



Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Division of Parks and Watercraft
PADDLING ENHANCEMENT GRANT



GRANT GUIDELINES

ODNR Division of Parks and Watercraft reviews applications and qualifies them in terms of completeness and priority rating. A completed application emailed or postmarked by **March 1** is necessary before the project can be eligible for funding.

Do not sign any agreements concerning the development of any project until written approval has been given by ODNR. Any contractual agreements prior to approval may result in that part of the project being ineligible for funding.

Once a project is approved for funding, all procedures and requirements of the Grant Agreement must be fulfilled. Costs, eligible expenses, fund accounting, and fiscal control are audited by the State continually throughout the project.

Regular site inspections by the State will be made to assure compliance with grant requirements. User fees, if charged, must be reasonable for all users and must be approved by the ODNR.

Application Requirements

1. Eligibility

Political subdivisions and agencies of state or federal government are eligible to apply for this grant reimbursement program. Projects sponsored by private individuals, clubs, or associations on lands they control do not qualify for the grant program and will not be considered.

- Applicants must have a SAMS.gov account and current DUNS # and/or UEI # to apply.
- The applying agency must be capable of financing and maintaining the project as a public access facility for a minimum of 10 years.
- All funded projects must be open and accessible to the recreational boating public.
- Any agency with an open Paddling Enhancement Grant may be eligible for additional funding for the next grant cycle if they are in good standing with ODNR at the time of the submission of any additional grant requests. To confirm the status of any open projects, contact the grant administrator.
- If a user fee will be or is charged, the applying agency can only ask for reimbursement up to 50% of the project cost.
- Federal, state, and local laws pertaining to non-discrimination in employment, area use, minimum wages, conflict of interest, and similar matters must always be met.
- Projects should be designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities; the application should explicitly show how they are met. Guidelines for ADA requirements can be found at the United States Access Board web site: www.access-board.gov.
- Applications must be complete at the time of submittal to be considered for funding.



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This is a reimbursement grant. The agency must have funds available to pay invoices. No in-kind services or donations are considered in this grant. Invoices are paid by the grantee and then reimbursed at the determined percentage.

2. Priorities

The application process for this grant is a competitive system. Grants are awarded based on an objective scoring system and the amount of funds available. The primary focus of this grant is to increase access and opportunities for *hand-powered* watercraft. Priority will be placed on projects that are ADA compliant, those within a designated water trail or proposed water trail and that connect paddlers to amenities such as shopping, restaurants, and overnight stays. Refer to the Division of Parks and Watercraft's publication "The Ohio Trails Vision" for additional information on Ohio Water Trails (refer to Appendix D).

3. Costs to Consider When Applying

- a. The cost of preparing, submitting, and administering an application is not eligible for reimbursement.
- b. Don't underestimate costs in hope of getting grant approval. Estimates should be figured based on anticipated construction costs.
- c. Once the grant is awarded, the award amount cannot be increased. Any increase in costs must be borne by the applying entity.

4. Eligible Project Components

All project components are subject to approval. A determination will be made based on the overall project site and priorities. Contact the grant administrator with specific questions.

Examples of Eligible Costs:

- Ramps
- Necessary roads
- Lighting at launch ramp and designated ramp parking areas
- Small boat access (for canoes, kayaks, etc.)
- Signage
- Kiosk for safety information

Examples of Ineligible Costs:

- Picnic shelters
- Picnic tables
- Grills
- Park landscaping
- Trash cans
- Monetary credit for land purchased for project
- Any costs incurred prior to entering into a formal agreement with ODNR.
- Engineering Costs



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5. Site Visit Prior to Approval

Upon receipt of the application, the Division may arrange with local officials to inspect the site of the proposed project to ascertain its general feasibility, site conditions, and the need of such project.

Grant Approval

1. Notification

All applicants will be notified of the status of their application in the spring of the submittal year.

2. Sign & Return Grant Agreement

Once the grant agreement is ready for signature, the recipient will receive a request for signature of the document from ODNR. The grant recipient must sign the document and return it for final execution by ODNR.

In the formal agreement, the grant recipient agrees to complete the project and agrees to abide by the procedures of ODNR before commencing the project, and after ODNR assures it has encumbered its share of the project cost. The contract states the terms of the financial arrangements for the project and defines the procedures to be followed by ODNR and the grant recipient as the project progresses.

4. Receive the Fully Executed Agreement from ODNR

ODNR will send the grant recipient a fully executed agreement with a formal letter stating permission to proceed with the project.

Any costs incurred prior to receiving a fully executed agreement are the responsibility of the applicant and will not be reimbursed by ODNR.

Project Management

Once a project is approved for funding, all procedures and requirements of the Grant Agreement must be fulfilled. Costs, eligible expenses, fund accounting, and fiscal control are audited by the State continually throughout the project.

1. Construction Notes

- a. The Agency prepares plans and submits all documents to ODNR for review and approval. The applicant shall not award any construction contracts until after plans and specifications are approved by ODNR. Upon ODNR approval of the final plan, specifications, and cost estimates, the grant recipient shall advertise for construction bids.



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- b. Once ODNR approves the contract, the grant recipient serves as the contracting agency. Quarterly construction status reports and a final report are required.
- c. Development projects require that contractors comply with the Governor's Executive Order of January 27, 1972. The applicant is obliged to cooperate with ODNR in order to ensure that the contractors comply with Equal Employment Opportunity requirements. This includes all bid advertisements.
- d. Projects funded through this grant program must make every possible effort to be barrier free and accessible according to the standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

2. Site Visits

- a. Site inspections may be made at any time to assure compliance with grant requirements. A final site inspection may also be required to close out the grant project.
- b. Properties and facilities acquired or developed with Waterways Safety Fund monies shall be available for inspection by ODNR or its representatives at such intervals as they require.

3. Signage Requirements

- a. A permanent sign acknowledging assistance from the ODNR Waterways Safety Fund is required for all projects. Signs must be maintained for a minimum of 10 years. ODNR will provide the required sign which must be posted at the project site. A photo of the installed sign must be submitted to the grant administrator prior to final reimbursement.

4. Permit Requirements

- a. The applicant is required to secure all local, state, and federal permits required for construction of the project. This requirement may include permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Ohio EPA, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and the local Flood Plain Administrator.
- b. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulates all work performed below and adjacent to the ordinary high-water mark as well as all work in a wetland area. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should be contacted to determine if the proposed project is within its jurisdiction.
- c. Permits are not required prior to making application for a grant but will be required before construction begins.



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5. Post Construction, Operation and Maintenance

- a. Facilities developed with assistance from the Waterways Safety Fund shall be operated and maintained so as to appear attractive and inviting to the public. Sanitation and sanitary facilities shall be maintained to comply with applicable state and local public health standards. Buildings, ramps, docks, or other structures and improvements shall be kept in repair throughout the life of the contract, to prevent undue deterioration and encourage public use.
- b. The facility shall be kept open for public use at reasonable hours and times of the year, according to the type of areas, facility or use intensity.
- c. The applicant agrees to operate and maintain the facility for a minimum of 10 years after completion of the project. If the Cooperating Agency ceases to operate the project as approved, all funds expended by ODNR must be returned to ODNR. Any modification that would change the scope or use of the project must have written approval from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

6. User Fees

User fees are allowed however they must be justified on the basis of maintenance.

- a. User fees may be charged provided they are comparable to fees charged for similar facilities in the same marketplace.
- b. ODNR must approve all user fees prior to being charged.
- c. Local agencies charging a fee will be required to provide 50% matching funds of the total grant.
- d. ODNR prohibits excess revenues from being used to support non-boating activities. If all fee revenues and interest earned thereon are not used for maintenance of the project, the excess revenue must be credited to ODNR. An accounting of revenues and expenditures must be presented to ODNR at the end of each calendar year.
- e. Neither the initial cost, nor the amortization of the Cooperating Agency's share of the project cost, nor interest on any loans can be included in the calculations of the maintenance of the project.
- f. The portion of the project costs that come from ODNR are paid by boaters from all parts of Ohio. Therefore, any fees must be the same for all persons, regardless of race, religion, place of residence, etc.

7. Discrimination Prohibited

- a. The applicant/recipient agrees that no person shall, on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, color, any disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act, national origin or ancestry, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to



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discrimination under any program or activity for which the applicant/recipient receives financial assistance from ODNR Division of Parks and Watercraft.

- b. It is inappropriate to deny access to any boater or discriminate on the basis of race, religion, place of residence, including preferential fees, reservation, membership system, or allocation of spaces.

8. Liability

The grant recipient agrees to defend and hold the State free from liability in case of claim or suit arising from the construction, operation, or maintenance of this project.