

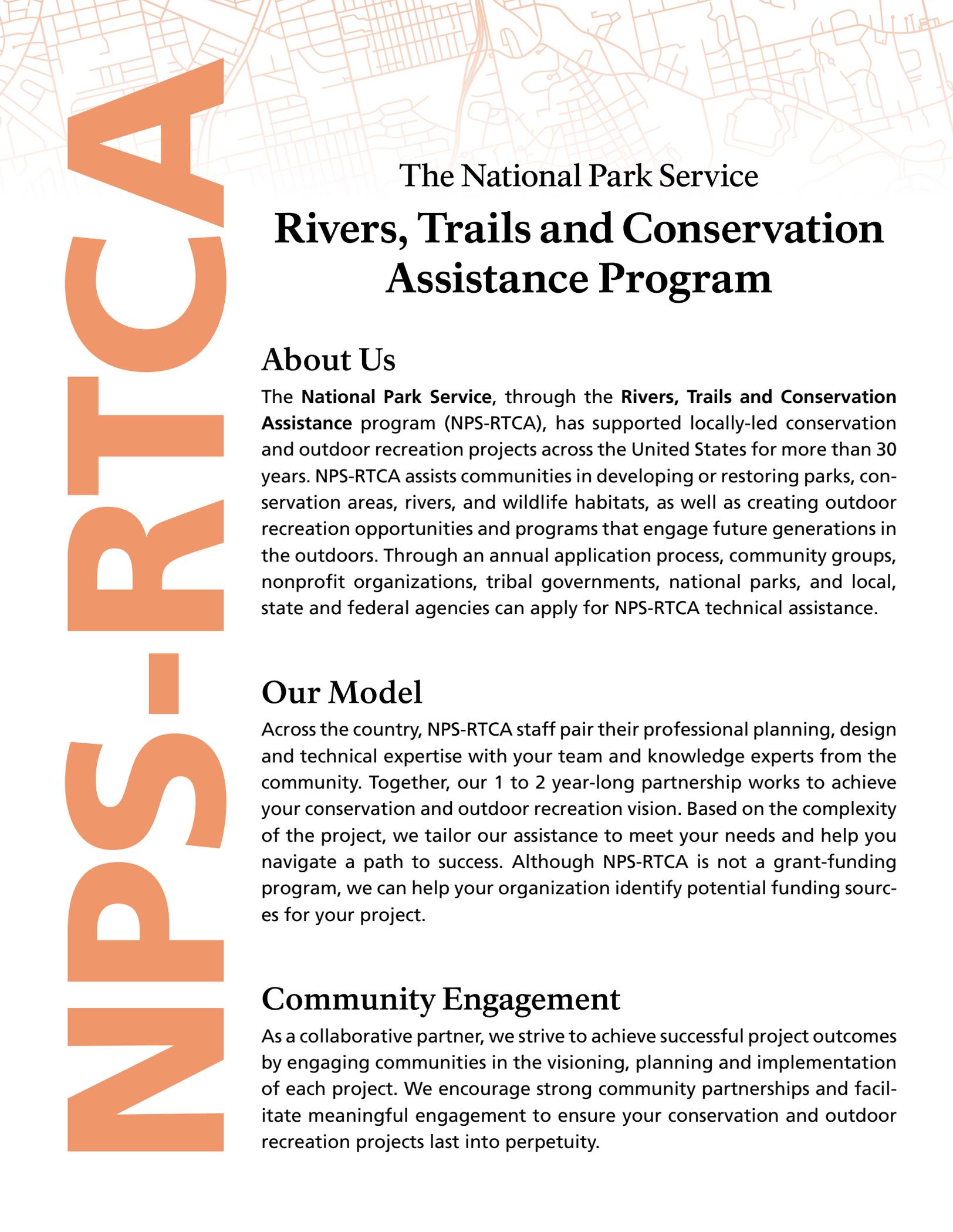


# Organizational Development

Strengthening the capacity of organizations

The National Park Service assists partners with organizational development that builds their capacity to manage conservation and outdoor recreation outcomes.





# NPS-RTCA

## The National Park Service **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program**

### **About Us**

The **National Park Service**, through the **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance** program (NPS-RTCA), has supported locally-led conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the United States for more than 30 years. NPS-RTCA assists communities in developing or restoring parks, conservation areas, rivers, and wildlife habitats, as well as creating outdoor recreation opportunities and programs that engage future generations in the outdoors. Through an annual application process, community groups, nonprofit organizations, tribal governments, national parks, and local, state and federal agencies can apply for NPS-RTCA technical assistance.

### **Our Model**

Across the country, NPS-RTCA staff pair their professional planning, design and technical expertise with your team and knowledge experts from the community. Together, our 1 to 2 year-long partnership works to achieve your conservation and outdoor recreation vision. Based on the complexity of the project, we tailor our assistance to meet your needs and help you navigate a path to success. Although NPS-RTCA is not a grant-funding program, we can help your organization identify potential funding sources for your project.

### **Community Engagement**

As a collaborative partner, we strive to achieve successful project outcomes by engaging communities in the visioning, planning and implementation of each project. We encourage strong community partnerships and facilitate meaningful engagement to ensure your conservation and outdoor recreation projects last into perpetuity.



## Recreate Responsibly: Messaging in Response to COVID-19

The Recreate Responsibly Coalition formed out of an emergency need brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. The coalition is a national partnership of nonprofits, outdoor recreation businesses and land managers working to establish and coordinate messages about safely enjoying the outdoors during the pandemic, protecting our public lands and growing the recreation economy.

As the pandemic continued into the fall of 2020, the leaders of Recreate Responsibly recognized the need to provide structure to the coalition and evolve a strategic plan to guide its future. After forming a steering committee, the leaders requested assistance from NPS-RTCA to guide the planning process. NPS-RTCA served as facilitator throughout the six-month process, meeting with the steering committee on a biweekly basis and with program managers in between meetings to track progress, troubleshoot issues as they arose and strategize about next steps.

- 1 KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**  
Check the status of the place you want to visit for closures, fire restrictions, and weather.
- 2 PLAN AND PREPARE**  
Reservations and permits may be required. Make sure you have the gear you need, and a back-up plan.
- 3 BUILD AN INCLUSIVE OUTDOORS**  
Be an active part of making the outdoors safe and welcoming for all identities and abilities.
- 4 RESPECT OTHERS**  
There is space for everyone and countless outdoor activities. Be kind to all who use the outdoors and nature differently.
- 5 LEAVE NO TRACE**  
Respect the land, water, wildlife and Native communities. Follow the seven Leave No Trace principles.
- 6 MAKE IT BETTER**  
We all have a responsibility to sustain the places we love. Volunteer, donate & advocate for the outdoors.

The completed Recreate Responsibly 2021 Strategic Plan provides strategies and guidance for organizational structure, administration and the implementation of their vision.

## Latino Outdoors: Building a National Network

Latino Outdoors is on a mission to make the outdoors a place where all Latinx communities can enjoy nature as safe, inclusive and welcoming — a place where nature is a setting for sharing and celebrating stories, knowledge and culture, developing leadership and stewardship, and engaging communities in volunteer work and transformational experiences.

While the organization is based in southern California, their vision and volunteer network stretch across the country. In 2017, Latino Outdoors requested assistance from NPS-RTCA to help facilitate ideas to expand their network and develop a multi-year strategic plan to build organizational capacity, outreach and program delivery.

Through a series of facilitated conversations focused on the history, success and goals of Latino Outdoors, NPS-RTCA helped put forth a plan that contained culturally relevant outdoor connections and best practices. Just one year after completing the plan, Latino Outdoors' outdoor and stewardship programming grew by 65%, along with significant increases in volunteer leadership and strategic partnerships across the nation.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Who are we?

The **National Park Service – Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program (NPS-RTCA)** assists communities, public land managers and nonprofit organizations with conservation and outdoor recreation projects. NPS-RTCA provides professional planning, design and technical expertise to help achieve your conservation and outdoor recreation vision.

## Does NPS-RTCA provide funding?

No. NPS-RTCA is not a grant-funding program, but we can help you identify potential funding sources for your project.

## What kind of projects does NPS-RTCA support?

Our program staff support locally-led projects that develop or restore parks, conservation areas, rivers, and wildlife habitats, as well as create outdoor recreation opportunities and programs that engage future generations in the outdoors.

## Are NPS-RTCA staff contractors?

The NPS-RTCA model is to combine the skills of our staff with those of your organization. It's a partnership – we work alongside your team and local knowledge experts to assist with the work that you are leading.

## How much time do NPS-RTCA staff spend on each project?

Typically, NPS-RTCA staff collaborate with communities for 1 to 2 years on conservation and outdoor recreation projects. Depending on the complexity of the project and our staffing capacity, the time frame may be extended.

## Who can apply for assistance from NPS-RTCA?

NPS-RTCA provides services to established community groups, nonprofit organizations, tribal governments, national parks, and local, state and federal agencies.

## How can you apply for assistance from NPS-RTCA?

NPS-RTCA support is provided when we are invited to assist you on a conservation or outdoor recreation project. We encourage you to contact us to discuss your project before applying. The application is available on our website: [www.nps.gov/RTCA](http://www.nps.gov/RTCA)

 [nps.gov/RTCA](http://nps.gov/RTCA)

 [NPS\\_RTCA@nps.gov](mailto:NPS_RTCA@nps.gov)

 [facebook.com/RTCANPS](https://facebook.com/RTCANPS)

 [twitter: @RTCANPS](https://twitter.com/RTCANPS)

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

