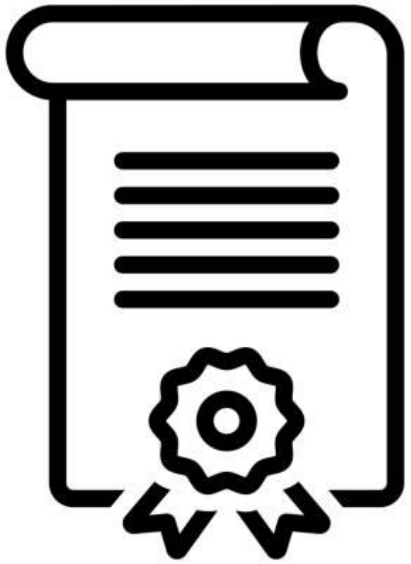
STAC Overview

Roles and Responsibilities, Charter Overview

Key Charter Points

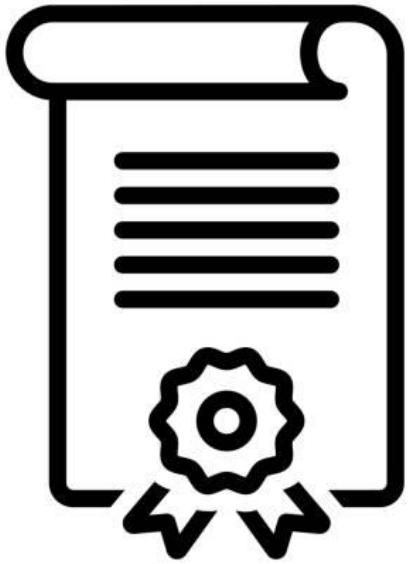
The State Trails Advisory Committee is a citizen committee tasked with advising Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) on the administration of the Recreational Trails Program and the Montana Trail Stewardship Program.

- Officially Charted in 1992
- Must include representatives of both Motorized and Non-Motorized Trail Users. Trail use is self-determined.
- Must meet a minimum of once per federal fiscal year Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 206(d)(4)(A)
- Committee is advisory in nature and is authorized to submit recommendations



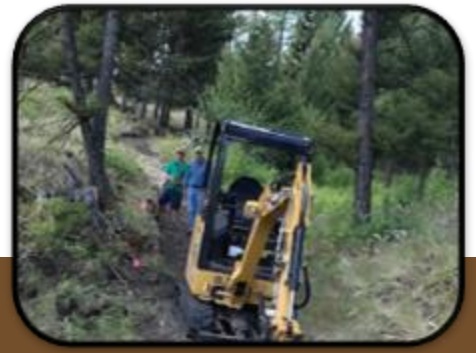
Key Charter Points Cont...

- The Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division Administrator shall serve as Committee Sponsor. The TSP and RTP Manager will provider oversight of the Committee, it's work, and coordination and be a liaison between the Committee and Sponsor
- **Meetings should be operated in a manner appropriate for public agency where a variety of viewpoints may be expressed, discussion is appropriate and germane, and an opportunity for public comment is provided.**
- Committee Members may serve up to two three-year terms. Terms must be Consecutive
    - **Current Terms expire on December 1st, 2027 .**
- Committee Members may not receive compensation for their time but are eligible for travel and lodging reimbursement



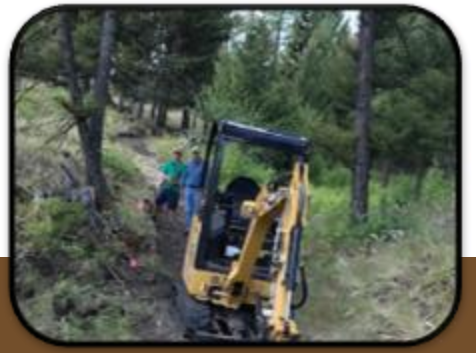
STAC Roles

- **Meet at least once per federal fiscal year**
  - **Current procedure includes one Spring Meeting to review applications and one Summer/Fall meeting to review guidance and any program changes before grant cycles open.**
  - Meetings are recorded and posted to the STAC Webpage
- **Provide input:**
  - Proposed changes to RTP and TSP project eligibility criteria;
  - Proposed changes to RTP and TSP project sponsor criteria;
  - Project evaluation and selection criteria.
  - The committee may review applications to RTP and TSP per program processes and policies and make recommendations regarding the awarding of funds.
  - May also assist in the review of the State Trails Plan



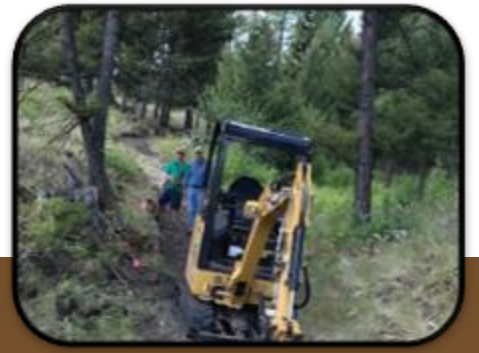
STAC Reminders

- Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement
- Travel Reimbursement Forms



Advisors

- FWP may recruit, by invitation, an unlimited number of advisors to the committee from state and federal agencies to advise the committee on applications that directly affect the advisor's agency, as well as scoring criteria and evaluation processes as they impact the advisor's agency.
  - *USFS, BLM, DNRC, DOT, FWHA, NPS, FWP, ETC.*
- Advisors do not receive compensation, are not covered by Workman's Compensation, and are not eligible for travel and lodging reimbursement.

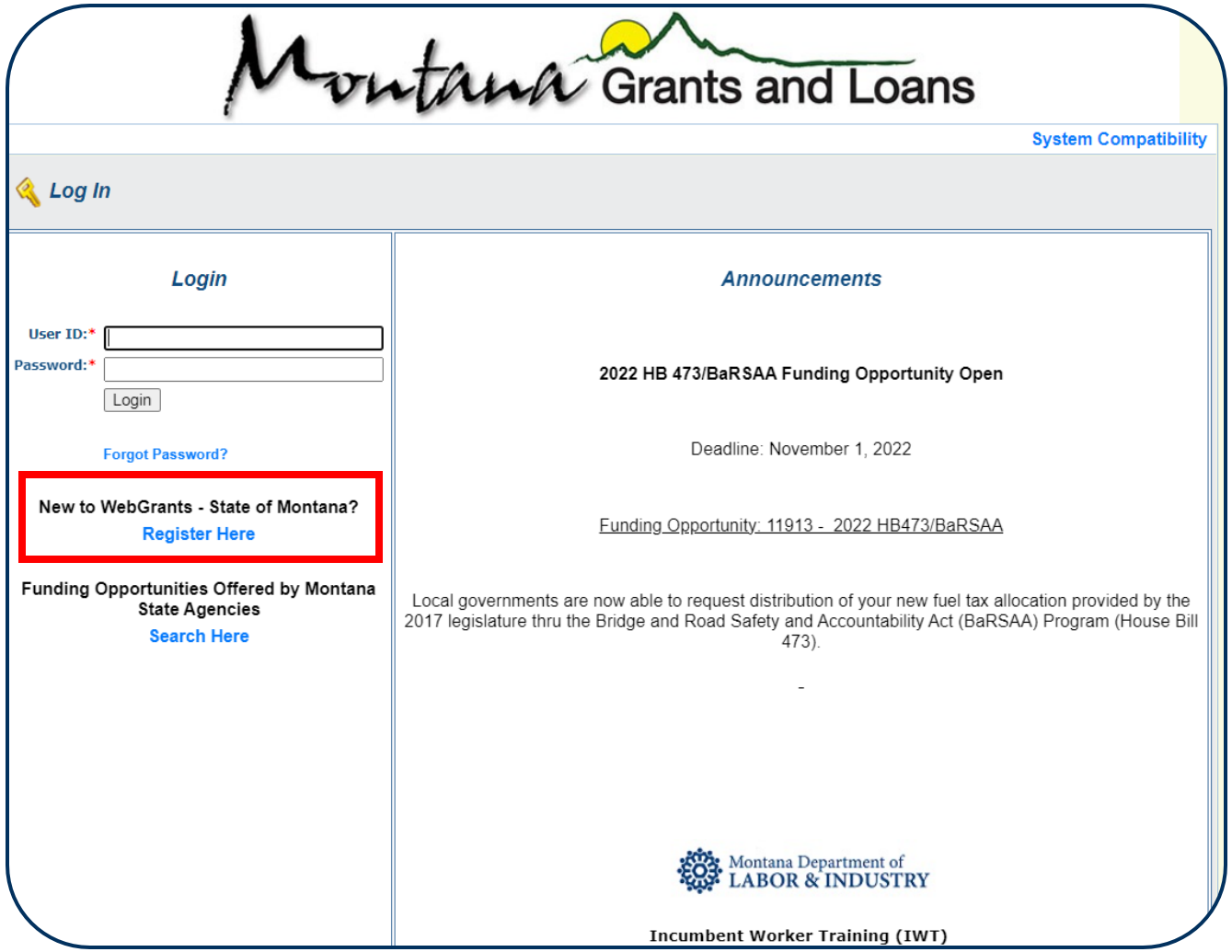


WebGrants

For RTP and TSP Grant Review

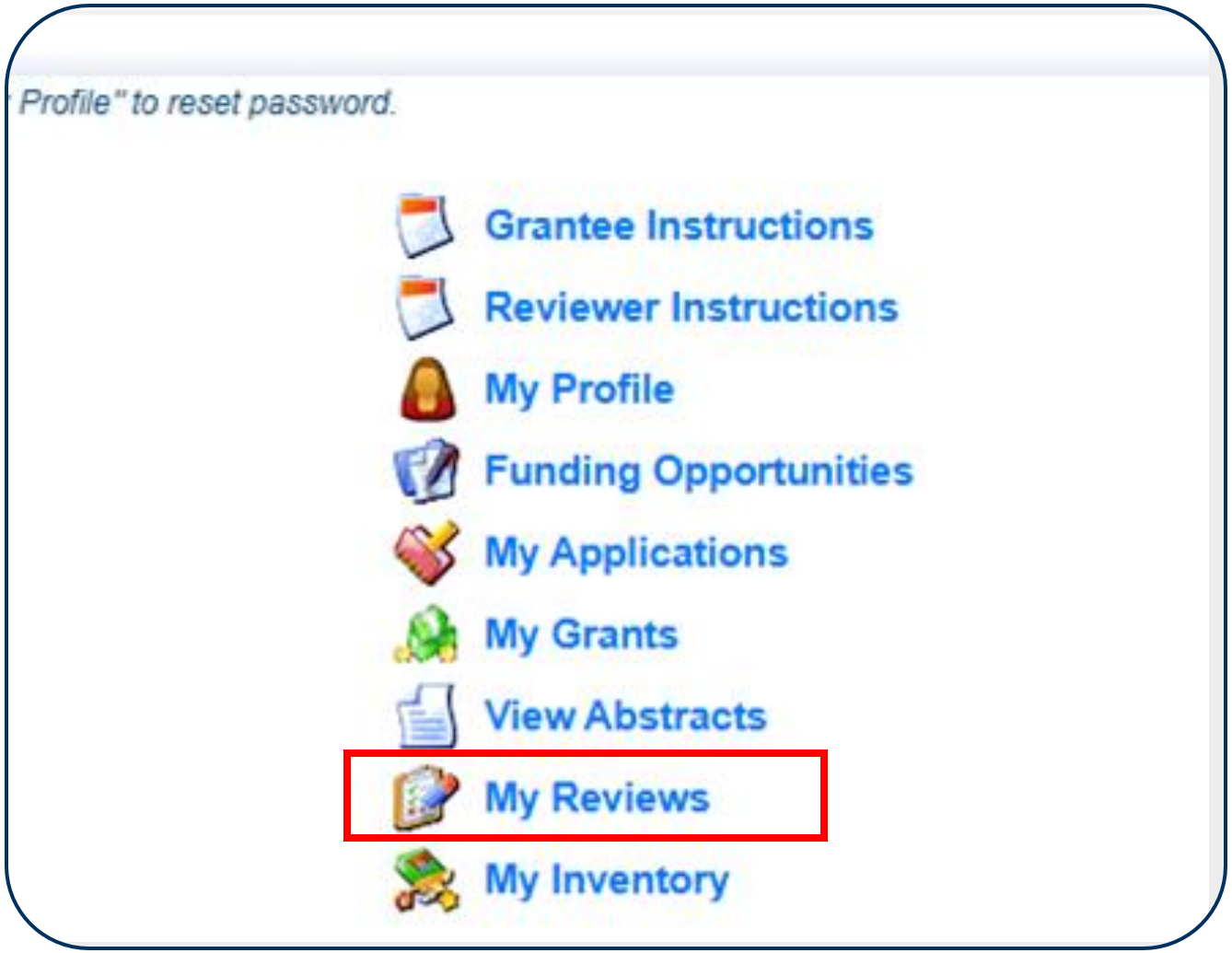
Signing Up for WebGrants

- Visit: funding.mt.gov
- Complete the Registration page
- Contact RTP Manager, stephanie.adamsclemen@mt.gov, for registration approval and access
- Your username and password will be emailed to you once approved



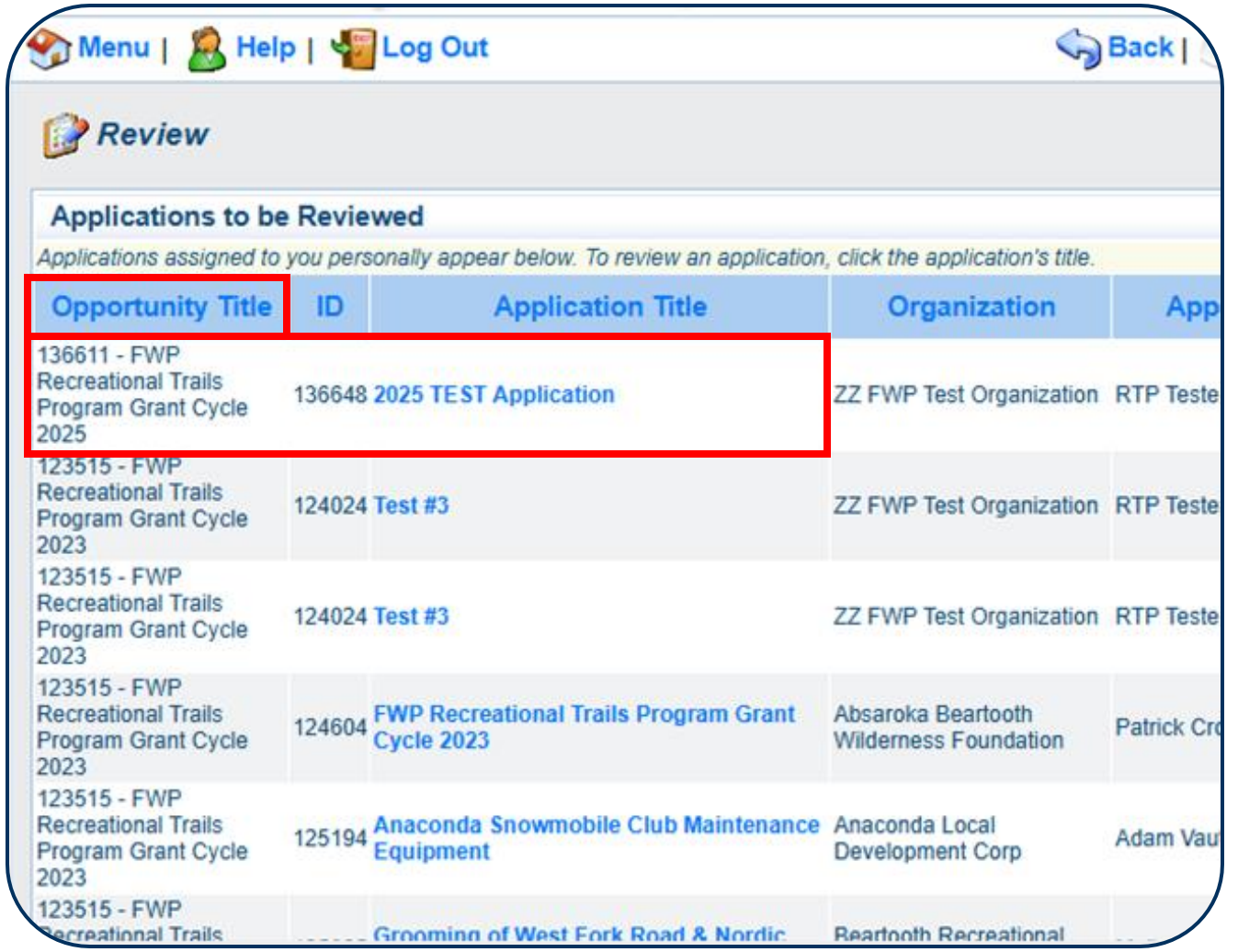
How to View Applications for Review

- Once logged in, Navigate the home menu to **"My Reviews"**



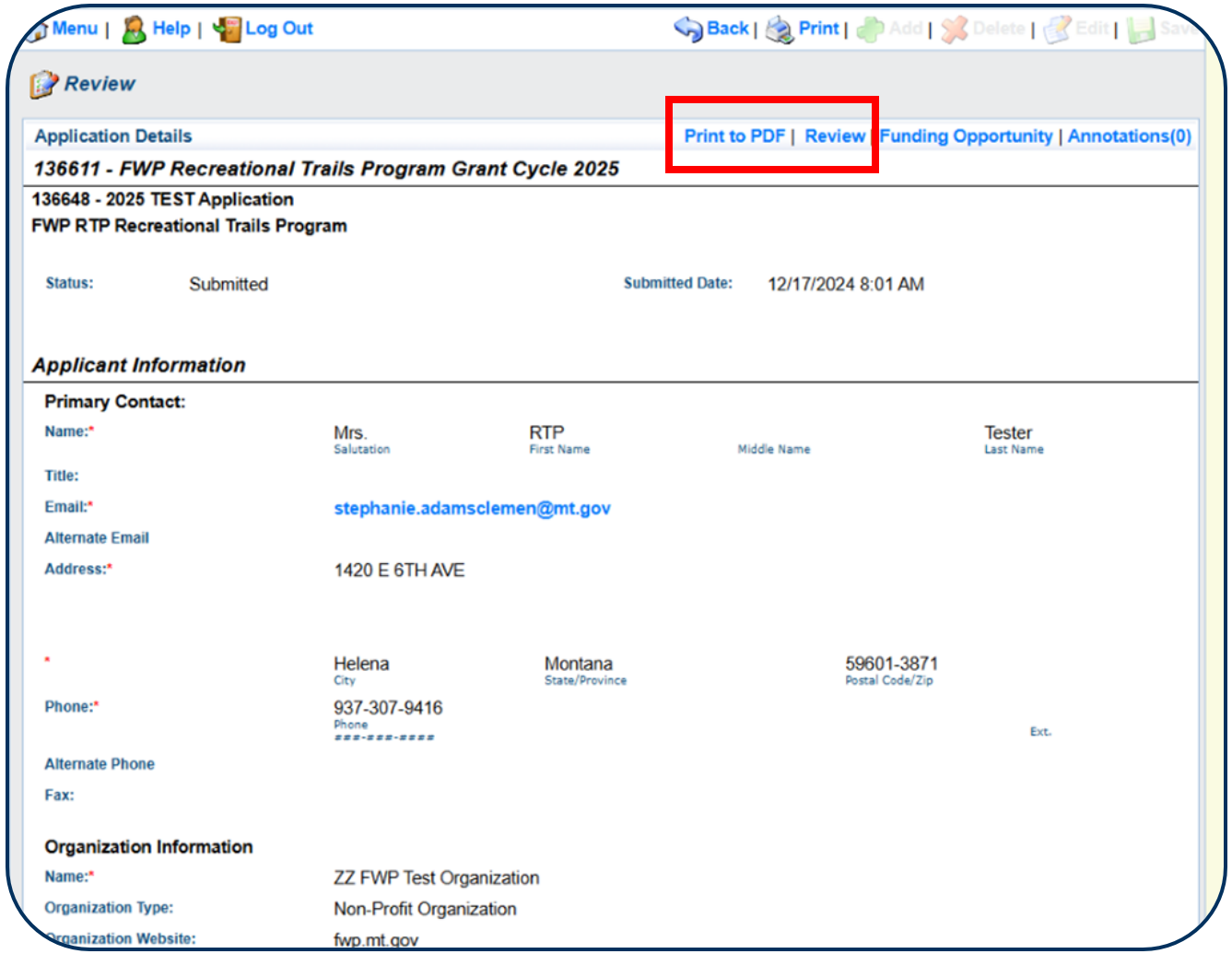
How to View Applications for Review

- A list of applications will be displayed.
- Make sure to review the OPPORTUNITY TITLE to ensure you are view the correct funding cycle and Program (RTP 2025)
- You can sort by Opportunity Title by clicking on the header
- Seclect the Application Title you want to view



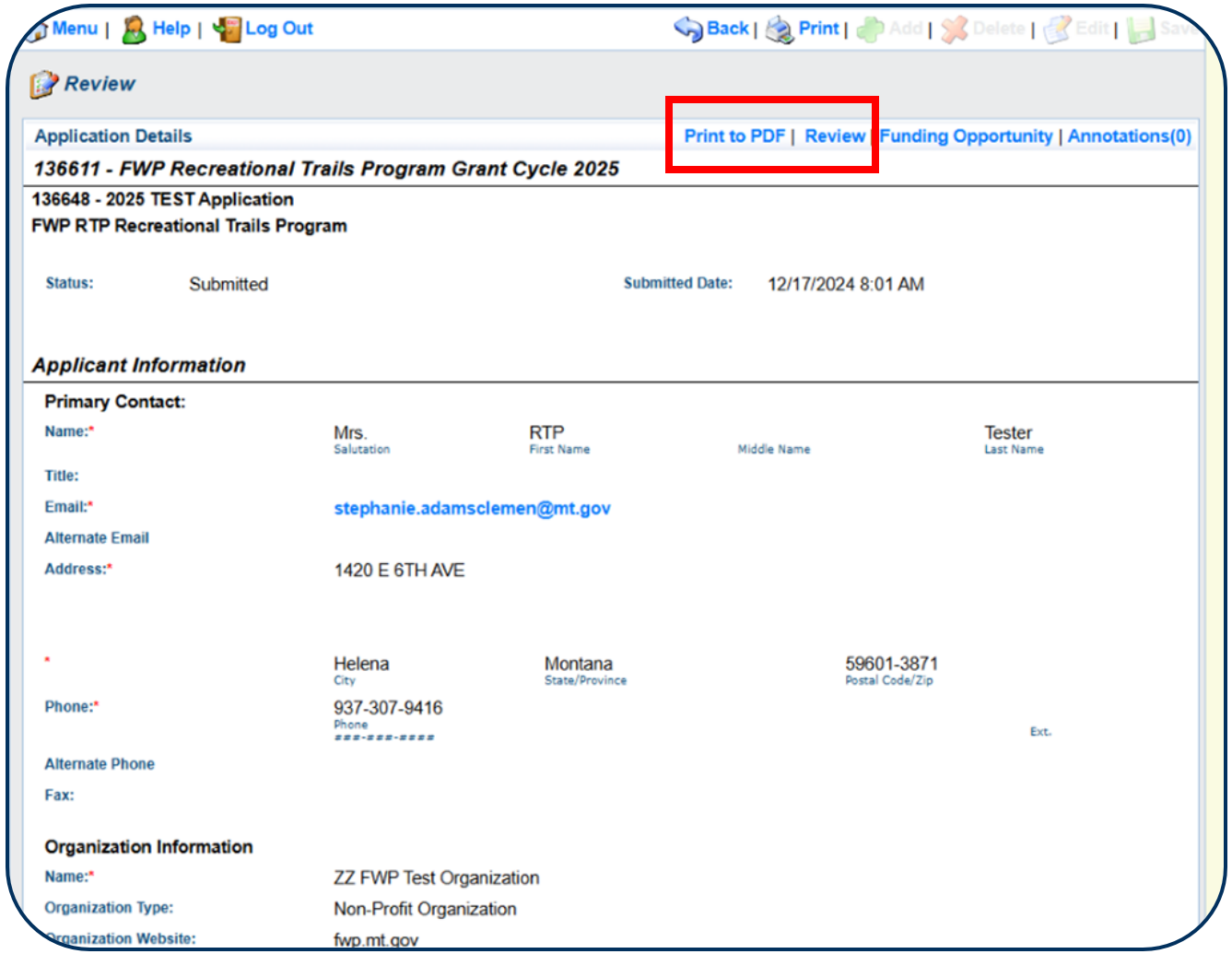
How to View Applications for Review

- Scroll down to review full application, there also may be various attachments/maps within the application for download.
- **IMPORTANT:** We only use WebGrants to **VIEW** the application, we will not use WebGrants to activity.
- "Print PDF" to download a PDF version of the application.



How to View Remove Applications from Review List (Optional – RTP)

- If you no longer want to see the list of applications under the Review list, you must:
  1. Select "Review"



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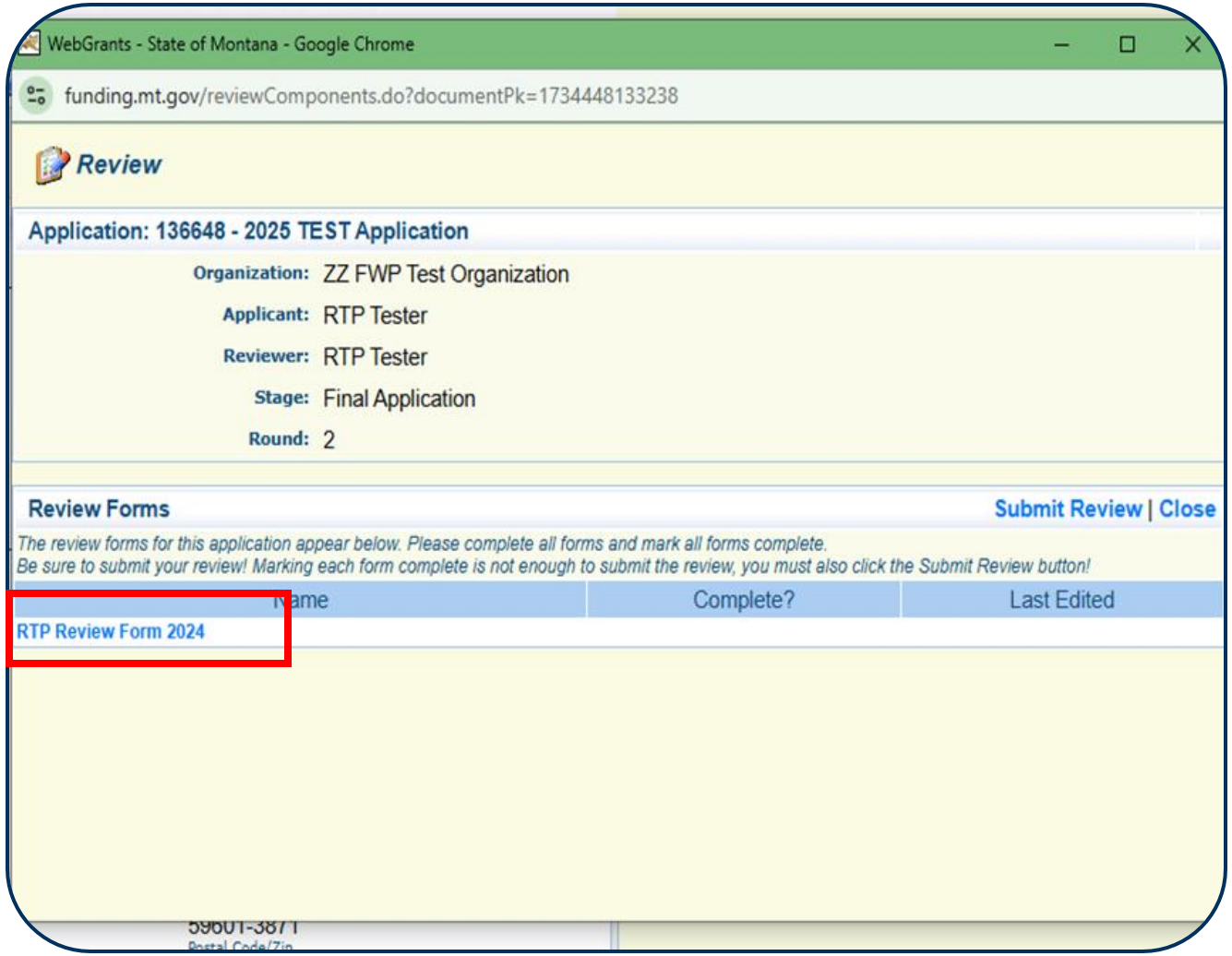
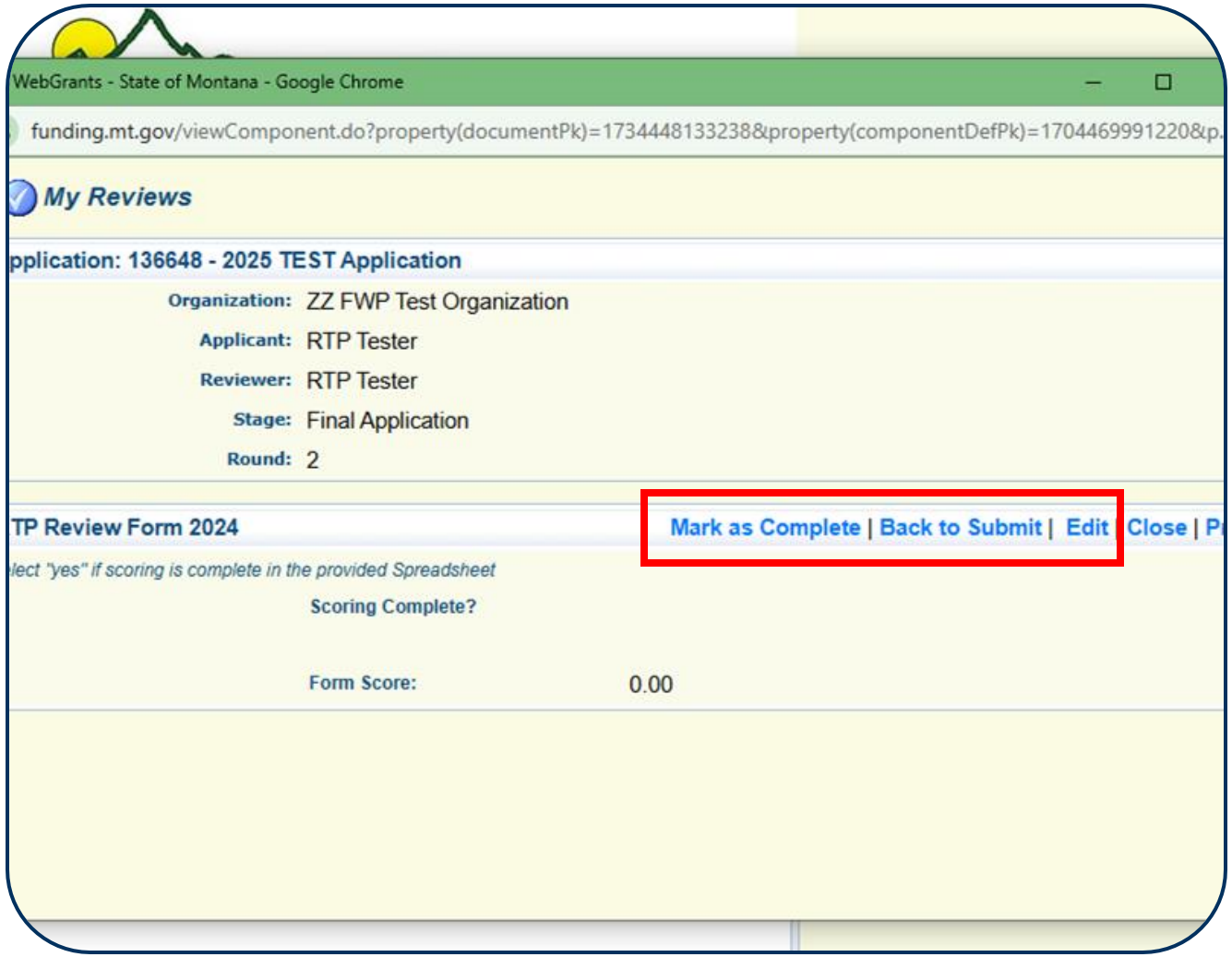
  1. Select "Review"
  2. In the Pop-Up Window, select the available review form



How to View Remove Applications from Review List

- If you no longer want to see the list of applications under the Review list, you must:
  1. Select "**Review**"
  2. In the Pop-Up Window, select the available review form
  3. "**Edit**" and complete the required question - then "**Save**"
  4. "**Mark as Complete**"
  5. "**Back to Submit**"



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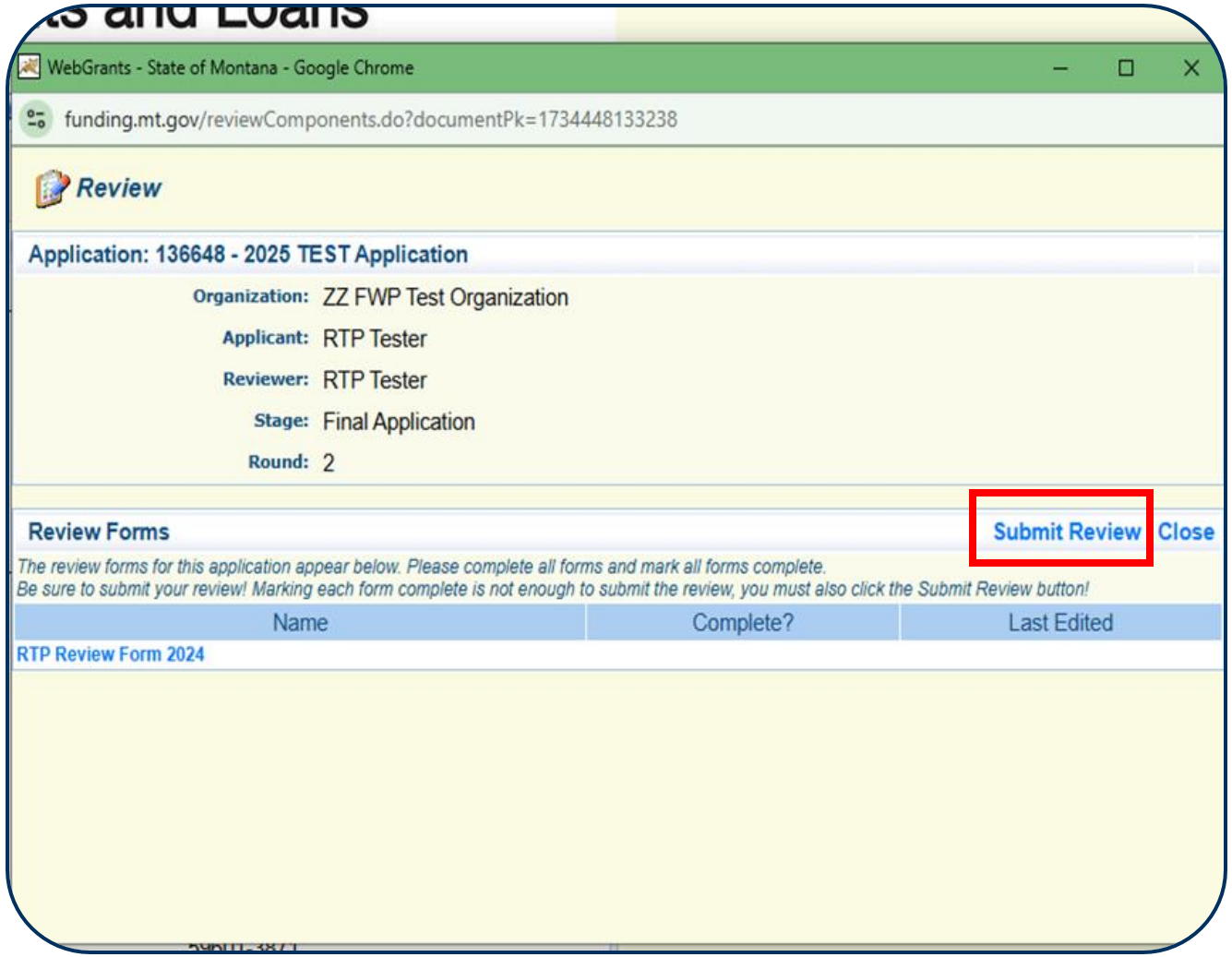
  6. "**Submit Review**"



Recreational Trails Program

Program Overview

Recreational Trails Program

Funding Source:

Funds come from the Federal Highway Trust Fund and represent a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from nonhighway recreational fuel use. (e.g., snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, and off-highway light trucks.)

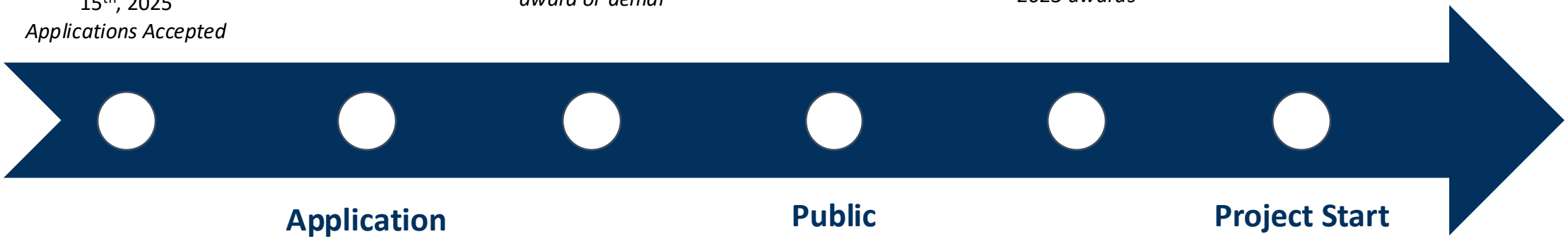
Purpose:

RTP grant funds are intended to provide, expand, and improve recreational trails for both motorized and nonmotorized trail uses. RTP grants are for projects that are primarily recreational in nature, rather than serving a more utilitarian transportation function.

30/30/40 Allocation

- 30% Nonmotorized
- 30% Motorized
- 40% Diversified
- 5% of funds may go towards education and safety projects

Application Cycle Overview



Application Cycle

Nov. 15th, 2025 – Jan. 15th, 2025

Applications Accepted

Initial Notice

April 2025

Applicants notified of conditional award or denial

Decision Notice

May 2025

FWP issues final decision notice for 2023 awards

Application Review

Feb. - March 2025

Internal and external review conducted

Public Comment

April - May 2025

15-day public comment period opens on proposed awards

Project Start

July & August 2025

Contracts issued

Funding

- Approximately $1.1 - $1.5 million Available
- FWP Authority may be limited for the FY25 cycle (Closer to $1.2 Million)
- Max Request: $100,000
- Match Required: 20%
  - 20% of the total project cost (match + RTP request)
  - May be from cash or in-kind (e.g., value of volunteer time)
  - Federal Applicants must provide 5% nonfederal match
  - May use FWP Trails Stewardship Grant as match to RTP – *must be already awarded at the time of application & be directly related to the proposed project.*

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

- Federal
- Tribal
- State
- County or Municipal Agencies (including school districts)
- Private Corporations
- Nonprofits

At the time of application, applicants must:

- Be registered and in good standing with the Secretary of State
- Be registered with the System for Award Managed (SAM) – Submit verification with application
- Must complete a Risk Assessment at the time of application (Now part of the WebGrants Application)

Eligible Funding Areas

- Maintenance and restoration of recreational trails
- Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages for recreational trails
- Purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment
- Construction of new recreational trails
- Trail signage
- Trail corridor or trailhead weed management
- Publications and educational programs that promote safety and environmental protection

RTP VS. TSP

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

- Federally Funded Program
- Max Funding: $100,000
- Required Match: 20%
- Equipment purchases and education/safety projects are eligible
- 10% de minimis or federally approved IDR rate allowed (can be used as match)

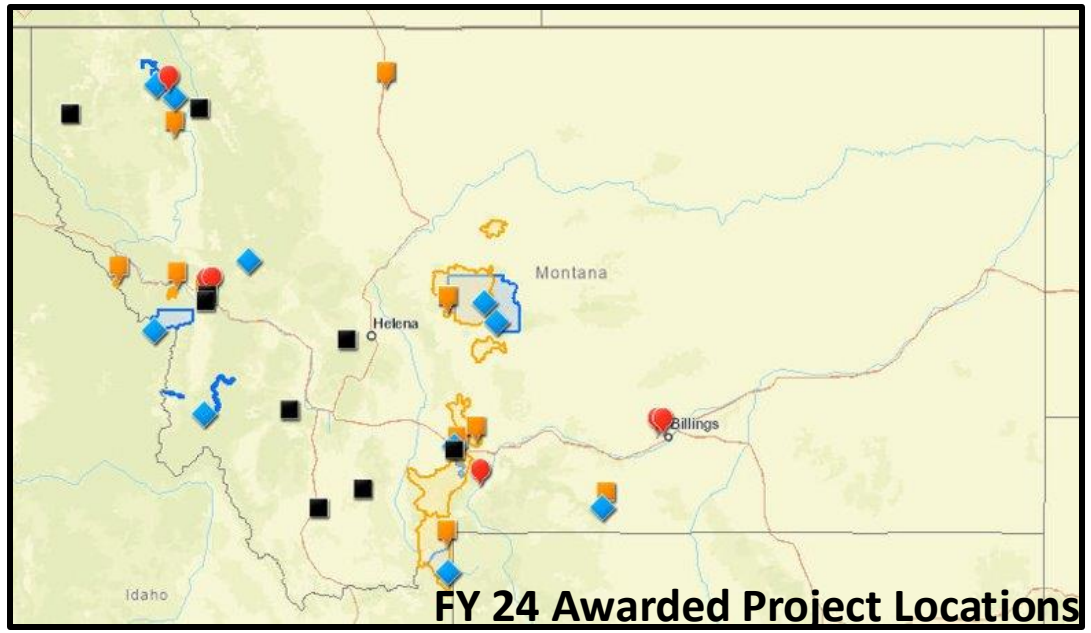
Trail Stewardship Program (TSP)

- State Funded Program
- Max Funding: $100,000
- Required Match: 10%
- Equipment purchases and education/safety projects are *not* eligible
- 7% admin fee allowed (can not be used as match)

2024 Cycle Recap

- **48** Applications - $ 2,458,121.98
- **36** Awards - $ 1,474,659
  - **Motorized** - $ 388,700
  - **Diversified** - $ 618,797.98
    - **Education** - $80,3360
  - **Nonmotorized** - $ 467,162

PROJECT TYPES INCLUDED:	
New Construction	8
Maintenance	12
Maintenance - Grooming	9
Equipment Purchases	6
Education	5



FY 24 Awarded Project Locations

Changes / Updates (2024 – 2025)

- A minimum grant award has been set at $5,000
- Volunteer hourly rate has increased from $25/hr. to $30/hr.
- Acquisition and easement proposals are no longer eligible.
- Build America, Buy America de Minimis & Small Grants Waiver: As of August 16th 2023, RTP funded projects with a **total cost of under $500k** no longer need to have BABA certifications for iron, steel, or construction materials.
- FWP Authority may be limited for the FY25 cycle – closer to $1.2 Million. Increased authority is being requested for the next biennium.
- We are ~$63k behind in Motorized project funding - would like to catch up this cycle.

RTP Application Review Process

- **January / February:** Preliminary Review (page 6 of Application Guidance)
  - Is it Eligible? Is it ready to procced? Adequate landowner permissions? Is the application complete?
- **February:** Internal Panel Review – Scoring Criteria
  - Project Description (10 points)
  - Project Implementation (12 points)
  - Recreational Benefit (8 points)
  - Trail Sustainability (8 points)
  - Budget (8 points)
- **March:** State Technical Advisory Committee Recommendations
- **March:** Internal Panel Final Decisions meeting & Notice of Conditional Awards
- **April-May:** 15-day Public Comment Period
- **June:** FWP Decision Notice Published
- **July/August:** Contracts out for signature. Work may not begin until a signed contract is received

Contact Information

Stephanie Clemen
RTP Program Manager
(406) 444 – 5898
stephanie.adamsclemen@mt.gov

Webpage:

fwp.mt.gov/aboutfwp/grant-programs/recreational-trails

Montana Trail Stewardship Program

Funding Source

Funding for TSP comes from a portion of Montana's $9.00 light vehicle registration as well as tax revenue from recreational marijuana sales.

Purpose

The Trail Stewardship Grant Program (TSP) provides funding for the development, renovation, and maintenance of motorized and nonmotorized recreational trails and trailside facilities. (23-2-108 and 23-2-109, MCA)

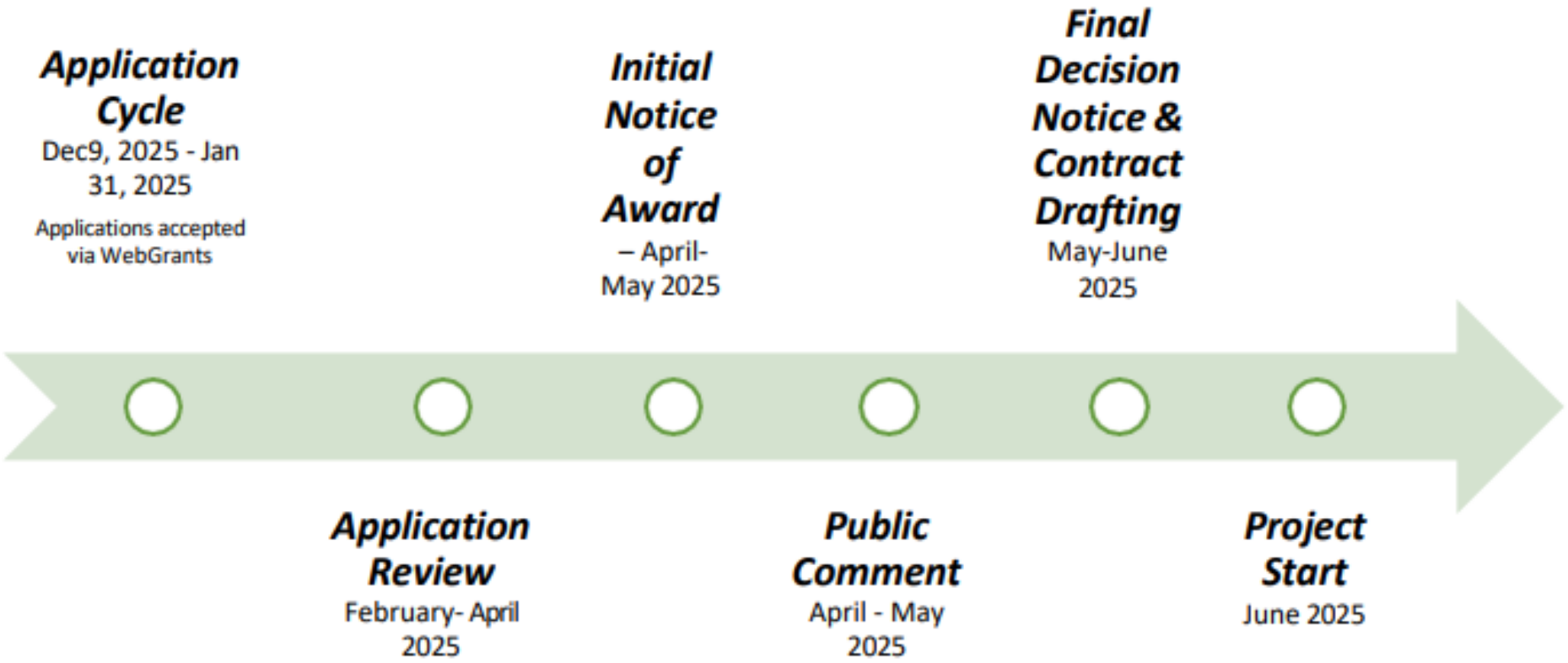
30/30/40 Allocation

-30% Motorized
-30% Nonmotorized
-40% Falls into a general pool

Available Funding

Approximately $2 Million available for the 2025 grant cycle. Applicants may apply for up to $100,000.

Grant Cycle Timeline

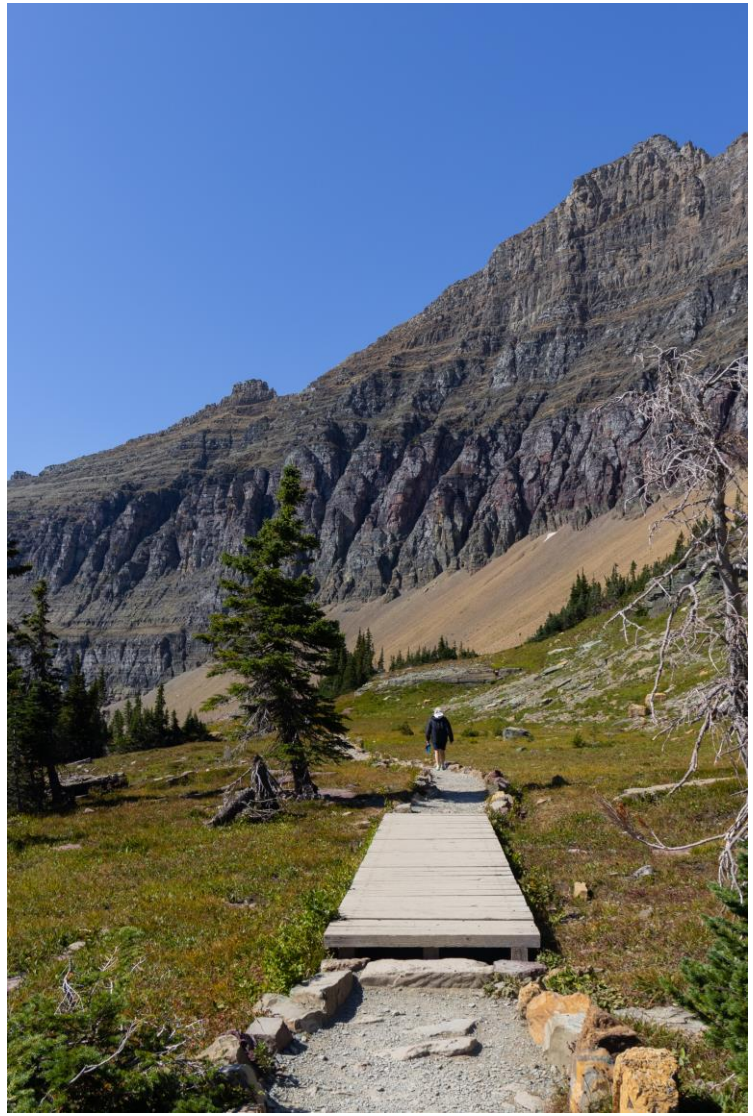


Funding

- Approximately $2 Million available for 2025
- Maximum of $100,000 per project.
- Match Requirement
  - 10% of the total project cost.
  - Matching funds may be in kind or cash.
  - Applicants may include expenses/reimbursement from other FWP grant programs as match in their project budgets.

Eligible Applicants

- Tribal, State, County, Municipal, or Federal government agencies, School Districts, and nonprofit recreational organizations and clubs.
- An organization can submit one grant application per grant cycle.
- Organizations may apply for both TSP and RTP Grants in the same year but they must be for distinctly different projects.



Eligible Projects

- Construction of new trails and paths
- Rehabilitation and maintenance including grooming of trails for motorized and nonmotorized winter recreation
- Construction and maintenance of trailside and trailhead facilities
- Integration of features to assist individuals with disabilities
- Maintenance or storage of equipment, including winter grooming equipment
- Restoration of areas damaged by trail use
- Weed management inside established trail corridors
- Development of urban trail linkages near homes, workplaces, and commercial centers

Ineligible Projects

- Acquisition of easements or property for trails
- Purchase of equipment
- Development of marketing and ethics education programs/materials
- Feasibility studies and planning

TSP Application Review

FWP Internal Review

- Preliminary Technical review for application eligibility, completeness, and landowner permission
- Internal Review panel application scoring based on the TSP Scoring Criteria

STAC Review

- All applications are reviewed and given a score based on the TSP Scoring Criteria.

Scoring Review Meeting

- STAC Review Scores are compiled and applications are ranked based on score
- Application scores are reviewed and discussed.
- Rankings are finalized

Review Timeline

- **February 3-10:**
  - Preliminary internal Review
- **February 10- March 10:**
  - STAC and Internal application Review and Scoring
- **Mid March:**
  - State Technical Advisory Committee Recommendations: 2 day meeting to review TSP and RTP Applications.
- **Late March:**
  - Internal Panel Final Decisions meeting & Notice of Conditional Awards
- **April-May:**
  - 15-day Public Comment Period
- **June:**
  - FWP Decision Notice Published
- **June/July:**
  - Contracts out for signature. Work may not begin until a signed contract is received

TSP Scoring Criteria & Rubric

Project Location– 4 Points

Project Benefits -12 points

Project Implementation Plan–16 Points

Project Budget and Narrative–12 points

Environmental Benefits– 4 points

Focus Areas – 2 Points

Contact Information

Hunter Harridge
TSP Program Manager
406-444-3343
Hunter.Harridge@mt.gov
Limited Availability Until January 27th

TSP Web Page
https://fwp.mt.gov/aboutfwp/grant-programs/trail-stewardship