

PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Awards \$1.8 Million to Support 49 Community Recreational Trail Projects

60% increase in recreational trail
funding will expand, improve 160
miles of the statewide trail
network

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Governor Charlie Baker | Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

Secretary Matthew Beaton, Energy and Environmental Affairs

Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack, Department of Transportation

Commissioner Leo Roy, Conservation & Recreation

Governor's Press Office

PALMER — Today, Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito announced \$1.8 million in 49 Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grants to community trail projects throughout the Commonwealth, which will construct over 10 miles of new trails and structures and will improve over 150 miles of existing recreational trails within the statewide trail network. The grants are awarded for construction and maintenance of a variety of public trails, such as hiking trails, bikeways, and snowmobile and off-road vehicle trails. As part of the administration’s commitment to expand and connect trail networks across the state, Governor Charlie Baker [announced](#) in June 2017 that the RTP budget would be increased by 60 percent.

“Massachusetts is home to hundreds of miles of trails offering healthy, outdoor recreational and transit opportunities and today’s awards will help communities increase accessibility and build and maintain many more,” **said Governor Charlie Baker**. “Our administration has prioritized the statewide trails system, which connects communities and improves quality of life throughout the state, and I am grateful to our partners for working to ensure these trails are available for generations to come.”

“The Recreational Trails Program grants directly support the maintenance of hundreds of thousands of acres of forests, parklands, and reservations and ensure visitors of all ages across Massachusetts have the opportunity to enjoy our parklands,” **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. “Investing in the well-being of our communities means ensuring natural resources are protected and made available for all to appreciate and enjoy.”

RTP grants can be used to improve long-distance trails and rail trail development, ATV trail maintenance, and the creation and/or maintenance of municipally owned trails. This year’s trail improvements include trail drainage; surfacing and trail erosion control; structure construction; installation of directional trail signage and kiosks; printing and development of maps and brochures; purchasing of trail maintenance equipment; trailhead parking area construction and/or improvements; and upgrading existing trails to accessible trail standards. Additionally, each recipient matches awarded grants with a minimum of twenty percent in funding or in-kind services for the designated project. This year’s matching funds totaled \$1,736,278.

“With these awards, the Baker-Polito Administration has prioritized responsible construction projects that will conserve our natural resources while enhancing the enjoyment of hikers, cyclists, snowmobilers and others who benefit from these trails,” **said Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Matthew Beaton**. “I’m excited to support the work of our local officials and organizations who have presented us with excellent ideas for increasing outdoor recreation, and I congratulate them on receiving this year’s awards.”

“The Baker-Polito Administration is committed to investing in low GHG transportation options that will connect people to the places they want to go. MassDOT is proud of the close partnerships we continue to develop with state and local agencies as well as businesses and non-profit organizations to build more pieces of the important regional walking and biking network,” **said Transportation Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack**. “That so many people will use these trails for recreation and transportation makes these great investments; that these investments will responsibly support access to the scenic beauty of the Commonwealth is icing on the cake.”

Funding for the grant program is received directly from the motor fuel excise tax on off-road vehicles including ATV’s and snowmobiles, and is provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Surface Transportation Act, in coordination with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). All RTP grant applications have been reviewed by the Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Board (MARTAB), which is an independent volunteer board appointed by the DCR Commissioner.

“The Baker-Polito Administration is thrilled to support 49 innovative proposals, which will strengthen the connections between our cities and towns, as well as the friends, families and neighbors who use their trails year round,” **said DCR Commissioner Leo Roy**. “With nearly half a million acres of protected space, the DCR is proud to support its partners who have stepped up to support their own state parks and forests.”

“Massachusetts has a tremendous inventory of remarkable open spaces, and a great network of trails that allow us to access them,” **said State Senator Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester)**. “The investment of these grants not only strengthens these precious resources, it also captures even further their power to improve our quality of life.”

“I would like to congratulate the communities in my district that were awarded grants,” **said State Senator Anne Gobi (D-Spencer)**. “In a region with so much to offer in terms of outdoor recreation, these grants go a long way towards ensuring that the areas we currently enjoy are preserved and protected for both the present and future generation.”

In order to meet their funding obligation, an organization is able to utilize a variety of methods to fund at least twenty percent of the project’s total cost to receive the grant. Methods include in-kind labor and professional services, material donations, use of equipment, or a cash match. Furthermore, RTP allocates thirty percent of its funds for motorized use, thirty percent for non-motorized use, and forty percent for diverse use projects. Funding is made available to registered non-profits and municipal, state, and

federal agencies.

“As a Berkshire native, I am grateful to the DCR and the Baker administration for recognizing the great work of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and the Berkshire Natural Resources Council, and others, in preserving and protecting the natural assets of the Berkshires for future generations,” **said State Representative Smitty Pignatelli (D-Lenox)**. “It is always great to see state government coming together with local organizations in partnership to protect the environment and increase the access of all the Commonwealth’s residents to forests, parklands, and reservations.”

“I’m very excited that these funds will be available to Brimfield and Palmer this year,” **said State Representative Todd Smola (R-Warren)**. “The Recreational Trails Program increases the opportunity for Massachusetts residents to get out and enjoy the outdoors in a sustainable way.”

“The Town of Palmer is honored and excited to be a recipient of the 2017 Recreational Trails Program Grant,” **said Angela Panaccione, Conservation Agent for the Town of Palmer**. “We are privileged to be able to bring our vision to life by creating a universally accessible trail that is not just a route from here to there, but rather a place to reconnect people of all ages and abilities with the natural environment. Though only 1/4mi, our focus was more on the experiences of the trail and the outdoors; seeking to encourage visitors to linger and rest while they enjoy the sights, sounds, and smells of the Swift River.”

This year’s awardees are:

- **Andover Conservation Commission - \$19,688 Grant and \$11,610 Matching Funds**
 - This project will create a new trail by constructing a 450-foot boardwalk across swampy terrain. This new trail will connect with many of the existing town trails, and will progress a new section of the Bay Circuit Trail.
- **The Trustees of Reservations (Andover) - \$26,438 Grant and \$16,290 Matching Funds**
 - This project involves the construction of a 700-foot accessible trail at Ward Reservation in Andover, MA. The trail will connect a trailhead to the existing Bog Trail with a boardwalk and portion of hard-pack surface trail, leading users through a quaking bog.
- **Mill Valley Snowmobile Club (Belchertown) - \$15,157 Grant and \$3,789 Matching Funds**
 - This project represents an ongoing program to upgrade the Mill Valley Snowmobile Club groomer fleet, and a special project to improve trails for grooming. This grant includes the purchase of a new, “state-of-the-art” grooming machine, the retiring of an old unreliable

machine, and a special team of trail workers who will focus on smoothing out some trails by removing roots, stumps, and rocks that currently hinder grooming efforts.

- **City of Beverly - \$5,346 Grant and \$2,319 Matching Funds**
 - This project will add trailhead and directional signs and update signage on existing kiosks throughout the City of Beverly to better direct people to trail access points, help people find their way through the extensive trail system and provide educational materials about natural resources.
- **Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (Blandford) - \$38,900 Grant and \$9,744 Matching Funds**
 - This project will restore the Newman Marsh Hiking Trail and reestablish a bridge crossing along the Sanderson Brook, located in Chester Blandford State Forest. These locations represent critical linkages along the Highlands Footpath, a proposed long distance walking journey which will connect communities from Lee to Russell to Goshen, MA.
- **Town of Boxford - \$13,626 Grant and \$9,018 Matching Funds**
 - This project will construct a 66-foot long elevated boardwalk suitable for hikers, bikers and equestrians across a narrow stream and boggy area. The boardwalk will provide a critical connection from a planned parking area to the extensive network of existing trails on town conservation land.
- **Town of Brimfield - \$28,500 Grant and \$8,000 Matching Funds**
 - This project will fund “shovel-ready” site plans for a 100' bridge to cross the Quinebaug River and related construction plans for the Grand Trunk Trail.
- **Wildlands Trust (Brockton) - \$19,995 Grant and \$14,800 Matching Funds**
 - This project will reestablish and enhance 2.4 miles of nature trails on the Stone Farm property to benefit the highly urbanized environmental justice community of Brockton. Project tasks include the installation of wayfinding signage along the trails, establishing new trailheads and trail linkages, construction of boardwalks and installation of signage at new and old parking and trailhead areas.
- **DCR (Cheshire) - \$11,418 Grant and \$14,058 Matching Funds**
 - This project will fund a seasonal Appalachian Trail Ridge Runner who will work exclusively on the National Scenic Appalachian Trail (AT) in Massachusetts. The AT Ridge Runner provides education and information to trail visitors, and works closely with numerous volunteers that help maintain the trail and associated overnight facilities. The AT Ridge Runner also helps to monitor trail conditions, record trail use, and respond to emergencies as needed.

- **Chesterfield Four Seasons Club - \$5,221 Grant and \$1,450 Matching Funds**
 - This project will allow for the purchase of tools for the snowmobile club to raise the tree canopy and trim trail side vegetation along a major snowmobile corridor in Chesterfield. This work will also enhance equestrian and other recreational use of the trail.
- **Chicopee4Rivers Watershed Council - \$12,410 Grant and \$4,640 Matching Funds**
 - This project will fund materials to provide and install signage to direct people to river access sites, information about the trail, and any local natural or community history. Finalized map guides will also be completed via community input, then printed to distribute to trail visitors.
- **Colrain Sno-Drifters Snowmobile Club - \$34,370 Grant and \$11,670 Matching Funds**
 - This project will upgrade a 1993 Suzuki Mini Truck with a brand new Kubota RTV X1100, in order to reduce repair cost, increase efficiency, and maintain snowmobile trails.
- **Conway Snowmobile Club - \$17,987 Grant and \$4,497 Matching Funds**
 - This project will purchase equipment attachments for a snow grooming power unit purchased under a 2016 RTP grant award. The additional equipment will assist in grooming operations on over 120 miles of snowmobile trails which connect four bordering towns and traverse through two state forests.
- **Kestrel Land Trust - \$50,000 Grant and \$24,102 Matching Funds**
 - This project will install new signage at trailheads and priority trail junctions throughout Mount Tom State Reservation and the Mount Holyoke Range park system.
- **DCR (Erving) - \$12,600 Grant and \$3,150 Matching Funds**
 - This project involves the purchase and use of a modern, versatile and environmentally-friendly snowmobile to replace old equipment. The equipment will be used to groom, patrol, and maintain trails in Warwick, Erving, Northfield and Mt. Grace State Forests.
- **Franklin Bellingham Rail Trail Committee, Inc. - \$9,200 Grant and \$2,300 Matching Funds**
 - This project will fund the removal of overgrowth present on 3/4 miles of old railroad bed in Franklin. The trail will be regraded to eliminate the whaling caused by ORV use, and drainage ditches will be cleaned to allow for proper water flow.
- **Town of Groton - \$13,920 Grant and \$5,800 Matching Funds**
 - This project will build a wooden pedestrian and equestrian-friendly bridge to span a chronically wet portion of trail which will ultimately facilitate all-season public use of an existing major east-west trail in Groton.

- **Essex County Trail Association (Hamilton) - \$7,775 Grant and \$2,625 Matching Funds**
 - This project will allow ECTA to acquire materials for the repair of existing trails in Bradley Palmer State Park during the next two trail maintenance seasons. The work will be conducted by ECTA, park staff and their partners to enhance the trail system in a park that straddles three communities.
- **Town of Hatfield Open Space Committee - \$32,094 Grant and \$8,468 Matching Funds**
 - This project will construct a natural-surface, 1.5-mile hiking trail which ascends 7,900 feet terminating at a sweeping panoramic and very unusual eastern-facing view of the Connecticut River Valley. The trail will be the first in the area that provides a safe ascent and descent to the steeper ridges of the West Hatfield which are otherwise inaccessible to residents and visitors.
- **Leicester Snowmobile Club - \$15,690 Grant and \$3,923 Matching Funds**
 - This project will upgrade snowmobile trail grooming equipment to increase access and enjoyment on the Leicester snowmobile club trail network.
- **Berkshire Natural Resources Council (Lenox) - \$75,000 Grant and \$31,200 Matching Funds**
 - This project will create a walking trail through the expansive and diverse grounds of Parsons Marsh located in Lenox, MA. Construction of the 1,700 foot trail will include the development of a trailhead, footpath and boardwalk to provide people of all abilities access to experience the unique ecology of the property as well as the diverse features of the surrounding landscape.
- **City of Leominster Recreation Department - \$64,681 Grant and \$35,670 Matching Funds**
 - Grant funds for this project will go towards the purchase of a fully-equipped trail tool trailer to serve as a regional tool cache for the local and regional trail organizations that perform trail construction and maintenance work.
- **Town of Lexington - \$23,515 Grant and \$40,716 Matching Funds**
 - This project will enhance and extend the system of unpaved, nature-based paths in Lexington through the relocation of several trails out of wetlands and the construction of new boardwalks and bridges along seasonally and perennially wet stretches of existing trails.
- **Town of Littleton - \$6,566 Grant and \$5,220 Matching Funds**
 - This project will install 480 feet of boardwalk along a newly created perimeter trail in the 20-acre Cloverdale Conservation Area. Once complete, the trail will allow for a recreational and educational loop through wet woods and an abandoned beaver meadow.
- **DCR (Lowell) - \$42,215 Grant and \$12,180 Matching Funds**
 - This project will enlarge a 6-car parking lot to 26 spaces to accommodate snowmobile and

horse trailers and allow for greater access to the Lowell-Dracut-Tyngsborough State Forest throughout the year.

- **Lunenburg Snow Riders - \$34,664 Grant and \$8,960 Matching Funds**
 - This project involves the purchase of snow grooming equipment to enhance the club's ability to maintain and groom snowmobile trails throughout the riding area, both during the snow season and off-season when more substantial trail repairs can be done.
- **City of Marlborough and Partners - \$39,717 Grant and \$56,673 Matching Funds**
 - The proposed Boroughs Loop Trail will connect the hiking trail networks of Marlborough, Northborough, Southborough and Westborough, to create a regional trail that encourages the exploration, enjoyment and protection of the Boroughs natural resources. This project will create the loop trail on the ground with signage, maps, publicity and 16 miles of trail creation.
- **Town of Needham - \$50,000 Grant and \$723,000 Matching Funds**
 - The Town of Needham is upgrading an existing unimproved trail to a universally accessible 2,500 linear foot loop trail around the decommissioned Needham Reservoir. This grant will assist in funding the construction of the trail, providing a recreational resource to an underserved segment of the local and regional population, while enhancing the trail for all users.
- **Lower Falls Improvement Association & Bike Newton - \$38,700 Grant and \$8,000 Matching Funds**
 - This project will provide funds for survey and engineering studies, including 10% design to construct two bridges and trail surface needed to fulfill the Massachusetts DCR's long-term plan to extend the Charles River Trail.
- **Appalachian Mountain Club (North Adams) - \$43,800 Grant and \$92,356 Matching Funds**
 - This project will continue previous RTP-funded work on an exceedingly steep section of the Appalachian Trail on Mt. Prospect in North Adams, MA. RTP funds will allow for 14 weeks of a Teen Trail Crew and 4 weeks of AMC Professional Crew to continue with this critical alignment and construction project.
- **City of Northampton - \$50,000 Grant and \$50,000 Matching Funds**
 - This project will install an accessible trail surface on 1,250 feet of the Mass Central Rail Trail from western Northampton to the Williamsburg town line. This key linkage will create additional opportunities for regional trail recreation and will represent a substantial milestone in a project that has been decades in the making.
- **DCR (Northampton) - \$130,244 Grant and \$31,790 Matching Funds**
 - Administration of the Recreational Trails Program by the RTP Coordinator (7% of total Obligation

set-aside).

- **DCR (Northampton) - \$47,871 Grant and \$12,740 in Matching Funds**
 - Recreational Trails Program Education Grants (5% of trail grant funds)
- **Town of Palmer - \$50,000 Grant and \$23,389 Matching Funds**
 - The Swift River Greenbelt Trailhead and Accessible Loop will provide trail access to people of all abilities to a peaceful forest experience with views of the Swift River. The project involves the construction of an accessible trail loop with two resting/viewing areas, two wooden platforms overlooking the river and the installation of a parking area and trailhead kiosk to improve access to the site.
- **Berkshire Snow Seekers Snowmobile Club, Inc. (Pittsfield) - \$34,910 Grant and \$8,728 Matching Funds**
 - The Berkshire Snow Seekers Snowmobile Club will purchase a new trail grooming and maintenance system to be utilized on 40 miles of the approximately 70 miles of existing/approved snowmobile trails in Pittsfield State Forest. This system will be used predominately on the smaller trails that the larger equipment cannot traverse, and will be used for trail maintenance in the off season to transport personal equipment and materials to various trail maintenance work sites.
- **DCR (Pittsfield) - \$39,280 Grant and \$55,489 Matching Funds**
 - DCR's West Region OHV Trail Program provides 24 weeks of professional trail work on over 300 miles of motorized trails in the region, with a goal of providing legal and sustainable riding opportunities to OHV users. The work of the regional trail crew will help mitigate negative impacts of intense motorized use, help protect important natural resources and provide a safe trail environment.
- **Towns of Abington and Rockland - \$100,000 Grant and \$75,260 Matching Funds**
 - This grant will fund the second phase of a project aimed at expanding and improving the Hanover Branch Rail Line. This phase will include the clearing and paving of 5,841 feet of the trail, as well as the installation of a small park with a kiosk. This project will provide a regional rail trail, which will connect residents in Rockland and Abington and afford them the opportunity to enjoy ADA-accessible recreation.
- **Ware River Snowmobile Club (Rutland) - \$26,300 Grant and \$7,540 Matching Funds**
 - This project will fund the purchase of a snowmobile trail groomer to allow for continued winter grooming of trails in the area.

- **Wachusett Greenways - \$100,000 Grant and \$81,504 Matching Funds**
 - This project will complete two major reconstruction projects which are required to sustain the Mass Central Rail Trail, an east-west multi-use corridor envisioned to stretch across the state of Massachusetts. The project will replace failed culverts, drainage and trail surface in Rutland. In Holden, steel bridge decking will be replaced as well as the bridge embankments for improved access for fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities along the trail.
- **Savoy Kanary Kats Snowmobile Club, Inc. - \$166,386 Grant and \$41,597 Matching Funds**
 - This project will fund the purchase of a Tucker model 2000 snowmobile trail groomer to replace a 1988 LMC 3700 in need of major repairs and to provide grooming services throughout the snowmobile trail system in Ware.
- **Town of South Hadley - \$50,000 Grant and \$39,410 Matching Funds**
 - The River to Range Accessible Trail will provide accessible, easy recreation and exercise to visitors and residents of South Hadley. This phase of the project will construct a critical segment of the accessible loop trail which provides scenic views of, and needed access to, the Connecticut River and Bachelor Brook.
- **Town of Spencer - \$34,860 Grant and \$21,741 Matching Funds**
 - This project will complete the Spencer Depot Rail Trail through the installation of various trailside amenities, parking area and trailhead upgrades, interpretive signage, mileage markers and the installation of several Trail Fit stations along the trail.
- **Coldbrook Snowmobile Club (Templeton) - \$10,370 Grant and \$2,287 Matching Funds**
 - This project will fund the installation and removal of a temporary bridge over the Otter River in Templeton to allow for snowmobile recreational use during the winter season.
- **Town of Walpole - \$13,852 Grant and \$6,690 Matching Funds**
 - This project will construct a 250-foot long boardwalk over a brook and through a wetland to provide a critical link between the town-owned properties of Jarvis Farm and Walpole Town Forest. A viewing platform will also be constructed within the wetland to provide opportunities for environmental education among users, including summer day camp participants.
- **Buzzards Bay Coalition (Wareham) - \$44,014 Grant and \$11,510 Matching Funds**
 - This project will enhance the trail system on a 33-acre parcel of riverfront land located at the head of tide on the Weweantic River. Improvements will include adding universal access trails and an accessible parking area with a boat landing zone, and installing four interpretive signs which will include trail maps

- **DCR (Wellfleet) - \$50,000 Grant and \$20,000 Matching Funds**
 - This project focuses on the expansion of the Cape Cod Rail Trail (CCRT), a popular 22-mile long, multi-use trail. DCR would use the funding to complete the design and engineering to construct the last developable 2 miles at the eastern end of this beloved trail.
- **Town of Williamsburg - \$47,250 Grant and \$57,612 Matching Funds**
 - This project will provide resources to complete trail improvements along the Mass Central Rail Trail in Williamsburg, allowing for a fully improved connection from Belchertown in the east to Williamsburg in the west.
- **Park Spirit of Worcester - \$16,412 Grant and \$4,103 Matching Funds**
 - Park Spirit will use RTP funds to install trailhead signage along Worcester's proposed 14-mile cross-city East-West hiking trail. The East-West trail will connect 17 unique green spaces using city streets. Trailhead signage will augment the trail user experience, promote the trail and formalize the trail route through the city.
- **Worthington Snowmobile Club - \$22,499 Grant and \$4,500 Matching Funds**
 - This project will provide funds for the purchase of trail grooming equipment that is badly needed to replace old, unreliable machines that can no longer accomplish the trail grooming goals of the club. New, powerful yet light machinery is needed to maintain the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts's long distance trail network and to make connections to other local trails as well.

Recently, the DCR and the MARTAB announced the opening of registration for the fifth annual Massachusetts Trails Conference, which will take place starting on November 2, 2017, in the City of Leominster. For more information regarding the trails conference, where participants will join in on hands-on workshops, field trips, and sessions lead by trail experts, please visit the agency's [website](#).

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