ORV Trail Fund Policy

Recreation Sites and Trails BC
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Definitions

ATVBC – Quad Riders Association of British Columbia

BCORMA – British Columbia Off-Road Motorcycle Association

BCPSC – Back-Country Power Sports Coalition of BC – While not a legal entity, this is an affiliation of the primary stakeholders identified in this document – ATVBC, BCORMA and BCSF.

BCSF – British Columbia Snowmobile Federation

Chapter 10 Recreation Manual – Refers to Chapter 10 of the Forest Recreation Manual – Recreation Trail Management – which is used by RSTBC to manage trails in combination with other technical trail maintenance and management documents.

FLNRORD – Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

In-Kind Contributions – Means any combination of volunteer time, donated labour, equipment, services, and materials from other sources. The valuation of volunteerism and donations is based on:

- Donated materials at verified fair market value (blue book to be used as a baseline);
- Donated accredited professional services at verified fair market value;
- General labour (e.g., administrative support, trail maintenance work): $20.00/hour; and
- Skilled labour (e.g., marketing, communications, Internet support): $25.00/hour.

Complete records of all volunteered hours and donated services or materials must be retained as part of the organization’s ORV Trail Fund records.

Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Trails – A trail used by off-road vehicles, such as snowmobiles, off-road motorcycles, and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), including “quads” and “side-by-sides.” Trails that are primarily used by ORVs, with or without a component of non-motorized use, qualify as ORV trails. Roads or trails designed for and used primarily by on-highway vehicles not registered as ORVs under the ORV Act are excluded from this definition.

ORV Member Organizations – Means the Quad Riders Association of British Columbia, the British Columbia Snowmobile Federation, or the British Columbia Off-Road Motorcycle Association and their affiliated organizations.

Trails Strategy for BC – Provides the framework, principles and guidance necessary to develop a world-class trails system for BC. Overall, this framework establishes strategic direction for planning, developing, maintaining, managing, marketing and using an integrated network of trails in BC.

Introduction

This document describes the eligibility requirements, evaluation criteria, process for receiving applications, and funding award process for the BC Off-Road Vehicle Trail Fund (ORV Trail Fund). This fund was created as part of the British Columbia Off-Road Vehicle Strategy in consultation with the BC ORV community. Funds made available through the ORV Trail Fund come from registration fees for ORVs in BC. The Off-Road Vehicle Act and a consequential amendment to the Special Account Appropriation and Control Act are the legal mechanisms that allowed creation of the fund. Should a difference be noted between either of these Acts or any other Act and this document, those Acts will take precedence.

This policy sets the framework for describing the objectives of the fund, how project proponents can apply for funds, and how applications will be adjudicated. This policy also references and is dependent on other related documents including:

- **ORV Trail Fund Application** – This is an online application form that proponents fill in and submit digitally.
- **ORV Trail Fund Application Guidelines** – This document will assist proponents in understanding the application process and completing the application form.
- **ORV Trail Fund Application Evaluation** – This document provides guidance in how applications are scored and summarizes scoring criteria for both applicants and proposal reviewers.
- **ORV Trail Fund Project Budget** – This is an Excel spreadsheet to assist proponents in developing project budgets.

1. ORV Trail Fund Objectives

The objectives of the ORV Trail Fund are to expend funds for the following: (1) construction and maintenance of ORV trails; and (2) support and promotion of the safe and responsible use of ORVs. Eligible expenses directly or indirectly related to the above purposes are also included. These eligibility criteria will be interpreted broadly so as not to unnecessarily restrict potential applications to the fund.
2. Eligible Applicants

The organized ORV community – including local clubs and provincial advocacy groups – is expected to be the primary applicant for these funds, but the funding should not be restricted to those groups. If another organization’s application is aligned with the objectives of the fund, then that organization is eligible. All applicants must be legal entities in the province of BC.

Eligible Applicants include any of the following:

- First Nations
- Local governments (municipalities and regional districts)
- ORV member organizations (ATVBC, BCORMA, BCSF)
- Non-profit organizations
- Corporations

Applications from individual applicants will not be accepted.

3. Eligible Projects and Activities

There are two categories of funding available under the ORV Trail Fund:

1) ORV trail construction and maintenance; and
2) Support and promotion of safe and responsible use of ORVs.

Projects and activities that deliver on ORV Trail Fund objectives will be considered eligible. In addition, projects must demonstrate a clear benefit for public off-road vehicle recreation use.

Examples of potential projects are included by category below:

- Construction and maintenance
  - Trail and riding area maintenance;
  - Planning and engineering of trails and trail infrastructure (including, but not limited to, signage, kiosks, toilets, trailheads, day-use shelters, etc.);
  - Trail spatial data collection and mapping;
  - Trail upgrades/improvements;
  - New trail construction;
  - Bridge and water crossing installation and upgrades;
  - Trail signage installation; and
  - Trail rehabilitation/decommissioning.

- Support and promotion of safe and responsible ORV use
  - Trail use education projects;
Development of best management practices or other ORV trail-related management documents;
Promotion and education related to sustainable ORV trail construction and maintenance;
Promotion of wildfire-safe activities related to ORV use;
Promotion of preparedness and safe riding;
Promotion of local ORV club membership;
Programs to improve compliance with specific trail use;
Ride safe campaigns;
Promotion of “pack it in, pack it out” programs and initiatives;
Promotion of responsible environmental activities and respect for the environment;
Promotion of respecting the rules of the land, trails and roads; and
Development and promotion of programs that contribute to cooperation between user groups.

4. Eligible Lands

There are a variety of land jurisdictions in the province where project proposals may be considered for the ORV Trail Fund. Clear proof of authorization for the proposal from the land manager or land owner must accompany each application. A list of potential authorization requirements is provided in Section 6.2.2. For a proposal to be considered for funding, the lands on which the project is proposed must be available for use by the general public and proof of public access may be required. Projects on private land will only be considered where written, legal public access is in place (e.g., an easement for the purposes of ORV recreation).

Other jurisdictions may be considered on a case-by-case basis but must demonstrate both the required authorizations and a public access guarantee as described above.

5. Maximum Available Funds

Approved applications will be funded to a maximum of $20,000 for construction and maintenance projects and $10,000 for safe and responsible ORV use projects. Funding requests must not exceed the maximum amount for each category. If funding requests exceed the maximum, the application may be rejected. The actual amount of funding awarded may be less than the requested amount depending on available funding and the number of proposals under consideration. Discretion may be used during the adjudication process to fund projects up to a limited amount or fund only portions of a proposal.

Projects requesting less than $1,000 will not be considered for the ORV Trail Fund.
RSTBC and the Back-Country Power Sports Coalition of BC (ATVBC, BCORMA, BCSF) will review available funds and allocations each year to ensure that an appropriate amount of funding is retained in the ORV Trail Fund to support applications in future years.

6. Application Content

The online ORV Trail Fund Application form must be used by proponents applying for funding. Each application will be assessed based on the following information.

6.1 Mandatory Requirements

Omission of any of the mandatory information will make the application ineligible for funding.

6.1.1 Proponent Contact Information and Project Title

- Proponent name (name of legal entity applying), address, phone number, email, mailing address, contact name.
- Project title.

6.1.2 Matching Fund Requirements

- Matching funds are comprised of a monetary contribution and an In-Kind Contribution to the project on behalf of the applicant. Limits are put on the amount of In-Kind Contributions that can be made for construction and maintenance projects but there are no such limits for promotion of safe and responsible use projects.
- Matching fund requirements for the two fund categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORV Project</th>
<th>Minimum Matching Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trail Construction and Maintenance</td>
<td>Matching Funds must be a minimum of 50% of total funding request to the ORV Fund. In-Kind Contributions can comprise up to 40% of the Matching Funds. Example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ORV Fund Request $10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matching Funds $5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applicant funds $3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In Kind $2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Project Budget $15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of Safe and Responsible Use</td>
<td>Matching Funds must be a minimum of 10% of total funding request to the ORV Fund. There is no maximum for In-Kind Contributions. Example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ORV Fund Request $10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matching Funds $1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In Kind $1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Project Budget $11,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.1.3 Project Budget

A detailed project budget must be submitted with the application for funding. At a minimum, the detailed budget must describe the following:

- Total cost of the project;
- Total funding request; and
- Total in-kind contribution from the applicant and/or partners.

6.2 Other Requirements

6.2.1 Project Description

- A general project description, including:
  - Summary of how the project supports the objective(s) of the ORV Trail Fund;
  - Location of the proposal, including a text description and digital mapping showing the proposal area, land ownership, access, and other important details;
  - Construction plan, including proposed schedule of works (if required);
  - Maintenance plan, including schedule (if required);
  - Promotion of safe and responsible use plan (if required); and
  - Description of the partners directly involved in planning, developing and submitting the application. Describe how the partners were specifically involved (i.e., what role did they play?).

6.2.2 Required Authorizations

- Any required authorizations for proposed works associated with projects submitted to the ORV Trail Fund must be signed-off and included in the application. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to ensure that all required authorizations are in place.

  - For lands administered by FLNRORD, proposals may require authorization under Section 57 of the *Forest and Range Practices Act* (FRPA), or other acts in specific circumstances.
  - A current partnership agreement with RSTBC is considered authorization for the purposes of the ORV Trail Fund where the agreement clearly authorizes the works described in the proposal and the works are proposed within the agreement area. Evidence must be provided that confirms the District Recreation Officer supports the proposal. Preference may be given to trails and trail networks legally established under FRPA and managed under partnership agreements with RSTBC.
o Any required authorizations under the _Land Act_ to undertake the proposed works must accompany the application.

o Where required, authorizations under the _Water Sustainability Act_ must also be included with the application.

o On private managed forest lands, the proposal must contain a letter of support from the land owner to be eligible to apply for funding from the ORV Trail Fund.

o For proposals located on Indian Reserves, a clear indication of support from the Chief and Council must be included in the application.

### 6.2.3 Budget Spreadsheet

- Proponents are encouraged to use the ORV Trail Fund Project Budget Excel spreadsheet to complete a detailed project budget.

### 6.2.4 Alignment with the _Trails Strategy for BC_

The _Trails Strategy for BC_ provides broad objectives that will help define what is required in developing world-class ORV trails and trail networks in BC. These objectives will help direct the application and adjudication process for awarding ORV trail funding. Applications will be evaluated based on how the goals of the project align with the overall vision and the six key components of the trails strategy.

The six key components of _Trails Strategy for BC_ are:

- **Environmental Stewardship**: Reducing unnecessary trail construction, utilizing or linking with existing trail infrastructure, avoidance of sensitive or protected areas.

- **Collaborative Planning**: Degree/number of partners among various trail user groups, trail design supporting multiple uses (e.g., motorized and non-motorized such as mountain biking, hiking, equestrian, etc.).

- **Good Governance**: Communications plan to ensure proper trail use and to reduce user conflicts, identification of seasonality of trail use, specific locations of avoidance areas, and comprehensiveness of trail user signage and mapping.

- **Sustainable Funding**: Ongoing management/maintenance plans, fund matching levels for construction and maintenance projects (e.g., cash, non-cash, non-governmental).

- **Effective Management**: Demonstrated experience in developing and managing trails and incorporating safe practices in trail design and management.

- **Strategic Information and Marketing**: Demonstrated resident need (e.g., user surveys, prior planning, other evaluations), tourism market potential, and market readiness.

### 6.2.5 Tourism Development and Economic Diversification Opportunities

Describe how the project supports increased economic development, resiliency, and strength for the local community. Include the breadth of the project's impact across the community or
multiple communities. The tourism development and economic diversification components of the application should also include:

- The depth of the community needs that the project addresses;
- How the project facilitates business, growth, and economic development or diversification;
- The level of support of the local destination marketing organization or other tourism promoters or managers;
- How the project contributes to a tourism strategy; and
- How the project creates jobs.

**6.2.6 First Nation Partnerships**

First Nations Partnerships and Reconciliation are a high priority to government. Provide specific details on how you have involved local First Nations in the proposed project. Examples of activities for this criteria are below:

- Description on which First Nation lands are implicated
- Project related planning, discussions or initiatives with the local First Nation
- How the project will benefit the First Nation
- Any First Nation partnerships or contracted work
- Signage recognizing the historical significance of the lands to the First Nation

**6.2.7 Specific Additional Criteria**

The following additional criteria will be considered when reviewing applications:

- Optimizing the use of existing trail infrastructure to reduce the need for new trail development and management;
- Avoiding vulnerable and high conservation value areas, and contributions to environmental protection;
- Encouraging community participation;
- Addressing landowner concerns;
- Partnering with not-for-profit organizations, governments, landowners, and the private sector;
- Ensuring sustainability (e.g., maintenance plan, etc.);
- Reducing land-use conflicts and inappropriate ORV use by establishing approved ORV trails; and
- Indicating how the project supports higher-level planning such as LRMPs or similar processes where applicable.
7. Application Process

7.1 Advertisements and Timing

Advertisements for applications will be sent out early in the calendar year of the funding cycle. Applicants will have approximately six weeks to prepare and submit their applications. Submissions will be reviewed and adjudicated over the following six weeks. Successful applicants will be notified at the end of the adjudication period.

Applications are completed online at: gov.bc.ca/ORVFund and submitted as per the site instructions. All submissions will be reviewed in the order they were received once the application period has closed.

7.2 Additional Submission Guidance

Proponents can apply for funding from both the construction and maintenance and promotion of safe and responsible ORV use categories once per funding cycle (calendar year). The same project can apply to both categories; however, this requires a separate application for each funding category. In this case, the two funding requests will receive the same project number.

Proposals for work on multiple trails in a trail network can be included in a single application.

Only one application per funding category will be considered for each applicant in a funding cycle. If an applicant submits more than one application per funding category, only the most recent submission will be considered.

7.3 Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

Each application will first be screened for compliance with the mandatory criteria. Applications that have achieved compliance with the mandatory criteria will then be scored and ranked relative to the other compliant applications.

Applications will be scored using objective measures. Scoring is described below and in the ORV Trail Fund Application Evaluation documents (RSTBC and Stakeholder). Applicants are encouraged to provide sufficient detail for each information requirement.

- Mandatory Requirements
  - Applications that do not include mandatory information will not be assessed.
  - This is a pass/fail criterion.

- Back-Country Power Sports Coalition of BC Scoring (See Appendix 1)
RSTBC Scoring

- Alignment with the Trails Strategy for BC – available online to all applicants and should be considered in development of the application.
  - Maximum 10 points.

- Project Budget – a detailed project budget is required.
  - Maximum of 10 points.

- Tourism Development and Economic Diversification – points can be awarded for tourism development and economic diversification opportunities related to the project.
  - Maximum 10 points.

- First Nations Partnerships – points can be awarded where meaningful and beneficial partnerships between applicants and First Nations are demonstrated.
  - Maximum 10 points.

- Specific Additional Criteria – points can be awarded for addressing specific additional criteria described in Section 6.2.7.
  - Maximum 10 points.

### 7.4 Distribution of Funds

Available annual funding will be distributed equally (33%) among the three ORV user sectors – ATVs (including side-by-sides), off-road motorcycles, and snowmobiles. Applications will be accepted from qualified applicants provided they meet the objectives and requirements of the ORV Fund and clearly identify the anticipated primary use of the trail proposal (i.e., ATVs, off-road motorcycles, snowmobiles).

Eligible legal entities include:
- First Nations;
- Local governments (e.g., municipalities, regional districts);
- Non-profit organizations (e.g., BC Grasslands Conservation Council, member clubs of the BC Wildlife Federation, 4x4 clubs; and
- Corporations (e.g., forest licensees, ORV manufacturers/distributors).
Multi-sector proposals will be accepted from any of the BCPSC member organizations or non-BCPSC entities provided the primary use of the trail project is identified.

To ensure that objectives for both funding categories (i.e., trail construction and maintenance, and promotion of safe and responsible ORV use) are met as per the legislation, a minimum of 25% of the total available funding per funding cycle will be allocated to the promotion of safe and responsible ORV use.

Provincial federations are eligible to apply for funding under the promotion of safe and responsible ORV use category. If the application is successful, the funds will come out of the appropriate ORV user sector for that year (e.g., ATVs, off-road motorcycles, snowmobiles).

If any user sector is undersubscribed and does not use its entire allocation for a funding cycle, the remaining funds may be allocated to other sectors or carried forward to the next year as determined through consultations with the stakeholders and at the discretion of the joint adjudicators (RSTBC and BCPSC).

### 7.5 Adjudication

Each application to the ORV Trail Fund will be assigned a project number and proponents will be notified to confirm their application has been received. As fund administrator, RSTBC will oversee the review process and ensure that funding is allocated equitably and fairly, according to the advertised scoring criteria. The Back-Country Power Sports Coalition of BC (ATVBC, BCORMA, BCSF) will participate in project reviews and scoring, providing valuable knowledge, expertise and experience to the process.

Prior to forwarding proposals to the Back-Country Power Sports Coalition of BC (BCPSC) for adjudication, RSTBC will ensure that projects meet all mandatory requirements. The BCPSC and RSTBC will independently score all compliant applications. The application scores are then shared and ranked based on the combined total score. Application scores will be made available to all proponents after the review process is complete.

Depending on the number of applications, total monetary requests, available funding, and the quality of the applications, RSTBC may set a minimum score of 50% of the total achievable points (65 out of a possible 130 points). The awarding of funds will be distributed according to determined application rankings, funding distributions as described in Section 7.4, and the amount of funds available. If too many applications fall below the 50% minimum score, the applications may be scored on a normal distribution curve.

Successful and unsuccessful proponents will be notified at the conclusion of the adjudication process, and RSTBC and BCSPS will make efforts to provide feedback to help improve future success.
8. Eligible Project Costs

Eligible expenses include the following for each funding category. Only those expenses incurred after the approval of the application to the ORV Fund are eligible for reimbursement.

8.1 Trail Maintenance and Construction

- Project plan development
  - comprehensive plans
  - construction drawings
  - environmental assessments
  - trail master plans
  - planning processes
  - engineering and technical trail assessments

- Trail construction
  - construction of access roads in certain circumstances
  - parking areas
  - trail and trailhead construction
  - development and installation of route and interpretation signs

- Trail Maintenance
  - clearing
  - brushing
  - minor trail reroutes
  - bridge replacements
  - installation of culverts, ditches, and other water management structures
  - resurfacing of trails with natural surfacing or aggregate
  - minor realignments of trails and trail features

8.2 Promotion of Safe and Responsible Use

- Development of brochures, maps, signage, web sites, or other media;
- Development of sustainable trail plans and educational programs for ORV trails in specific riding areas;
- Development of broad education programs for ORV trails on a regional or provincial scale;
- Hiring of professionals to develop best management practices for soil disturbance, wildlife interactions, or other environmental concerns;
- Costs associated with inventorying a riding area, network or trail as preparation to improve management or maintenance;
- Development or promotion of best practices for ORV users in areas associated with wildfire risk;
- Costs related to signage development promoting safe and responsible use, including “pack it in, pack it out,” “safe riding campaigns,” “promotion of membership with ORV clubs and associations” and “rules on ORV registration;” and
- Development of programs that contribute to cooperation between user groups.

9. Fund Award and Transfer

Upon award of funding, 10% of the total value may be held back until a substantial completion certificate is signed by the land manager and the proponent files a project completion report.

10. Reporting

All successful applicants to the ORV Trail Fund are required to submit an annual report on project progress in relation to the project plan submitted with the application. Annual plans are required until completion of the project, at which time the project completion report is required. Where differences between project progress and the project plan are noted, a justification must be provided with a plan to address those deficiencies.

Completion reports and accompanying photos must be submitted to the ORV Trail Fund at: ORVFundApplications@gov.bc.ca. Copies of the completion report must also be sent to the applicable sector of the BCPSC (ATVBC, BCORMA, BCSF).

Applicants that do not provide reporting or do not complete project deliverables described in the project plan will be disqualified from future opportunities and the Province may consider further action.
11. Evaluation

A review of the advertisement, acceptance, adjudication and award processes associated with the ORV Trail Fund will be completed annually by RSTBC in consultation with the stakeholders. Where specific changes to ORV Trail Fund application processes are required, they will be incorporated into the policy documents for future use.

Specific information that will help guide or inform reviews of the application processes will come from the following sources:

- ORV member organization feedback;
- Trail usage statistics by type (e.g., ATVs, off-road motorcycles, snowmobiles);
- Trail revenue sources (ORV registration, riding permit areas under the ORV Act, donations, other);
- Trail user experiences, needs and recommendations, including residents and non-residents; and
- Trail manager and user group perspectives on the effectiveness of the ORV Trail Fund, and recommended modifications for improvements.
Appendix 1 – BCPSC Scoring Criteria

➢ **Alignment with the Trails Strategy for BC**
  o The Trails Strategy for BC is available online to all applicants and should be considered in development of the application.
  o *Maximum 10 points.*

➢ **Project Budget**
  o A detailed project budget is required.
  o *Maximum of 10 points.*

➢ **Tourism Development and Economic Diversification**
  o Points can be awarded for tourism development and economic diversification opportunities related to the project.
  o *Maximum 10 points.*

➢ **Respect for the Environment and Sustainable Trail Development**
  o Sustainability means using, developing and protecting resources in a manner that enables people to meet current needs while providing for the needs of future generations from an environmental, economic and community perspective.
  o *Maximum of 15 points.*

➢ **Proponent Capacity for Long-Term Management**
  o Applications that demonstrate a commitment to long-term management of the trail project will receive points accordingly. Volunteer efforts will also be considered as a key part of this criterion.
  o *Maximum of 15 points.*

➢ **Significance of Trail System**
  o If a strategic trail plan has been developed for the region, applications will be awarded points for demonstrating how the project fits into that plan and how the project enhances connections with existing trail networks.
  o *Maximum of 10 points.*

➢ **Overall Assessment of the Project**
  o This discretionary criterion enables committee members to bring their knowledge of regional and province/territory-wide recreation uses and needs into consideration. The determination of points awarded is based upon informed judgment.
  o *Maximum of 10 points.*