Appendix B:

Grant Opportunities

Summarized by NCWRPC
**Wisconsin DNR Administered Programs**

All DNR grant applications are due May 1, annually, to the Community Service Specialist serving that region of the state.

Community Service Specialist  
Rhineland Office  
107 Sutliff Ave  
Rhineland WI 54501

**Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

Money is available to encourage nationwide creation and interpretation of high quality outdoor recreational opportunities. The program funds both state and local outdoor recreation projects. Counties, cities, villages, towns, school districts, and Indian tribes are eligible for funding with an approved Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans. Up to 50% matching grants from the fund are available to state and local units of government. Priorities include acquisition of land where a scarcity of outdoor recreational land exists. Also, projects that provide access for the greatest number of potential users and provide the greatest opportunities for outdoor recreation are also desirable.

Eligible projects include acquisition of land for public outdoor recreational areas and preservation of water frontage and open space. Development of public outdoor park and recreational areas and their support facilities. Applications are available from the DNR regional Community Service Specialist.

**Stewardship Program**

The Stewardship Program is a comprehensive program that addresses a broad spectrum of land conservation and recreation needs across the state. Stewardship has four major components:

**Nonprofit Grants**  
Acquisition of land and easements for a wide range of conservation and outdoor recreation purposes.

**Local Assistance Grant Programs**  
Grants for local governments or NCOs to acquire land and conservation easements of land and development projects that support nature-based outdoor recreation.

- Acquisition and Development of Local Parks  
- Urban Rivers  
- Urban Green Spaces  
- Acquisition of Development Rights

**Stewardship Grants for Nonprofit Conservation Organizations**  
Review specific guidelines for each of the following programs online at:  

**Natural Areas**  
State Natural Areas are set aside for protection of their natural values for future generations, scientific research, and teaching conservation and natural history. They are not intended for intensive recreational use such as picnicking or camping.
Habitat Areas and Fisheries
The purpose of the Habitat Areas Program is to protect, restore, and enhance wildlife habitat in Wisconsin in order to expand opportunities for wildlife-based recreation such as hunting, bird watching, fishing, nature appreciation, and viewing of game and non-game species. The goals of the program are achieved through the use of easements, land acquisition, and habitat restoration.

Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (a Stewardship Program)
Funds may be used for both land acquisition projects and development projects for nature-based outdoor recreation, such as fishing piers, hiking trails and picnic facilities. Applicants compete for funds on a regional and county basis. NCOs may only apply for funds for land acquisition; they are not eligible for funds for development on property.

DNR considers the following factors when evaluating projects:

- Implements priorities contained in state and local comprehensive outdoor recreation plans
- Meets needs and deficiencies identified in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, the approved local comprehensive outdoor recreation plan, or the approved comprehensive outdoor recreation plans of other units of government including regional or integrated management plans
- Acquires land where a need for additional land acquisition is supported by an approved comprehensive outdoor recreation plan
- Is regional or statewide in nature and can be documented as such
- Documentation shows benefits to tourism
- Results in a first of a kind facility for the project sponsor or service area
- Provides or supports a water-based activity
- Serves the greatest population
- Involves volunteers, local donations or cooperation by two or more service clubs
- Applicants that have never received an outdoor recreation program grant
- Provides for completion of a project already started where the sponsor has shown the ability to provide quality outdoor recreation facilities for its citizens without grant assistance
- Sponsor has completed prior LWCF, ADLP, UGS, URGP or projects successfully.
- Involves two or more governmental agencies
- Acquires land where a need for additional land acquisition is supported by an approved comprehensive outdoor recreation plan;
- Serves as a demonstration project for other project sponsors
- Corrects a documented health or safety problem
- Renovates existing facilities which are in danger of being lost for public use
- Sponsor is able to adequately maintain and operate the area or facility
- Provides multiple season, multiple activity use
- Serves the recreation needs of elderly persons, minorities and disabled persons. Facilities provided must exceed those required by state or federal regulations
**Acquisition Of Development Rights (a Stewardship Program)**

The program’s purpose is to buy development rights (easements) to protect natural, agricultural, or forest lands from development that enhance nature-based outdoor recreation. Applicants compete for funds on a statewide basis.

Priority parcels criteria:

- Property with frontage on rivers, streams, lakes, or estuaries;
- Property that creates a buffer between land that has been permanently protected for natural resource and conservation purposes and potential or existing residential, commercial, or industrial development;
- Property that is within the boundaries of an acquisition project established by the DNR, a government unit, or a NCO where the uses of the property will complement the goals of the project and the stewardship program.

DNR considers the following factors when evaluating acquisition of development rights:

- Recreational opportunities provided or enhanced;
- Proximity to other permanently protected land;
- Natural, scenic, geologic, and archaeological values of the property;
- The degree of development pressure;
- Whether the project has been identified in a comprehensive plan pursuant to s. 66.1001, WI Stats., another plan that has as one of its purposes the protection of natural resources, or the natural heritage inventory database.

**Recreational Trails Act (RTA)**

The Recreational Trails Act (RTA) provides funds to local units of government through the transfer of federal gas excise taxes paid on fuel used in off-highway vehicles. These funds are used to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for motorized (30% of RTA funds), non-motorized (30% of RTA funds), and both (40% of RTA funds) types of recreational trail uses.

Eligible projects in order of priority are: maintenance and restoration of existing trails, development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages, construction of new trails with certain restrictions on federal lands, and acquisition of easement or property for trails.

**Snowmobile Club Signs**

Funds are available to provide free cardboard trail signs and reflective material to snowmobile clubs agreeing to open their trails to public use as per s. 23.09(26) and Chapter 350, Wis. Stats. Funds are limited to no more than $15,000 per year for the purchase of signs and reflective material. Applications are due in the Region offices by April 15 of each year for the following season.
**Snowmobile Route Signs**

Funds are available to provide costs for initial signing of snowmobile routes and trail crossing warning signs as per s. 23.09(26) and Chapter 350, Wis. Stats. Towns, cities, and villages are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Department. No local match is required, but state funding is limited to no more than $30,000 per year for the route sign program. Applications are due in the Region offices by April 15 of each year for the following season.

**Snowmobile Enforcement Patrols**

Funds are available to encourage county snowmobile patrols to function as a law enforcement unit for the enforcement of State Statute 350 as per s. 350.12(4)(a)(4), Wis. Stats. and NR 50.12, 20.370(4)(ft), Wis. Adm. Code. Counties are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Bureau of Law Enforcement. A county must file a Notice of Intent to Patrol form with the Department on or before July 1 of each year. Claim forms shall be filed with the Department on or before June 1 of the year following the 12-month period for which the claim is made. Salaries of officers engaged in the enforcement of ch. 350, Wis. Stats., at a rate no more than the regular straight-time rate are eligible. Fringe benefits cannot exceed 29% of the gross salary. Travel, materials and supplies are reimbursable. Depreciation is calculated at a rate of 20% annually on all equipment over $1,000.

**Snowmobile Trail Aids**

Funds are available to provide a statewide system of well-signed and well-groomed snowmobile trails for public use and enjoyment as per s. 23.09(26), and Chapter 350, Wis. Stats. Counties are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Department. 100% cost sharing is provided with limits on maintenance costs of $250, and development costs of $500 per mile. Applications are due in the appropriate Region Office by April 15 of each year. Eligible projects include maintenance of trails, which includes signing, brushing, and grooming of snowmobile trails, purchase of liability insurance and acquisition of short term easements, development of trails which may include general trail construction, bridges, gates and signs, major rehabilitation of existing snowmobile bridges and rehabilitation of existing trail segments.
Other Private Assistance Programs

These funding opportunities are provided by non-governmental sources:

**ABSF Skier Development Grant Program**
To encourage sport growth, the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation annually provides grant funding opportunities to skier development programs. Priority will be given to organizations that are cross country ski focused, but organizations that support running, biking, and other off-season programs for skiers are also encouraged to apply. About $20,000 is available annually for grants.

Review specific guidelines online at:

**C.D. Besadny Conservation Grants**
The Natural Resources Foundation’s C.D. Besadny Conservation Grant Program provides small, matching grants to conservation organizations in support of projects that promote the responsible stewardship of Wisconsin’s natural resources at the local level. Grants up to $1,000 are awarded annually to projects or programs in Wisconsin that: benefit the public, involve management and restoration of Wisconsin’s natural resources, and/or contribute to knowledge about Wisconsin’s natural resources through education. Recipients are required to match the grant award on a 1:1 basis with funds or in-kind services.

Review specific guidelines online at:
http://www.wisconservation.org/how-we-work/c-d-besadny-conservation-grants/

**Norma & Stanley DeBoer Quiet Trails Fund**
This fund provides funding to DNR property managers or qualified 501(c)(3) organizations for managing walking trails open to the public on public land. The primary purpose of this fund is the creation and maintenance of walking trails open to the public on public lands, including, but not limited to the following activities: identification or trail locations; surveying; purchase of materials; construction; clean-up activities; repairs of trail surfaces, railings, or existing signage; and fees for necessary professional services, and the secondary purpose is the enhancement and promotion of walking trails accessible to the public on public lands, including, but not limited to: habitat improvement adjacent to the trail; development, creation and installation of directional or explanatory signage and trail guide booklets; and modest costs of events designed to increase awareness and/or use of walking trails.

Applicants must be the WDNR or tax exempt. The fund cannot be used for activities associated with any trail open to motorized vehicles (except for authorized maintenance or construction vehicles or motorized equipment for the disabled). This includes, but is not limited to: trails for snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, and motorcycles.

Review specific guidelines online at:
http://www.wisconservation.org/how-we-work/donor-advised-competitive-grants/