designated campsites or dispersed camping easily accessible from the waterway, either in remote locations or at parks.
- Depending on the character of the waterway, restroom facilities spaced reasonable distances apart may be an amenity, especially for urban areas or rivers expected to receive high traffic.

- Safety considerations, such as portages around hazards or obstacles, with removal or modification of dangerous unnatural features (i.e., low-head dams). In the case of rapids, applicants are encouraged to consider how to construct portages in such a way that allows some paddlers a way around the rapids, while granting access for whitewater “play.”

Important information

- Your local entity assumes maintenance of water trail facilities.
- Projects that leverage other funds score favorably.
- For funds to be disbursed, your local entity must enter into a project agreement with the Iowa DNR, which details requirements and commitments your organization will keep.
- Up to 90 percent of your award can be provided up front, if requested. The remainder is reimbursable by the Department of Natural Resources after expenditure is complete.
- Funds must be applied to intended use within two (2) years of award. If not, an extension must be filed including adequate justification, or funds must be repaid to the Iowa DNR.
- One year after you receive an award letter, your organization must file a Midterm report on project progress to date.
- You must file a final report to receive your final percentage of funds.
- Grantees should give Iowa businesses priority, when possible, in contracting labor or purchasing materials.
- Administering organizations are required to keep all project records for three years after the final report is completed. These records are to be available for audit by the state.
- Any deviation from the project outlined in your application must be confirmed in writing in advance by the Iowa DNR Water Trails coordinator.
- For large projects, applicants should consider funding constraints for this

program, and adjust requests to be supplemental to the project.

Timeline

- Applications must be postmarked by the last business day of January each year.
- Grant designations will be announced during the final week of February each calendar year.
- The earliest possible disbursement date is July 1 of each calendar year.
- Applicants need to meet the requirements for construction permits from federal, state and local authorities before constructing their projects. Receipt of state funding does not eliminate the need for appropriate construction permits.

How will grant awards be determined?

Iowa’s waters are surrounded by a diverse mix of landscapes, habitats, and experiences. This program rewards projects that present what is unique about a given waterway. Examples might include natural places in urban areas, wilderness experiences, multi-day trip experiences, adventurous journeys on more challenging waterways, and so on. This grant program is intended to assist non-profit organizations and local units of government overcome barriers in creating water trails, including matching funds, design, construction, and maintenance projects. With the exception of whitewater play spots, these funds are not intended to address access and safety improvements at single locations, unless it can be shown that a single project can significantly enhance an existing or planned water trail.

Applications will be scored by Iowa DNR staff and two appointed representatives of the water recreation community. From the highest-scoring grant applications, this group will meet to select projects on the basis of available funding and positive impact anticipated for Iowa’s waterways.

Tools available

To assist with development of water trails, the Iowa DNR provides an online Water

Trails Development Toolkit. Rather than each local trail group struggling to re-create elements from scratch, templates are being created for signs and accesses at www.iowadnr.gov/watertrails/. There is substantial information here, including design guidelines for adhering to the Americans with Disabilities Act, when appropriate.

Designation of Water Trails and the “wilderness water trail” designation

In 2007, a citizens’ advisory committee for water trails explored the need for designation of sections of water trail under various jurisdictions for consistency within a flexible framework to address local needs. One outcome was a second level of designation called the “wilderness water trail,” a designation recognizing that some waterways run through some of Iowa’s last unspoiled places where natural resources should be prioritized over amenities. See the water trail designation form at the end of this document for more information.

Application instructions

Applications for the DNR Conservation and Recreation Bureau grants must be completed and postmarked by the last business day in January in order to be eligible for review. Please review the application checklist. Submit **six copies** of your application to:

**Water Trails Coordinator
Iowa DNR
Wallace State Office Building
502 E 9th St.
Des Moines, IA 50319**

Questions may be addressed to:
Nate Hoogeveen
Water Trails Coordinator
515-281-3134
watertrails@dnr.state.ia.us

Local governments (cities, counties, school districts) and service organizations with 501(c) 3 status are eligible. Service organizations lacking 501(c) 3 status can attain eligibility by involving their local

government or other non-profit groups in the holding of funds. In such a case, the grant application should be made by the group or unit of government that will hold the funds, and reference the non-tax exempt group leading the effort.

For specific information concerning purchasing of tools, materials, or services, please contact the Iowa DNR Water Trails Coordinator. The Iowa DNR does not make or imply any guarantees from the information found in this application or persons contacted.

Application checklist:

- _ A. APPLICATION FORM with full contact information.
- _ B. If you are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, attach Internal Revenue Service approval letter. If applicant is a unit of government or non-profit organization applying as responsible agent for other groups, list local groups involved.
- _ C. NARRATIVE assessing existing conditions, clearly outlining the concept of the proposed project, and providing project justification. If possible, demonstrate how the water trail is part of an area-wide, local, regional, or statewide plan. Describe overall benefit to the state’s water trails system, qualifications of applicant, soundness of plan, and likelihood of success.
- _ D. A MAP identifying the location of the project.
- _ E. A CROSS-SECTION of the proposed trail project (only required if your water trail will require engineering and construction).
- _ F. A SKETCH-PLAN of the trail project.
- _ G. An ITEMIZED BREAKDOWN of the total project costs and, if applicable, the portion this grant is expected to fund.
- _ H. A TIME SCHEDULE for the total project development, and when funds from this grant program are expected to be spent.
- _ I. LETTERS OF ENDORSEMENT from managers of all public lands where construction will take place and/or signs will be installed.
- _ J. Responses to APPLICATION RANKING CRITERIA listed below.

IOWA WATER TRAILS PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION

Postmark Deadline: Last business day of January

PROJECT NAME

APPLICANT NAME

CONTACT PERSON

ADDRESS (street address required)

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

PHONE (day)

PHONE (evening)

E-MAIL

TOTAL IOWA DNR WATER TRAILS & SAFETY

GRANT AMOUNT REQUESTED \$

FUNDS SECURED FROM OTHER SOURCES \$

FUNDS NEEDED FROM OTHER SOURCES \$

TOTAL COST OF PROJECT \$

TOTAL NUMBER OF TRAIL MILES TO BE CONSTRUCTED OR AFFECTED

APPLICATION RANKING CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed on a 100-point scoring system. Point values have been assigned to the various questions in the application as indicated below. Beyond the points system below, scoring committee members will take into account overall benefit to the state's water trails system, qualifications of applicant, soundness of plan, and perceived likelihood of success described in the narrative. Applicants will receive notification of acceptance or deferral by mail in March of each calendar year. Please be concise; limit responses to a maximum of 250 words per question.

1. Will this trail use the statewide water trail signage system? (Yes or no. If no, please describe an alternative system and reasons for using it.) (5 points)
2. How will this project enhance water safety on the trail's waterway? (10 points)
3. Describe your water resource and how your water trail will be attractive to people seeking recreation experiences on it. (10 points)
4. How does your water trail project correspond with conservation efforts, including but not limited to watershed improvement, conservation improvements, trash clean-ups, greenbelt enhancement, scenic view protection, and water quality monitoring? (10 points)
5. Detail why funds from this program are needed, and how funds from this grant program might be used to leverage local, federal, and any other funds. Projects with other funds secured receive priority. (10 points)
6. In what ways will you involve volunteers in this project? (5 points)
7. How will environmental impacts be taken into account in design and construction of accesses? How will size of the waterway be considered relative to size of the access? (10 points)
8. Describe the planning efforts and how public input been sought and demonstrated (i.e., public meetings, media coverage, local supporting group endorsements, etc.)? Have outside governmental (i.e., DNR, National Park Service, RC&D) staff or private planners assisted a water trail planning effort, and how was the public engaged? What were the results (i.e., "wilderness water trail" designation for a portion of the trail, types of amenities desired, etc.) (15 points)
9. How do you expect this water trail project will benefit your community – economically, environmentally, and otherwise? (10 points)
10. Describe a maintenance plan and list authority(ies) to be responsible for water trail maintenance and operation. Projects with a planned approach to maintenance over the coming decades will receive higher priority. (10 points)
11. Does your project area have other types of existing trails (i.e., biking or hiking)? Describe planned connections (linkages) between different types of trail systems. (5 points)

, IA

Re: Iowa Water Trails grant

Dear :

Congratulations! Enclosed, please find two copies of a grant agreement for your Iowa Water Trails Grant awarded by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Please carefully review the grant agreement. Your organization must sign both copies of the agreement, return them to my attention and a fully executed copy will be returned to you.

Funding for the attached Grant will be available after the first of the Fiscal Year that begins July 1, . You may receive a 90% advance of the grant amount by sending a letter requesting the advance with your signed agreements.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 515-281-3013.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Moench
Budget and Finance Bureau

Enclosures

**Department of Natural Resources
Resource Enhancement and Protection Fund**

GRANT AGREEMENT-WATER TRAILS

GRANTEE:

PROJECT TITLE:

GRANT AWARD:

DNR CONTACT/PHONE #: Kathleen Moench 515-281-3013

1. **PURPOSE.** The purpose of this Iowa Water Trails Grant Agreement is to enable the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to assist help enhance Iowa's waterways for conservation and recreation.

2. **PARTIES/AUTHORITY.** The parties to this Grant Agreement are the Iowa DNR, an agency of the State of Iowa, and . The parties make this Grant Agreement under the authority of the DNR's Bureau of Conservation and Recreation's state Marine Fuel Tax fund.

3. **GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT .** This Grant Agreement is for the project described as:

4. **GRANT AWARD AND REIMBURSEMENTS.** The DNR will provide the costs as described and agreed to in the grant application up to a maximum grant amount of \$.

a) Up to 90% of the award may be advanced by submitting a letter requesting the 90% advance along with the signed agreements to the address below. Sign and return agreements by **DATE:**

Budget & Finance Bureau, Kathleen Moench
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
E. 9th & Grand
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

b) A report is required on the date indicated on the Midterm Report form (Attachment A). Submit this report electronically to watertrails@dnr.state.ia.us. Within 15 business days, the report will be reviewed and instructions for the 10% payment will be forthcoming.

c) A final report is required on the date indicated on the Final Project Report form (Attachment B). Submit this report electronically to watertrails@dnr.state.ia.us. Within 20 business days the report will be reviewed and instructions for submitting the final 10% payment request (Attachment B) will be forthcoming.

5. **RESPONSIBILITIES.** The grantee is solely responsible for the project completion as outlined in the project proposal. The grantee will make a concerted effort to procure goods and services from Targeted Small Businesses (TSBs) listed at www.iowai.org/iowa/dia/tsb/ during the performance of this Grant Agreement. The DNR may provide assistance at the request of the grantee, or at the Director's recommendation. The grantee agrees to meet the requirements for construction permits from federal, state and local authorities before constructing their projects. Receipt of state funding does not eliminate the need for appropriate construction permits.

AMENDMENTS. This Grant Agreement may be amended only by written ADDENDA from the DNR Director or the DNR Water Trails Coordinator. Requests for amendments shall be directed to watertrails@dnr.state.ia.us.

EFFECTIVE DATE/TERMINATION. This Grant Agreement shall become effective when it has been signed and dated by the DNR Director and the grantee. All work specified in the project proposal will be completed by .

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS: If funds anticipated for the continued fulfillment of this agreement are at any time not forthcoming or insufficient, either through the failure of the State of Iowa to appropriate funds, or discontinuance or material alteration of the program under which funds were provided, then the Department shall have the right to terminate the agreement without penalty.

9. By signing this Grant Agreement, the grantee agrees to the terms and conditions set forth in this agreement, failure to meet the terms and conditions of this grant agreement may be cause for repayment of all or part of the grant funds.

Date	Liz Christiansen, Deputy Director Iowa Department of Natural Resources
426004572	
Fed ID #	Grantee Signature
	Print Name

Attachment A

<p style="text-align: center;">DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES MIDTERM PROJECT REPORT</p>
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For Programs: LWCF REAP Habitat Stamp WRAC ATV Snowmobile REAP Ed **Water Trails**

If you have questions, please contact the Budget & Finance Bureau at 515-281-3013. Make additional copies as needed.

This form is due _____ and is required for all projects NOT filing a final report before that date.

Grant Recipient:

Grant #:

Project Title:

Billing #:

Do you still plan to complete this project?

Are there any unexpected problems with your project are being encountered? Please describe.

Are there delays due to waiting for additional funds from other sources or using these funds to help match another grant program? Please describe.

What is your timeline for completing this project?

I certify that this statement is correct and that the work and services are in accord with the approved grant.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Title: _____ Fed ID#: _____



Application for DNR Water Trail Designation

Complete this application and send to:
Nate Hoogeveen, Iowa DNR Water Trails Coordinator, Wallace State Office Building, 502 E. 9th St., Des Moines, IA 50319-0034

The following are guidelines that are consistent with the Iowa Department of Natural Resource's vision of a "DNR Water Trail":

- The trail is signed according to guidelines in the Water Trails Sign Manual (<http://www.iowadnr.com/watertrails/toolkit.html#sign>), or conforms to a parallel signage system developed locally.
- The trail possesses adequate portage around obstructions and dams, or the obstructions and dams are modified for safety, or the water trail begins and ends a safe distance upstream and downstream from hazards.
- The trail has adequate accesses, while recognizing that in some cases a long stretch of river with no accesses is an ideal experience for wilderness.
- Periodic kiosks exist and conform to the Water Trail Guidelines (<http://www.iowadnr.com/watertrails/toolkit.html#kiosk>).
- The trail has access to camping/lodging locations unless it is designated as a day-trip only water trail.
- The trail is promoted through maps, brochures, and/or web sites.
- All promotional materials contain listings of as much of the following as possible: restrooms, campsites, access points, difficulty of access points, surface type of access, obstructions, distances between accesses, nearby cities, and ADA information.

Designated Iowa DNR Water Trails receive the following benefits:

- Statewide recognition and support
- Reference on the Iowa DNR Water Trails web site
- An Iowa DNR-created "Water Trail Map" on www.iowadnr.gov

Contact Information:

Name: _____
Title: _____
Organization: _____
Phone: () _____ - _____
E-Mail: _____
Street: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____

Trail Information:

Location: _____
Miles of river: _____
Name of Water Trail: _____
Counties spanned: _____

Please describe the planning and execution that have been undertaken to meet the vision of an Iowa DNR Water Trail (use attached sheet if necessary).

Wilderness Water Trail Information:

Locally identified “Wilderness Water Trails” can make up a segment of a water trail, or encompass a water trail in its entirety. The designation is intended to develop an expectation among users that wilderness is a key attribute, accesses will be intentionally interspersed at longer intervals than on other water trails, that amenities and signage will be kept to a minimum, and conservation efforts and river management will be a priority. At least one public meeting to determine landowner and community support is strongly encouraged prior to such a designation. Please list the following:

Beginning access point for Wilderness Water Trail designation: _____

Ending access point for Wilderness Water Trail designation: _____

Describe public input received prior to request for Wilderness Water Trail designation: _____

Describe the natural resource value of this river segment, and why it is important for this segment to receive a Wilderness Water Trail designation: _____
