

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD

This announcement is not a request for applications.

This announcement is to provide public notice of the National Park Service's intention to award financial assistance for the following project activities without competition.

ABSTRACT	
Funding Announcement Number	NPS-17-NERO-0129
Project Title	New England National Scenic Trail Implementation
Recipient	Appalachian Mountain Club
Anticipated Federal Funding	\$97,500
Non-federal Cost Share	\$11,345
Anticipated Period of Performance	Through June 26, 2020
Award Instrument	Continuation to Cooperative Agreement P15AC00491
Statutory Authority	16 USC 1246(h)(1); PL 111-11 TITLE V C SEC 502; 54 USC 101702(a)
CFDA # and Title	15.921 Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance
Single Source Justification Criteria	(2) Continuation
Point of Contact	Mary Raczko, mary_raczko@nps.gov , (857) 286-1424

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The purposes of this modification are to:

1. Provide additional funding to the Cooperative agreement in fiscal year 2017
2. Add FY 17-18 Annual Workplan as an attachment to the agreement
3. Change signatories for both NPS and the Recipient
4. Change the required reporting frequency

STATEMENT OF WORK

The project title is New England National Scenic Trail Program 2017-18 Annual Workplan

The Purpose of this project is to administer all activities in Massachusetts related to the New England National Scenic Trail (NET), including coordination and implementation of the Blueprint for Trail Management (P.L. 111-11 (C) 5202). In Massachusetts, the NET has been designated as a National Scenic Trail of approximately 90 miles through 20 communities.

In addition to the perennial NET management activities, which include public outreach and community engagement, landowner outreach, community partnerships and mapping, this year's workplan emphasizes **1) trail improvements**—restoring the footpath by repairing or installing appropriate erosion control structures such as rock steps and waterbars, and **2) a pilot program to establish a Summer Conservation Crew**.

Trail work will be carried out by **AMC volunteers**, typically in groups of 1-2 for maintenance and 5-10 for larger projects; **professional trail consultants**, who will take on projects that require a higher skill level; and a pilot **Summer Conservation Crew** that will undertake trail maintenance and improvement projects while also learning about conservation activities and careers. Depending on scale, volunteers will conduct 8-10 projects; professional trail consultants, 2-3 projects; and summer conservation crew, 4-6 projects.

All work will be conducted through a collaborative partnership between NPS and AMC; AMC will dedicate the Trail

Planner's time to serve as the principal staff. The Planner will be overseen by AMC and will be the principal liaison to the Trail Stewardship Committee (TSC) and the NET communities. The Planner will work in close cooperation with AMC and NPS Trail Coordinator in planning, developing and implementing all these activities to accomplish cooperative trail objectives consistent with the Blueprint.

RECIPIENT AGREES TO:

1. Serve as the NET's principal point of contact in Massachusetts for the AMC Berkshire Chapter, NET Trail Committee, AMC Trails Department, communities, TSC and other organizations. Participate in the TSC meetings with NPS and other meetings as needed.
2. Build capacity among the AMC Berkshire Chapter NET Trail Committee to assure consistent trail stewardship. Coordinate annual volunteer trainings in the Fall and Spring to promote safety and quality trail management & maintenance, training topics include: treadway rehabilitation, occupational safety, Leave-No-Trace principles and overall conservation awareness.
3. Coordinate with CFPA, and NPS to provide organizational support and public outreach for trail activities and events, including AMC's National Trails Day events, *New England Trail College Network*, and annual AMC volunteer trainings. Utilize AMC promotion resources including mailings, publications, brochures, website and Facebook. Work with NPS and CFPA to organize events for *New England Trail College Network*, including the annual Five-College Outdoor Festival in April 2018.
4. Coordinate with CFPA and NPS in preparing and distributing annual reports.
5. Serve as the principal liaison with landowners, including private and corporate landowners, and the State of Massachusetts. Maintain an up-to-date comprehensive landowner database.
6. Maintain an AMC GIS Trail Layer for Massachusetts; provide NPS access to the database.
7. Provide support for financial tracking and related reporting, including volunteer work hours.
8. Provide support to the Massachusetts land protection community in prioritizing and completing key trail land conservation projects, as appropriate.
9. Identify and apply for federal, state, local and private funding to advance the goals of the NET designation and the Blueprint for Trail Management.
10. *Conduct Volunteer Trail Projects:* Plan, prioritize and implement trail work, including improvements, maintenance and trail signage with NPS Trail Administrator. Recruit and provide leadership to AMC trail volunteers and manage professional trail consultants and summer trail crew. Provide all transportation, tools, materials, and supplies necessary to complete trail maintenance and rehabilitation projects along the NET in Massachusetts from Southwick to Royalston.
11. *Summer Conservation Crew:* Establish and pilot a summer conservation crew for trail stewardship & conservation work. Recruit and supervise participants and provide leadership to participants and other volunteer participants. The conservation crew (ages 16 to 21) will work for eight weeks, while the crew leaders (ages 19 to 25) will work for a twelve-week period that includes four weeks of extra training. Conservation crew will be primarily recruited from the communities within Holyoke, MA. This non-residential program will identify meeting place within the community from which each work day will start and end. AMC trail crew leaders will provide the transportation to and from the work sites along the New England Trail from that determined meeting point. The conservation crew will work a total of 40 hours per week, Monday through Friday, for the 8 week summer program and support the on-going maintenance and trail improvement projects on the New England Trail; it will also have opportunities to learn about and participate in on-the-ground erosion control efforts, invasive species management, vegetation rehabilitation, building sustainable trails, native plant restoration, and

many other conservation activities.

12. Provide a cost share of 25% of the total summer conservation crew component of the project as the required match to NPS funds provided under this task agreement. The required match may be in-kind.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AGREES TO:

1. Work directly with AMC, CFPA and other partners to inventory trail assets, conduct annual condition assessments, and identify and prioritize trail maintenance and protection projects.
2. Develop project cost estimates utilizing NPS approved methods and track project status and accomplishments for backlog maintenance projects.
3. Support operation of all AMC trail projects and events. Support may include but is not limited to consultation on projects, providing on-site education programming, site visits, and enrichment activities.
4. Consult with CFPA and AMC on the selection of trail projects.

Provide Financial Assistance

SINGLE-SOURCE JUSTIFICATION

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SINGLE SOURCE POLICY REQUIREMENTS
Department of the Interior Policy (505 DM 2) and National Park Service Policy FAP&P 1443-2015-06 requires a written justification which explains why competition is not practicable for each single-source award. The justification must address one or more of the following criteria as well as discussion of the program legislative history, unique capabilities of the proposed recipient, and cost-sharing contribution offered by the proposed recipient, as applicable.
In order for an assistance award to be made without competition, the award must satisfy one or more of the following criteria: (1) Unsolicited Proposal – The proposed award is the result of an unsolicited assistance application which represents a unique or innovative idea, method, or approach which is not the subject of a current or planned contract or assistance award, but which is deemed advantageous to the program objectives; (2) Continuation – The activity to be funded is necessary to the satisfactory completion of, or is a continuation of, an activity presently being funded, for which competition would have a significant adverse effect on the continuity or completion of the activity. A single source on the basis of continuation must demonstrate that competition would result in a substantial duplicate cost to the government that cannot be recovered through competition.; (3) Legislative intent – The language in the applicable authorizing legislation or legislative history clearly indicates Congress’ intent to restrict the award to a particular recipient of purpose; (4) Unique Qualifications – The applicant is uniquely qualified to perform the activity based upon a variety of demonstrable factors such as location, property ownership, voluntary

support capacity, cost-sharing ability if applicable, technical expertise, or other such unique qualifications;

- (5) Emergencies – Program/award where there is insufficient time available (due to a compelling and unusual urgency, or substantial danger to health or safety) for adequate competitive procedures to be followed.

NPS did not solicit full and open competition for this award based the following criteria:

(2) Continuation – The activity to be funded is necessary to the satisfactory completion of, or is a continuation of, an activity presently being funded, for which competition would have a significant adverse effect on the continuity or completion of the activity. A single source on the basis of continuation must demonstrate that competition would result in a substantial duplicate cost to the government that cannot be recovered through competition.

This is a continuation of the work begun in Cooperative Agreement P15AC00491.