



Funding Research Memo: Parks and Trails

Last updated: October 2016

THIS MEMO WILL BE UPDATED PERIODICALLY. IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING RESOURCES, PLEASE CONTACT THE SNC FUND DEVELOPMENT TEAM: sncfundingteam@sierranevada.ca.gov.

CAVEAT – Grant guidelines and deadlines are subject to periodic change. Please check the program web sites for new information. The deadlines listed are projected from the last funding round and are particularly unreliable. Check the program’s web site!

FUNDING SUMMARY TABLE

(*Hyperlinks to more complete information later in memo, including links to program web sites.)

Grant	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline	Eligible Costs
CA Dept. of Parks and Recreation Recreational Trails Program	No minimum or maximum. 12% match required.	Development of non-motorized trails.	Not until late 2017 or 2018	Acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors; development and rehabilitation of trails, trailside, and trailhead facilities; and construction of new trails.
CA Dept. of Parks and Recreation Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Grants	Depends on program category. 25% match required.	Planning, acquisition, development, maintenance, administration, operation, enforcement, programs, restoration, and conservation of trails, trailheads, areas, and other facilities associated with the use of OHVs.	March	Very broad – all direct costs plus 15% indirect.
CA Dept. of Parks and Recreation Habitat Conservation Fund	No grant minimum or maximum. 1:1 local or private non-state match required.	Several categories of programs, including trails and wildlife area activities.	October 1	Funding is for land acquisition, trail development, interpretive, and educational activities.
CA Dept. of Parks and Recreation Land and Water Conservation Fund	Grants up to \$2 million. 1:1 match required.	Acquisition or development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities.	Not until 2017	Can fund either acquisition or development projects, but not both.

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CA Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) Active Transportation Program	Minimum \$250,000. Match encouraged but not required.	Active transportation projects, particularly walking and biking.	June	Infrastructure projects (environmental, design, right-of-way, and construction), non-infrastructure projects (education, encouragement, and enforcement activities), and development of community-wide bicycle, pedestrian, safe routes to school, or active transportation plans in disadvantaged communities.
CA Natural Resources Agency Environmental Enhancement Mitigation Program	Up to \$500,000 (\$1 million for acquisition). Match not required but encouraged.	Urban forestry, resource lands, or additional mitigation of transportation projects.	June	Direct project-related costs (acquisition, restoration, or development) incurred during the project performance period. Indirect costs not covered.
Department of Water Resources Urban Stream Restoration Program	No funding until 2018. Currently, program staff will provide technical assistance.	Reduce flooding and erosion, restore or protect the natural ecological values of streams, and promote community involvement and stewardship.	Rolling	Program staff will provide technical assistance to help plan projects and get them ready for successful applications in 2018.
U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Land Access Program (FLAP)	No maximum. An 11.47% match is required.	Improvement of state or county roads and other transportation facilities that provide access to high-use federal recreational areas or economic generators.	Periodic 'Calls for Projects'. Next call is scheduled for January 2017.	This program does not provide funding. Instead the FLAP team will implement the project, including scoping, budgets, engineering, design, environmental review, procurement, and construction management.
U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Land Transportation Program	No maximum, no match.	Improve transportation facilities on public lands.	Periodic 'Calls for Projects'.	Program administration, transportation planning, research, preventive maintenance, engineering, rehabilitation, restoration, construction, and reconstruction of roads, parking areas, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, environmental mitigation, etc.
U.S. Department of Agriculture Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program	Grants up to \$50,000 and loans.	Developing essential community facilities in rural areas.	Rolling	Construction of buildings, roads, bridges, fences, or utilities, as well as other public improvements. Also acquisition of land and water rights, but only when they are necessary for the facility.
National Park Service Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance	No funding provided, technical assistance only.	Development of parks, trails, access to rivers, and other special places.	June, July, or August	Will provide staff assistance in the form of planning, facilitation, design, etc.

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Wells Fargo/National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Environmental Support for Communities	\$25,000 - \$100,000. Match not required but is a scoring criteria; 1:1 or higher match ratios will be more competitive.	Projects that link economic development and community well-being to the stewardship and health of the environment.	December	Habitat restoration and management, capacity and outreach, trail restoration, youth involvement, volunteer programs, etc.
CA State Parks Foundation	Up to \$7,500.	Categories of activities include: Celebrate Heritage, Welcome Visitors, Teach Californians, Safeguard Resources, and Connect Individuals, Organizations, and Partners.	March and September	Services and amenities for visitors, transit initiatives, park interpretation and educational materials, preservation of historical/cultural artifacts, volunteer training, trail improvements, etc. Grants can also be for organizational capacity building.
American Hiking Society National Trails Fund	Up to \$5,000.	Hiking trail improvements.	February	Land acquisitions, trail improvements, constituent development.
Polaris TRAILS grant	Up to \$10,000.	Promoting safe and responsible riding, and preserving access for all-terrain vehicles.	March and September	Funds can be used by organizations for trail development and maintenance projects, safety and education initiatives, lobbying, and other projects to increase and maintain land access.
Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) Foundation	Usually below \$5,000 but there are exceptions.	Programs designed to promote energy sustainability, environmental conservation, and stewardship of land and resources.	March through October	No specific limitations. Applications should be at invitation of PG&E staff.
Community Foundations	Various	Various	Various	Various
California Department of Parks and Recreation California Trails and Greenways Conference - April 19-21, 2017. The conference will provide an opportunity for trails advocates to share information and discover new partnerships.				



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CA Department of Parks and Recreation – Recreational Trails Program http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=24324

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds annually for recreational trails and trails-related projects. This program channels federal transportation funding through the CA Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). There is no maximum or minimum limit on grant request amounts for the program generally, but a maximum grant amount may be set each year by DPR.

Eligible projects include acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors; development and rehabilitation of trails, trailside, and trailhead facilities; and construction of new trails.

The maximum amount of RTP funds allowed for each project is 88 percent of the total project cost. The applicant is responsible for obtaining a match amount that is at least 12 percent of the total project cost. Eligible match sources include state funds (including state grant funds), local funds (including general funds and bond funds), private funds, donated materials and services, value of donated land (for acquisition projects only), and other federal funds.

The program officer has stated that the next round of funding will not be until late 2017 or 2018.

CA Department of Parks and Recreation – Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Program http://ohv.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1164

This program supports the planning, acquisition, development, maintenance, administration, operation, enforcement, restoration, and conservation of trails, trailheads, areas, and other facilities associated with the use of OHVs, and programs involving OHV safety or education.

Relevant activities that can be funded include:

- Ground Operations - Maintenance and/or conservation of facilities; compliance with soil standards and Habitat Management Programs; and protection of natural and/or cultural resources
- Development - Construction of, and improvements to, facilities to sustain or enhance OHV recreational opportunities and experiences (trails, trailhead staging areas, parking, picnic and restroom facilities, etc.)
- Planning - Development of plans for future projects
- Restoration - Provide ecological restoration to habitat damaged by authorized or unauthorized OHV use
- Acquisition - Secure interests in land to sustain or expand OHV recreation access and OHV opportunities

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- Law Enforcement - Provide financial assistance to local and federal agencies for protection of life and property related to OHV recreation
- Education and Safety - Provide public awareness and safety programs for responsible OHV recreation

A 25 percent match (cash or in-kind) is required. This can include volunteer services. A higher match brings in higher scores.

Eligible Applicants by Project Types	Acquisition	Development	Education & Safety	Ground Operations	Law Enforcement	Planning	Restoration
Cities and Counties	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U.S. Forest Service	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U.S. Bureau of Land Management	X	X	X		X	X	X
Other Federal Agencies	X	X	X	X		X	X
Federally Recognized Native American Tribes	X	X	X	X		X	X
Educational Institutions			X				
Nonprofit Organizations			X	X			X
State Agencies							X
Districts	X	X	X	X		X	X

The proposed activity must be directly related to OHV recreation. In general, the more robust the OHV opportunities (more diverse OHV options, more developed facilities, signage, education programs, monitoring, and enforcement, etc.), the higher the application will score. The application requires detailed information about the OHV project, and the information must be well-documented by reports, statistics, plans, studies, and other records.

Other important points about the application:

- More points are awarded if the applicant has multiple partners actively involved
- Projects developed with public input score higher
- Projects will score higher if they are part of an existing land management plan or help implement such a plan
- Because of the heavy documentation requirements (including project descriptions, site plans, maps, photos, etc.), substantial planning and analysis is needed for new projects.

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Eligible project costs are very broad – basically, any costs directly related to the work identified in the project description. Additionally, the applicant may receive reimbursement up to 15 percent of the requested amount for indirect costs.

CA Department of Parks and Recreation – Habitat Conservation Fund

http://www.parks.ca.gov/?Page_id=21361

The Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF) program allocates approximately \$2 million each year for grants to cities, counties, and districts. Projects include:

- Nature interpretation and other programs which bring urban residents into park and wildlife areas
- Programs which protect various plant and animal species
- Acquisition or development of wildlife corridors and trails

Eligible applicants are cities, counties, and districts (park and open space districts). The deadline is the beginning of October.

There are several categories of funding, only two of which are relevant to this funding memo:

	Trails	Wildlife Area Activities
Funding types	Land acquisition or trail development	Educational or interpretational activities
Cost types	Capital outlay	Non-Capital outlay
Species impact	A path or track that brings people to a park or wildlife environment	No direct species impact

There is a requirement to use the CA Conservation Corps for restoration/trail building activities if appropriate.

CA Department of Parks and Recreation Land and Water Conservation Fund

http://www.parks.ca.gov/?Page_id=21360

Applications may fund either acquisition or development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Priority development projects include trails, campgrounds, picnic areas, natural areas, and cultural areas for recreational use.

Eligible applicants include cities, counties, and districts authorized to acquire, develop, operate, and maintain park and recreation areas. Property acquired or developed under the program must be maintained in perpetuity for public outdoor recreation use. This is a very difficult, technical application.

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Grants are up to \$2 million. A 1:1 match is required and may include:

- Funds from state local assistance programs
- Grantee employee labor
- Local or private funds
- Gifts of real property, equipment, and consumable supplies
- Volunteer services directly related to project completion and furnished by professional and technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled and unskilled labor
- Free or reduced-cost use of land, facilities, or equipment
- Bequests and income from wills, estates, and trusts

The grant web site states that there will not be another round of funding until 2017.

CA Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) Active Transportation Program (ATP)

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/atp/>

The ATP consolidates existing federal and state transportation programs, including the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA), and State Safe Routes to School (SR2S), into a single program with a focus to make California a national leader in active transportation, which includes biking and walking. Eligible projects include:

- Safe Routes to School projects that improve the safety of children walking and bicycling to school, in accordance with Section 1404 of Public Law 109-59.
- Recreational trails and trailheads, park projects that facilitate trail linkages or connectivity to non-motorized corridors, and conversion of abandoned railroad corridors to trails.
- Development of a community wide bike, pedestrian, safe routes to schools, or active transportation plan in a disadvantaged community.

There is no stated maximum grant. The minimum grant is \$250,000. Matching funds are encouraged but not required. Deadlines are generally in June.

CA Natural Resources Agency Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program

http://resources.ca.gov/bonds_and_grants/eemp/

The Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEMP) is designed to fund projects that contribute to mitigation of the environmental effects of transportation facilities. Eligible projects must be directly or indirectly related to the environmental impact of the modification of an existing transportation facility or construction of a new transportation facility. This means that the proposed project must be in the immediate vicinity or general area of work done on a public street, highway, mass transit guideway (trains, ports, light rail lines, city streets, airports, etc.), or appurtenant features (park and ride facilities, high-occupancy vehicle lanes, transit stations, etc.). These are called

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'Related Transportation Facilities' (RTF). Not all road work qualifies; see the guidelines. The RTF must have been constructed after January 1, 1990, or not yet have been constructed but is planned and budgeted, and has completed environmental reviews. You can identify eligible RTFs by contacting your local transportation department, Regional Transit Agency, Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), Council of Local Governments (COG), Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), or Caltrans District Office. You will need a lot of documentation from this transportation agency, so contact it early in the process.

Project categories:

- Urban forestry projects designed to offset vehicular emissions of carbon dioxide
- Resource lands projects for the acquisition or enhancement of resource lands to mitigate the loss of, or the detriment to, resource lands lying within or near the right-of-way acquired for transportation improvements
- Mitigation projects beyond the scope of the lead agency responsible for assessing the environmental impact of the proposed transportation improvement

The EEMP encourages projects that produce multiple benefits which reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase water use efficiency, reduce risks from climate change impacts, and demonstrate collaboration with local, state, and community entities. Eligible applicants are local, state, and federal governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations.

The maximum grant is \$500,000. Match funding is not required, but contributes to the competitiveness of the project. The 2016 deadline was July 12.

Department of Water Resources Urban Streams Restoration Program.

<http://www.water.ca.gov/urbanstreams/>

This Department of Water Resources (DWR) grant provides funding to reduce flooding and erosion, restore or protect the natural ecological values of streams, and promote community involvement and stewardship. The last round of funding was in 2014 and there will not be another round of funding until 2018. However, starting in 2017 program staff can provide technical assistance to help communities plan their projects and prepare for successful grant applications. Contact the [program staff](#) for more information.

U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Land Access Program

<https://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/>

The Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) provides funds for roads and other transportation facilities (bridges, trails, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, etc.) owned/maintained by the state or county that provide access to federal lands that have high recreational use or economic impact. FLAP funds cannot be used on federally

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owned or maintained roads; funding for those projects is provided by the Federal Lands Transportation Program (see below).

Eligible activities include work on parking areas and trailheads, provisions for pedestrians and bicycles, mitigation measures to reduce wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity, roadside rest areas, etc.

A successful application does not result in grant funding for the project. Instead the project goes on a list and is implemented by the Federal Lands Highway office, which takes care of scoping, environmental review, design, procurement, and construction administration in close partnership with the relevant agencies.

The next 'call for projects' will come out in January or February, 2017. Applications are submitted by the agency responsible for maintaining the facility in question (usually the county), but local offices of the Federal Land Management Agency (FLMA) often assist in completing the application materials. In any case, the project application must be supported by the appropriate FLMA, documented by a completed support form or a letter of support.

U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Land Transportation Program

<https://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/fltp/>

The Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP) was established to improve transportation facilities on public lands, including national parks and Forest Service lands. The program focuses on improving federal lands transportation facilities (FLTFs) that are located on, adjacent to, or provide access to public lands. The FLTFs must be owned and maintained by the federal government and must be included in the national FLTF inventory. Funds can be used for:

- Program administration, transportation planning, research, preventive maintenance, engineering, rehabilitation, restoration, construction, and reconstruction of FLTFs, as well as:
 - Adjacent vehicular parking areas
 - Acquisition of necessary scenic easements and scenic or historic sites
 - Provision for pedestrians and bicycles
 - Environmental mitigation in or adjacent to federal land to improve public safety and reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity; and to mitigate the damage to wildlife, aquatic organism passage, habitat, and ecosystem connectivity, including the costs of constructing, maintaining, replacing, or removing culverts and bridges, as appropriate
- Construction and reconstruction of roadside rest areas, including sanitary and water facilities
- Congestion mitigation
- Other appropriate public road facilities

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By statute, the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Forest Service receive annual FLTP allocations. For instance, the Forest Service is allocated \$30 million per year for the next five years. These agencies provide an application, also known as an “investment strategy,” that describes how FLTP funds will be used to advance the performance goals of the program. One of the priorities for these strategies is high-use federal recreation sites or federal economic generators.

The program provides 100 percent of project costs.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program>

This program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. Essential community facilities are defined as ‘public improvements requisite to the beneficial and orderly development of a community that is operated on a nonprofit basis’. Eligible facilities include those providing community, social, or cultural services.

This program provides low-interest loans and some grants. The percentage of the project which can be provided as a grant depends on the size of the community and its income levels. In no case can grant awards be greater than \$50,000.

National Park Service Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program

<http://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm>

This program does not provide funding, but rather National Park Service staff provide free, on-location facilitation and planning expertise for projects related to development of parks, trails, access to rivers, and other special places. They can help guide a project from conception to completion. Some of the ways they can help:

- Define project vision and goals
- Inventory and map community resources
- Identify and analyze key issues and opportunities
- Engage collaborative partners and stakeholders
- Design community outreach and participation strategies
- Develop concept plans for trails, parks, and natural areas
- Set priorities and build consensus
- Identify funding sources
- Develop a sustainable organizational framework to support the project

The application deadline is usually June, July, or August. It is a good idea to contact the staff several weeks in advance of the deadline to discuss your project.

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Wells Fargo/National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Environmental Solutions for Communities

<http://www.nfwf.org/environmentalsolutions/Pages/home.aspx#.VfhMJZenGF7>

In 2012, Wells Fargo and NFWF launched a five-year Environmental Solutions for Communities initiative designed to support projects that link economic development and community well-being to the stewardship and health of the environment. Funding priorities for this program include:

- Supporting sustainable agricultural practices and private lands stewardship
- Conserving critical land and water resources and improving local water quality
- Restoring and managing natural habitat, species, and ecosystems that are important to community livelihoods
- Facilitating investments in green infrastructure, renewable energy, and energy efficiency
- Encouraging broad-based citizen participation in project implementation.

Funding has been provided for trail maintenance projects, particularly if they involve community volunteers. Grants in the 2015-16 cycle targeted counties in the south and south-central region of the Sierra Nevada and ranged from \$25,000 to \$100,000. The grant period is 18 months. The 2015 deadline was December 10.

California State Parks Foundation (CSPF)

<http://www.calparks.org/whatwedo/grants/>

These grants are focused **on state parks only**. Grants are for projects or programs that protect, enhance, and preserve California's state parks. These grants are awarded two times a year through a competitive process and support CSPF's Park Excellence Project vision elements: Celebrate Our Enduring Heritage, Welcome Visitors, Teach Californians, Safeguard Resources, and Connect Individuals, Organizations, and Partners.

The grants can connect the next generation stewards to the outdoors and state parks, utilize technology to support and enhance the visitor's experiences, rehabilitate historical buildings, restore habitats and monitor wildlife, preserve cultural assets for future generations, and/or restore and improve parks. Some eligible projects include services and amenities for visitors, transit initiatives, park interpretation and educational materials, preservation of historical/cultural artifacts, volunteer training, and trail improvements. Funding can also be used to build the capacity of the organization, if the organization's mission is dedicated to supporting one or more California state parks. The maximum grant is \$7,500. Eligible applicants are 501(c)(3) organizations. A letter of support from the park's California Department of Parks and Recreation District or Sector Superintendent is required, unless the grant is not for capacity building or the state park is not operated by the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

Applications are accepted in March and September.

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American Hiking Society National Trail Fund

<http://www.americanhiking.org/national-trails-fund/>

Grants are for members of the American Hiking Society Alliance and range from \$500 to \$5,000. Only 501(c)(3) nonprofits are eligible to receive funding. Projects considered are:

- Projects that have hikers as the primary constituency, though multi-purpose human-powered trail uses are eligible
- Projects that secure trail lands, including acquisition of trails and trail corridors, and the costs associated with acquiring conservation easements
- Projects that will result in visible and substantial ease of access, improved hiker safety, and/or avoidance of environmental damage
- Projects that promote constituency building surrounding specific trail projects – including volunteer recruitment and support

Higher preference is often given to projects with volunteer labor. Projects should be completed within one year. The 2016 deadline for applications was February 19.

Polaris T.R.A.I.L.S. grant

<http://www.polaris.com/en-us/rider-support/trails-application>

The T.R.A.I.L.S. grant program was launched in January 2006 for all-terrain vehicle (ATV) clubs, associations, and grassroots groups. The purpose of the program is to promote safe and responsible riding and preserve access for ATV vehicles. Funds can be used by organizations for trail development and maintenance projects, safety and education initiatives, lobbying, and other projects to increase and maintain land access.

Grant funding is limited to a maximum of \$10,000 per request. Organizations can apply for either monetary awards or product as long as the value does not exceed \$10,000, and may apply for two grants per year. All organizations must be 501(c)(3), 501(c)(7), government, or nonprofit organizations. There are two deadlines per year, in March and September.

Pacific Gas & Electric Foundation

<http://www.pge.com/en/about/community/grants/index.page?>

Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) gives small grants in three areas, one of which is 'environment'. It appears this is very broadly defined (see the list of grantees). There is a preference for low-income and underserved communities. Grants applications are invited by PG&E employees, so the best idea is to contact your local PG&E public affairs staff. Once invited to submit a grant, the application process is done online.

Grants are small, usually under \$5,000. The corporation gives out a lot of grants, so if you just need a few thousand dollars for an event, equipment, etc., this might be worth

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pursuing. The funding process is open for a period of about six months every year, but this period changes year to year.

Community Foundations

<http://lccf.org/about/locate-your-local-cf>

If you have a community foundation that serves your area, look at their web site (or call them— some of these foundations are very small and don't have a web presence) and ask if they have grant programs that would be appropriate for your project. The link above leads to the League of California Community Foundations web site, which maintains a list of these foundations.

Most community foundations offer several different types of programs, each of which has a different annual deadline. Grants are usually small. Local, visible projects are often favored.

California Department of Parks and Recreation California Trails and Greenways Conference

http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=24151

The 32nd annual California Trails and Greenways Conference will be held April 19-21, 2017. The conference provides three days of high-quality education and networking opportunities for urban, rural, and backcountry trail professionals. Participants can join leading trail experts for training and discussions on the latest advances in trail design, construction, maintenance, interpretation, volunteerism, and management. The conference also provides an opportunity to explore collaborative opportunities and engage in productive dialogue. There will be training sessions in trail management, design, and construction, as well as hands-on learning opportunities

All activities are designed to increase the knowledge of trail, recreation, and wild land management to improve non-motorized, recreational, and heritage trail systems and programs throughout California.

For updates on the conference and other related topics, subscribe to the CA Trails Conference mailing list at <https://catrailsconference.org/subscribe/>.