

# Understanding the Recreational Trails Program: A Guide for Applicants

Pamela Jordan

Federal Program Specialist



TEAM  
KENTUCKY.

My *New*  
Kentucky  
Home



# Recreational Trails Program Mission



City of Whitesville Community Park Resurfacing

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds to States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses.

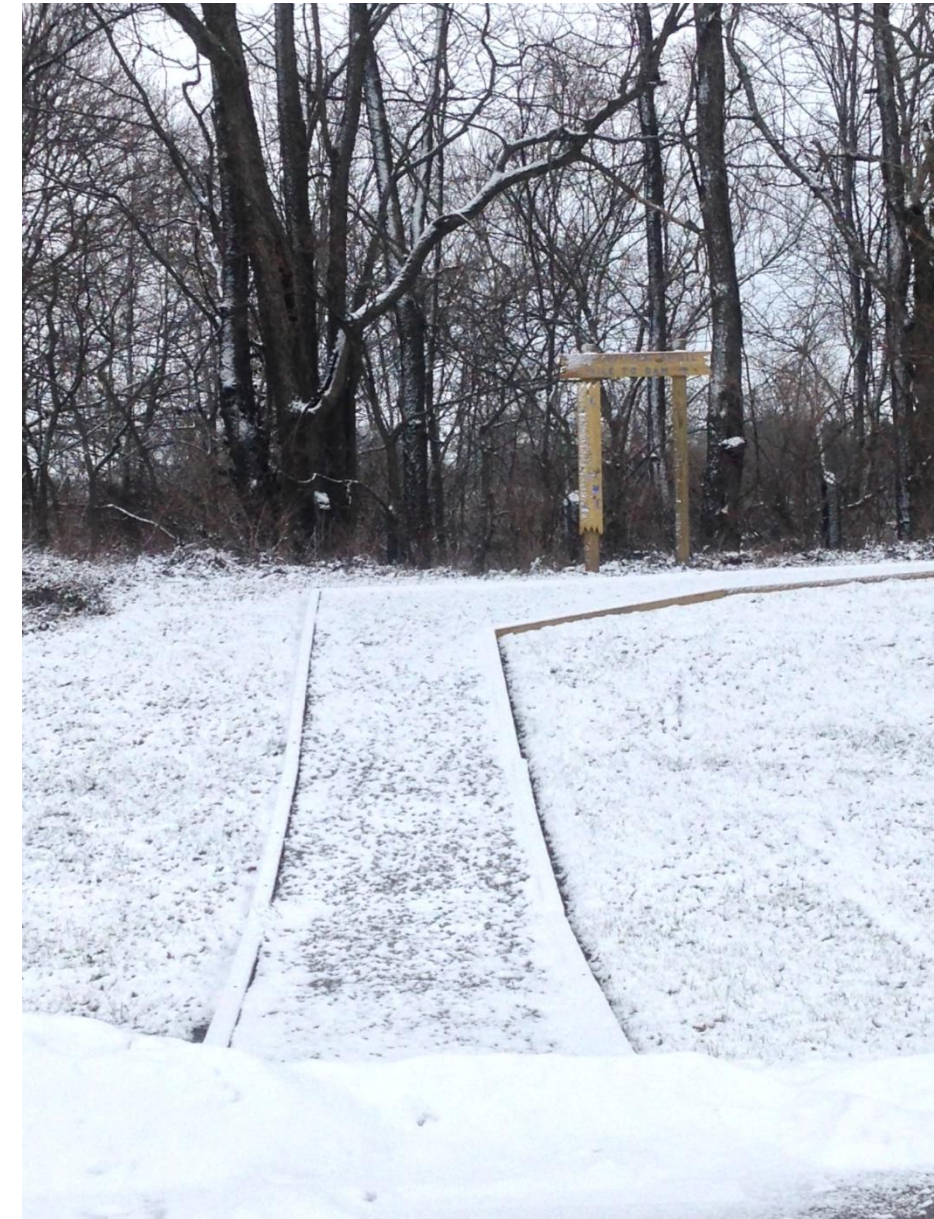
# Project Basics

- Projects are administered by DLG in conjunction with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
- RTP funds come from the Federal Highway Trust Fund and represent a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from non-highway recreational fuel use.
- Funding is available up to \$250,000
- Match 80/20
- 30% of the funds the state receives annually must be awarded to motorized trails
- Funds are paid on a reimbursement basis only



# Eligible Projects

- Maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails
- Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities that serve trail users
- Purchase and lease recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment
- Acquisition of easements and property for recreational trails
- Design and engineering (Capped at 15%)
- Accessibility upgrades



Pendleton County Nature  
Trail Project

# Ineligible Projects

- Sidewalks
- Roads
- Campsites
- Administrative Costs
- Playgrounds, picnic pavilions, sports fields
- Purchase of tools
- Design and/or Planning Only

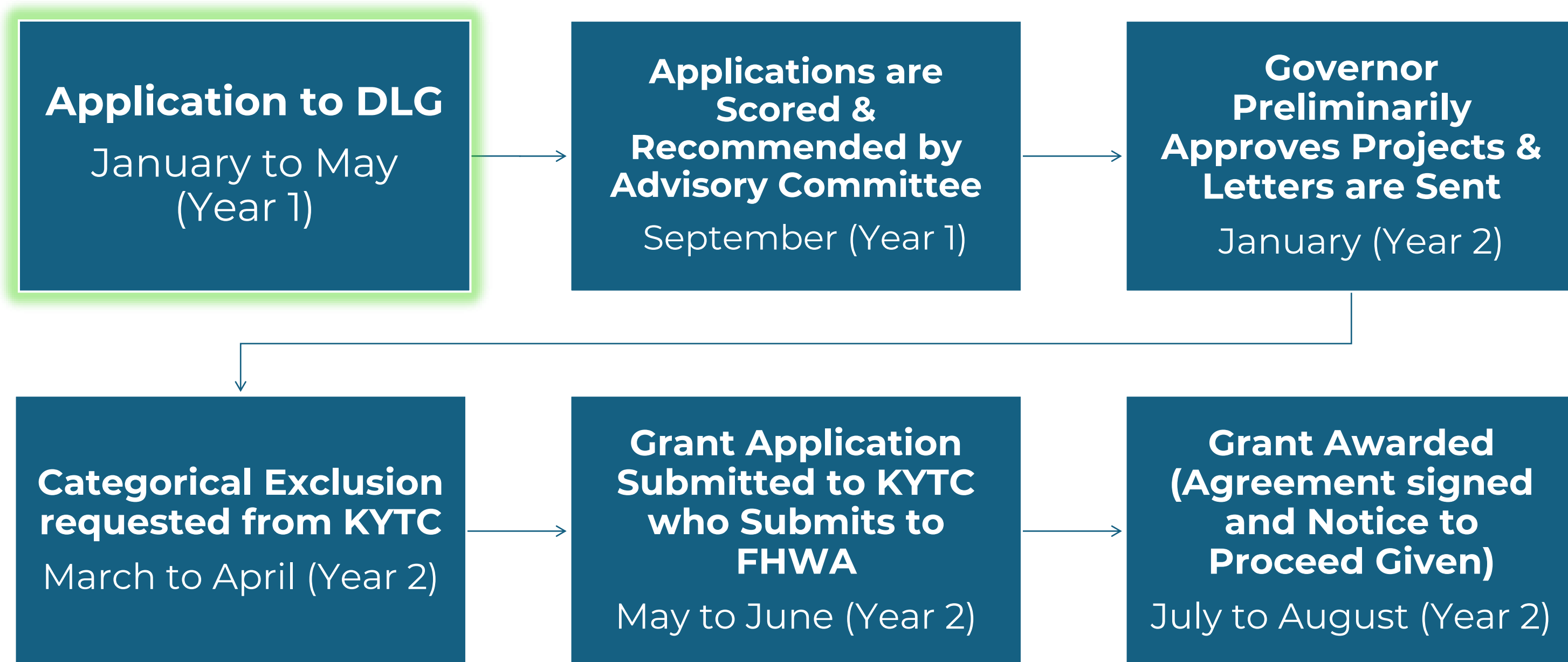


# Application Timeline





# Application Timeline



# Application Components

Application Form - includes project overview, applicant information, and justification, etc. as well as:

1. Budget: Include source of match
2. Confirmation that trail will remain available to the public in perpetuity and that Right of Way will be available
3. Environmental information, such as will trees be removed and are there caves nearby



# Application Attachments

## Department for Local Government Recreational Trails Program 2025 Application

### ATTACHMENTS

Please submit the application with the following attachments. Have each attachment clearly marked and in the order listed below.

- **ATTACHMENT A – COVER LETTER**

Provide a signed cover letter on official letterhead by the agency head or designee (Federal, State, or Local Agencies) supporting the submission of the proposed project.  
If the proposed project is located on public land, a signed statement supporting the submission of the proposed project from the public land manager is also required.

- **ATTACHMENT B – MAPS**

Boundary Map  
Location Map – Location Map provides a snapshot of the project's location. It is not the same as a boundary map. Location Maps include street names, nearby cities, landmarks, etc.

- **ATTACHMENT C – SITE PLAN**

- **ATTACHMENT D – DETAILED BUDGET**

Provide a detailed breakdown of how the applicant determined the total project cost. Include copies of quotes, invoices, written statements, appraisals, etc. as supplemental documentations. If your application consists of both motorized & non-motorized trail usages, please submit separate budgets for each.

- **ATTACHMENT E – PROOF OF PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**

Deed – If awarded, a deed restriction will be placed on the property.  
Lease – Attach a copy of the lease. In order to be eligible for the RTP, the lease must have a minimum of 25 years remaining.  
Easement – Provide a copy of the easement. Also, submit consent by the landowner via a written agreement to the placement of a restrictive easement for perpetual maintenance of the property.

- **ATTACHMENT F – PHOTOS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT LOCATION**

- **ATTACHMENT G – ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)** (A template has been provided.)

- **ATTACHMENT H – U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE REVIEW**

Applicant must follow the USFW IPaC's Endangered Species Act (ESA) Review process to evaluate the project's potential impacts on critical habitat, migratory birds or other natural resources. Click [here](#) for more information on the USFWS review process.

- **ATTACHMENT I – SHPO 106 REVIEW**

Applicant must submit the proposed project to the State Historic Preservation Offices for a Section 106 review. Click [here](#) for more information on the process and policies. Please note that a "preliminary site check" does not satisfy the SHPO requirement.

- **ATTACHMENT J – KENTUCKY STATE CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW**

Applicant must complete the Kentucky State Clearinghouse Review. Click [here](#) to submit your project for review. Please note, Clearinghouse comments remain valid for one year.

- **ATTACHMENT K – RESOLUTION** (A template has been provided.)

- **ATTACHMENT L – ASSURANCES**

12

## Department for Local Government Recreational Trails Program 2025 Application

If applicant already has the following assurances in place (i.e. employee handbook), submit a copy of the policy. If not, forms have been provided for each to meet the requirement.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act – Applicant must have "assurances" in place to assure nondiscrimination in all of its programs and activities.

Section 504 – Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in federally funded programs.

Drug-Free Workplace

SF-424D Construction Assurances – Not included in the application packet. Click [here](#) to access the form.

- **ATTACHMENT M – NO IMPACT LETTERS FROM LOCAL UTILITY COMPANIES**

- **ATTACHMENT O – PUBLIC MEETING & CONCURRENCES**

Include a copy of the public meeting's advertisements, sign-in sheet, and minutes. Also, attach all written comments and completed concurrences forms (included). Public meetings must be properly advertised (at least a week's notice and posted in largely viewed mediums) to ensure public participation.

- **ATTACHMENT P – MISC.**

If applicable to the proposed project, please submit the following:

Motorized Trails – If grant funds are to be used to accommodate motorized use on trails, submit a signed statement by the application verifying the trails have not been predominately used by non-motorized trails users prior to May 1, 1991.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) – If the applicant is incorporated in a MPO, the application must include a letter from the MPO approving the proposed trail. Click [here](#) for a map of MPO boundaries.

13

# Maps

1. Location Map: Shows the location of the map in the context of the city/county it is in
2. Site Plan: Shows the project elements that will be completed (i.e. map of the new trail, location of trailhead facilities, etc.)
3. Boundary Map: if trail is within a park, preserve, etc., this map will show the boundary of that area



# Perpetual Trail Easement Requirement

- If the land is publicly owned, grantees can file either a:
  - Perpetual Trail Easement, or
  - Deed Restriction
- If the land is not publicly owned, both easements must be filed:
  - Easement from Citizen to Grantee, and
  - Easement from Grantee to DLG
- Both guarantee the trail will be maintained and open to the public in perpetuity.

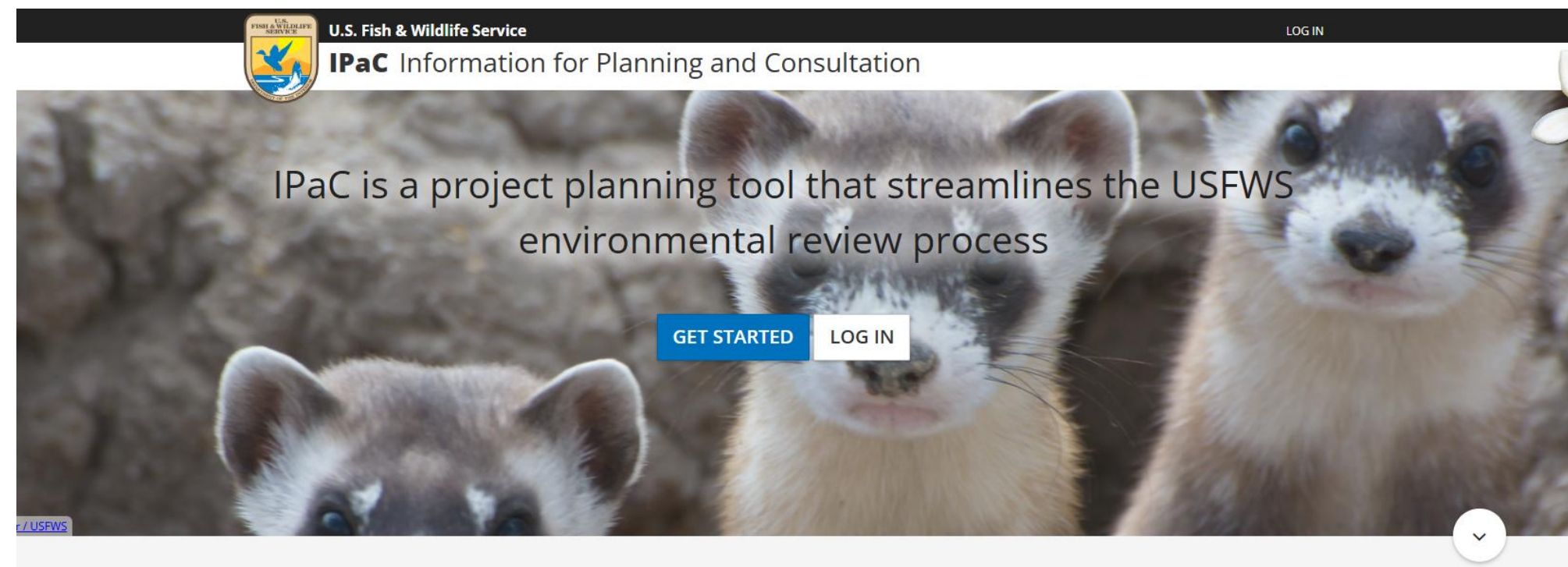


City of Glasgow Beaver Creek  
Park Track Widening



# Environmental Requirements

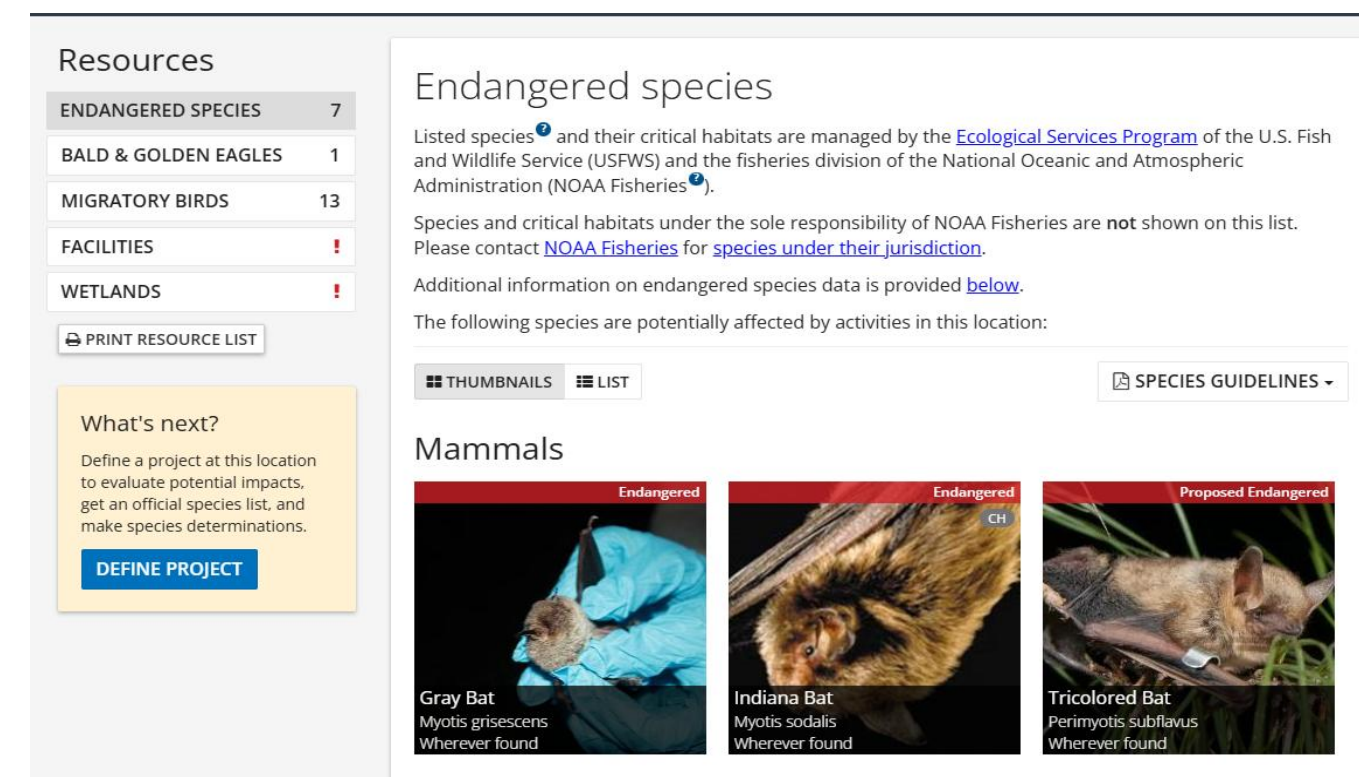
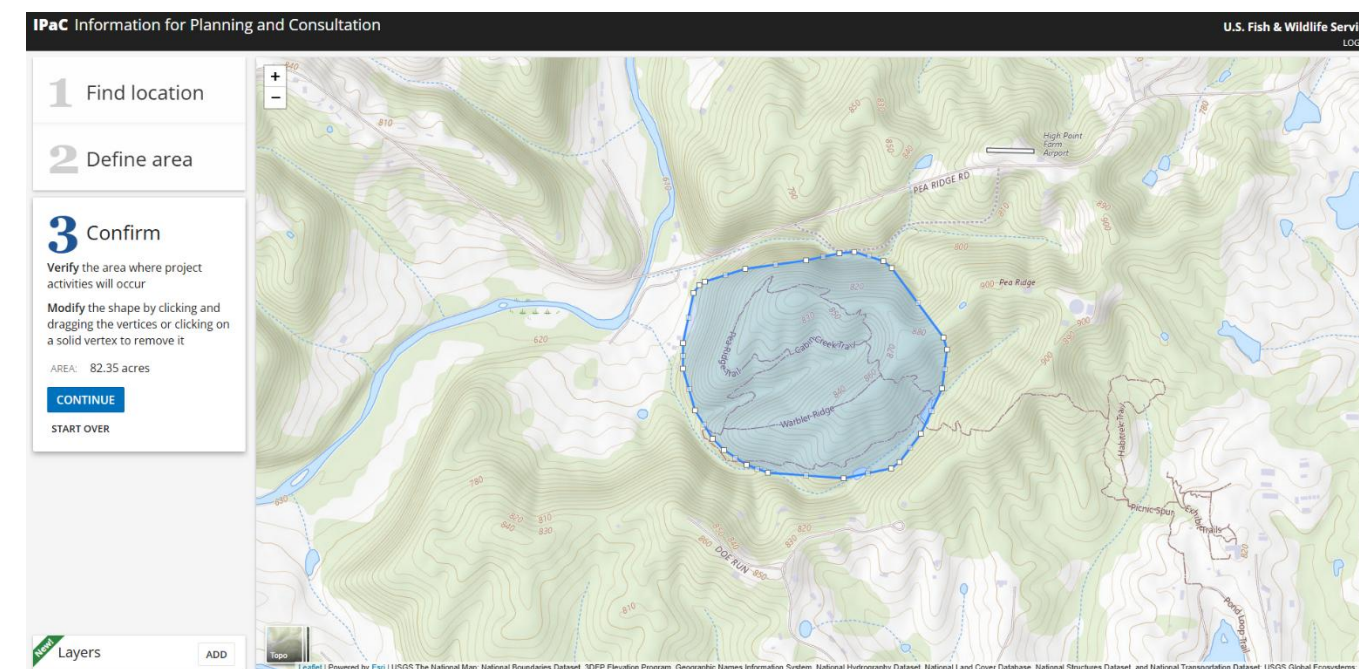
1. Fill in the **Preliminary Environmental Assessment** form included in the application packet. This can be completed by anyone with knowledge of the project.
2. **Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act:** a Federal agency must ensure that any action (i.e., project) it authorizes, funds, or carries out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a threatened or endangered species. For federal grants, this responsibility may fall to the applicant.



# IPaC Review Process

1. Create action area (i.e., project area, site, property, parcel) and enter project information.

2. Click “Define Project” on lefthand side of page



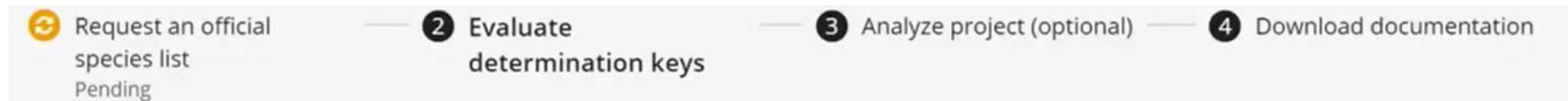


# IPaC Review Process

## 3. Request an official Species list

MAMMALS	
NAME	STATUS
Gray Bat <i>Myotis grisescens</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. This species only needs to be considered under the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The project area includes potential gray bat habitat.</li></ul> Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5329">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5329</a> General project design guidelines: <a href="https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/D4XT2Q5ZOEGRKM25472KKYG6A/documents/generated/6422.pdf">https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/D4XT2Q5ZOEGRKM25472KKYG6A/documents/generated/6422.pdf</a>	Endangered
Indiana Bat <i>Myotis sodalis</i> There is <b>final</b> critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. This species only needs to be considered under the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The project area includes 'potential' habitat. All activities in this location should consider possible effects to this species.</li></ul> Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5949">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5949</a> General project design guidelines: <a href="https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/D4XT2Q5ZOEGRKM25472KKYG6A/documents/generated/6422.pdf">https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/D4XT2Q5ZOEGRKM25472KKYG6A/documents/generated/6422.pdf</a>	Endangered
Northern Long-eared Bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5045">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5045</a> General project design guidelines: <a href="https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/D4XT2Q5ZOEGRKM25472KKYG6A/documents/generated/6422.pdf">https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/D4XT2Q5ZOEGRKM25472KKYG6A/documents/generated/6422.pdf</a>	Endangered
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. This species only needs to be considered under the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>This species only needs to be considered if the project includes wind turbine operations.</li></ul> Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515</a>	Proposed Endangered
CLAMS	
NAME	STATUS
Longsolid <i>Fusconaia subrotunda</i> There is <b>final</b> critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5889">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5889</a>	Threatened
Salamander Mussel <i>Simpsonaias ambigua</i> There is <b>proposed</b> critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5208">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5208</a>	Proposed Endangered
Snuffbox Mussel <i>Epioblasma triquetra</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4135">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4135</a>	Endangered

## 4. Evaluate Determination Keys (Dkeys)



### Step 2: Evaluate determination keys

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has performed up-front analyses for certain project types, agencies, and species. The analyses have been compiled into *determination keys*, a simple interview process to help you arrive at a recommended determination for some species in your project area.

There are 2 determination keys that may apply to your project. Each determination key starts with a qualification interview to see if the key is appropriate for your project.

- Northern Long-Eared Bat (NLEB) Consultation and 4(d) Rule Consistency

Release date: April 2, 2021

This key expedites the optional streamlined consultation framework for the NLEB for Federal agencies & provides users who are not with or representing Federal agencies a mechanism to ensure their actions are consistent with the NLEB 4(d) rule.

EVALUATE

SKIP / DOES NOT APPLY



# IPaC Review Process

If you are able to make “no effect” or “not likely to adversely affect” determinations for all species through the Dkeys, then you don’t need to consult further with the Service. The Dkeys will generate a consistency letter documenting your determination for each species.

Based on your answers and the assistance of the Service’s Kentucky DKey, you made the following effect determination(s) for the proposed Action:

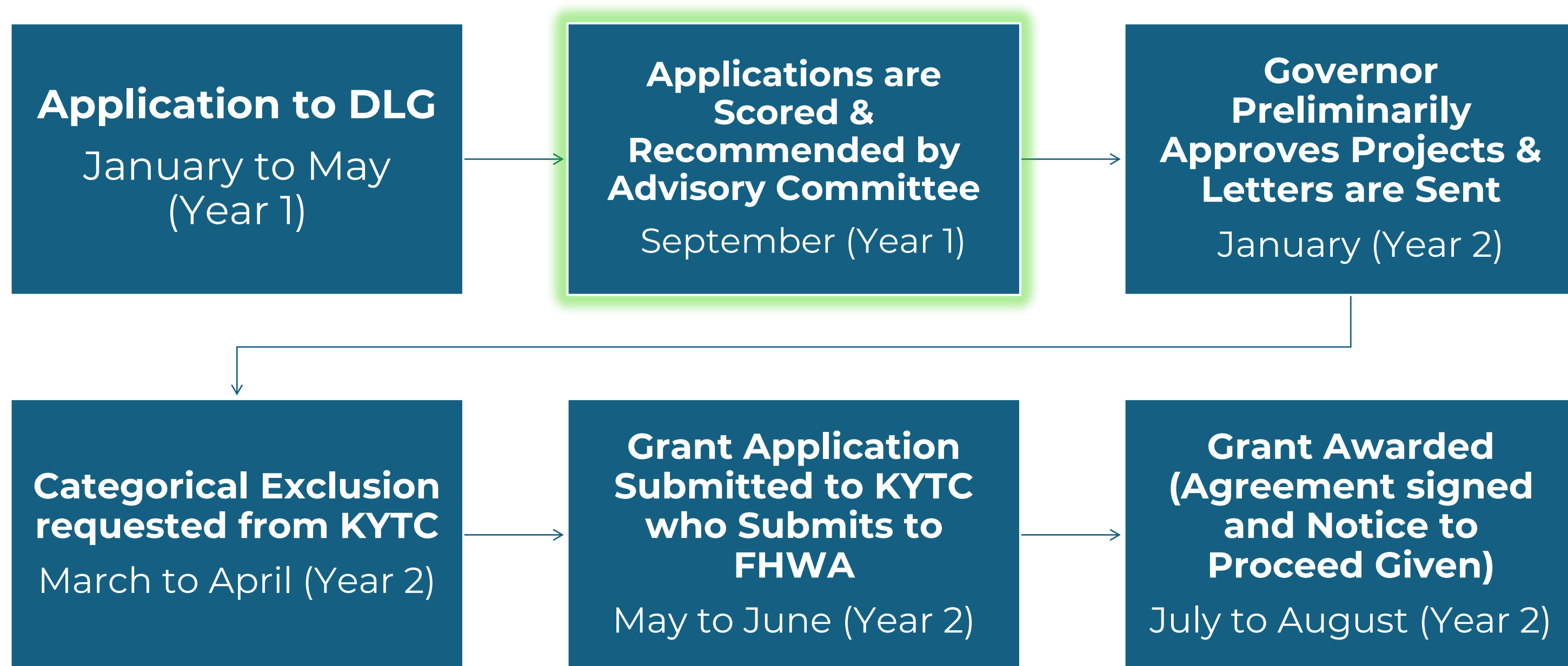
Species	Listing Status	Determination
Gray Bat ( <i>Myotis grisescens</i> )	Endangered	NLAA
Longsolid ( <i>Fusconia subrotunda</i> )	Threatened	NLAA
Snuffbox Mussel ( <i>Epioblasma triquetra</i> )	Endangered	NLAA

If you reach a “may affect” determination for one or more species in a Dkey, then further consultation with our office is required. The Dkeys will provide information on how to conduct this next step of review.

# Other Attachments with Longer Lead Times

- **State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) 106 Review**
  - Must submit project to their website for review, and provide us with the letter they return, not your application for review
- **Kentucky State Clearinghouse Review**
  - Requires 30 days for review
- **Resolution** stating intent to apply and confirming that the city/county will hold the required matching funds
- **No Impact Letters from Utilities**
  - Contact District Utilities Supervisor for a list of all known utilities in the project area
  - Request a letter stating that there will be no impact on the utilities due to the project
- **Public Meeting**
  - Requires advertisement of the meeting for at least one week posted in largely viewed mediums

# Application Timeline

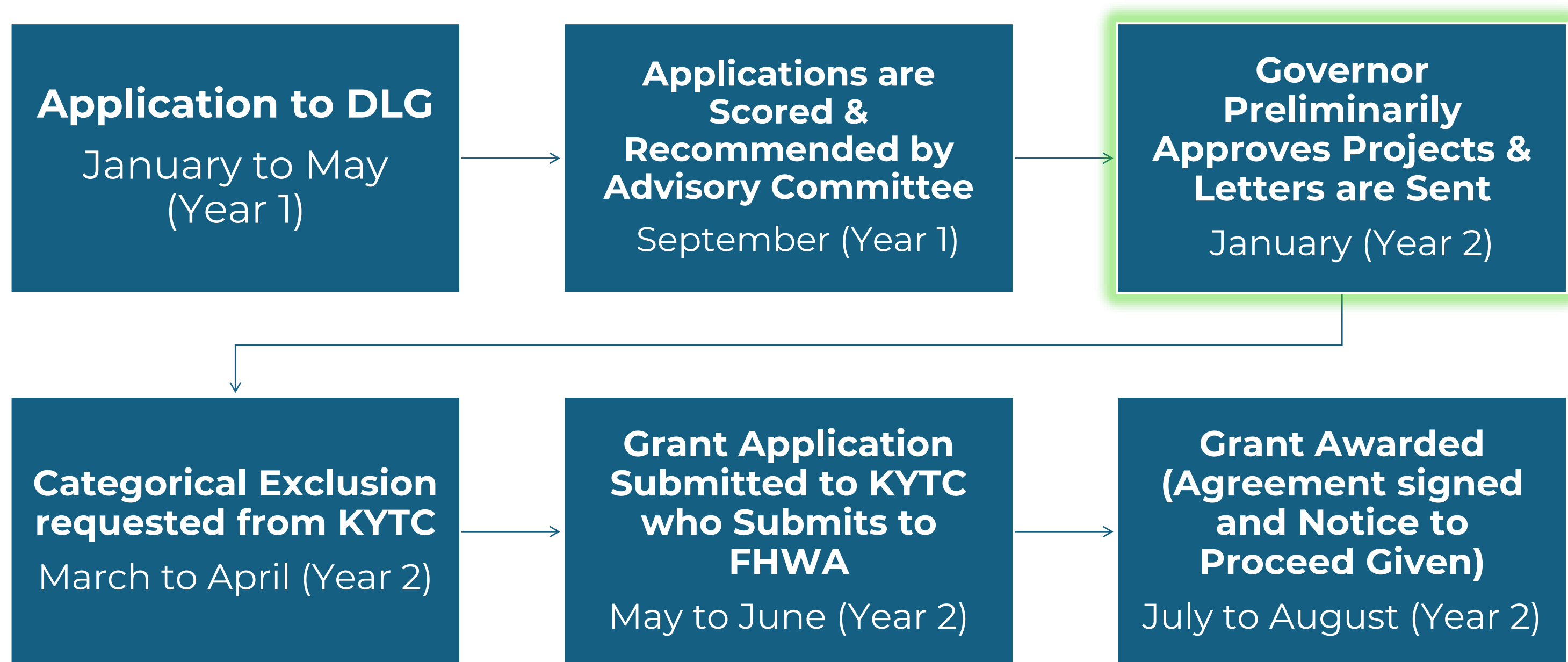




# RTP Scoring

1. The length of recreational trail developed and/or improved by the proposed project. 4 – 15 pts
2. The number of recreational trail opportunities enhanced by the proposed project. 4 – 15 pts
3. Project provides and/or improves outdoor recreation by persons with disabilities, older citizens, economically disadvantaged, and other special population groups. 0 – 10 pts
4. Project is identified or referenced as a specific goal of a local or regional plan. 0 or 10 pts
5. Proposed trail ties into other trails, greenways or scenic corridors, and/or links natural, cultural, historic, and/or recreation areas. 0 – 15 pts
6. Is the project sponsor a Trail Town? 0 – 10 pts.
7. Project includes signs, maps, brochures, etc. educating trail users of the proper uses and conduct while on the trail; And gives users the opportunity to learn about any natural and/or cultural resources along the trail. 0 – 10 pts
8. Applicant currently has an open RTP project. 0 or 10 pts

# Application Timeline



# What does preliminary approval mean?

Answer: The governor has selected your project for funding, but all components of the application to the Federal Highway Administration still must be completed and submitted.

**Can I start my project when I get my preliminary approval letter?**

Answer: No.



# Application Timeline



# Application Timeline



# Environmental Review & LPA PD Checklist

KENTUCKY TRANSPORTATION CABINET Department of Highways DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION		TC 58-48 Rev. 10/2019 Page 1 of 1
<b>1. PROJECT SUMMARY</b>		
Item #: RTP Berea Trailhead Restrooms	Project Sponsor:	
Route(s): Berea City Park	County: Madison	
Project Description: Development of trailside and trailhead facilities. Demolishing the existing concessions stand and building a new restroom facility.		
<b>2. ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION</b>		
Functional Area	Determination	Comments/Commitments/Mitigation
Public and Resource Agency Controversy	No	
Total acreage of fee simple ROW	0	
Number of Total Relocations	0	
Environmental Justice Impacts	No	
Section 106: Architectural Historic	No Effect	
Section 106: Archaeological Resources	No Effect	
Section 4(f)	No AD Properties	
Section 6(f)	No AD Properties	
Noise	Not a Type I	
Air Quality Impacts	No	
Hazardous Materials Impacts	No	
Section 7: T&E Species	Not likely to Adversely Affect	No tree removal
Anticipated Feet of Stream Impacts	0	
Anticipated Acreage of Wetland Impacts	0	
Anticipated Permits	No	
Other:		
Other:		
Based on the criteria listed above, in review of the most recent Categorical Exclusion Agreement between KYTC and FHWA, the subject project is determined to be considered a Categorical Exclusion, Level CEMP.		
<b>3. ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT APPROVAL</b>		
Based on the information obtained during the environmental review process and included as attachments to this form, the project is determined to be a Categorical Exclusion under 23 CFR part 771 pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and complies with all other applicable environmental laws, regulations, and Executive Orders. The project action does not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the natural and human environment.		
District Environmental Coordinator	Date	Project Manager
	5/6/25	Daniel R. Peake 5/12/2025
Environmental Project Manager	Date	Director of Environmental Analysis
Recommended by FHWA	Date	Federal Highway Administration

CC: John Ballantyne, Ron Rigney, Oatman, Susan B. Niemann, Elizabeth A. Curry, Selena A. Carter, Lindsay M. Jones, Travis P. Mike Jones

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) / Kentucky Department for Local Government (DLG) / Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)  
Local Public Agency Project Development Checklist (LPA-PDC) for **Recreational Trail Projects (RTP)**  
(Required for RTP Infrastructure Projects Only)  
Developed March 30, 2018

Project Information	
KYTC Item No.:	
Federal Project No.:	
Local Public Agency:	Person in Responsible Charge:
DLG Project Manager: Pamela Jordan, Federal Program Specialist	
County:	
Is any portion of the project in the right-of-way of a highway?	Route(s), if Applicable:
Project Description:	
DLG/LPA Project Agreement No.:	
Planned Advertisement for Bids Date:	
Planned Letting Date:	

**Introduction**

The Local Public Agency Project Development Checklist LPA-PDC **must be completed by the LPA** (assistance from project consultants is acceptable), signed by an authorized agent of the LPA (should be the 'person in responsible charge' of the project), and submitted to DLG with the complete Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&E) package for review and concurrence prior to advertisement for construction bids. The completed LPA-PDC will indicate the design and contract documents for this project have been prepared in accordance with the current version of KYTC LPA Guide and the DLG/LPA Project Agreement (which requires compliance with all applicable state and federal laws, and regulations). Concurrence with the PS&E package and LPA-PDC by DLG and authorization of Federal funds is required prior to advertisement for construction bids. **The LPA must not advertise for construction before written notice to proceed from DLG.**

Answer **all** questions by checking 'Yes' or 'No' **and** provide support information. If additional documentation or comments are needed to adequately address a question, please add notes in the 'Comments' column and provide attachments as necessary.

Please review the current version of the KYTC/FHWA Stewardship Plan (<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/federalaid/stewardship/agreements/ky.pdf>) for authority, role, and responsibility delegations of program and project activities in implementing the Federal-aid Highway Program.

The LPA-PDC is **not** an all-inclusive list as it does **not** address all Federal-aid requirements and regulations. However, the LPA-PDC does account for several major Federal-aid requirements and provides references to source documents for further review.



# Application Timeline





# Now that your project is awarded...

- You must follow all federal and state procurement guidelines
- If there are any changes or delays to your project, reach out to DLG as soon as you can
- Make sure you have your deed restriction or perpetual easement completed
- Submit reimbursement requests once you've used at least 25% of the grant funds
  - Note that reimbursement will only be given for the percentage of costs equivalent to the percentage of federal match you applied for (i.e. 80% of funds will be reimbursed if you submitted with an 80/20 match).



City of Dayton Sargaent Park Trail



# Questions?

Contact:

Pamela Jordan

[Pamela.Jordan@ky.gov](mailto:Pamela.Jordan@ky.gov)

502-892-3158





# Clay Cottongim

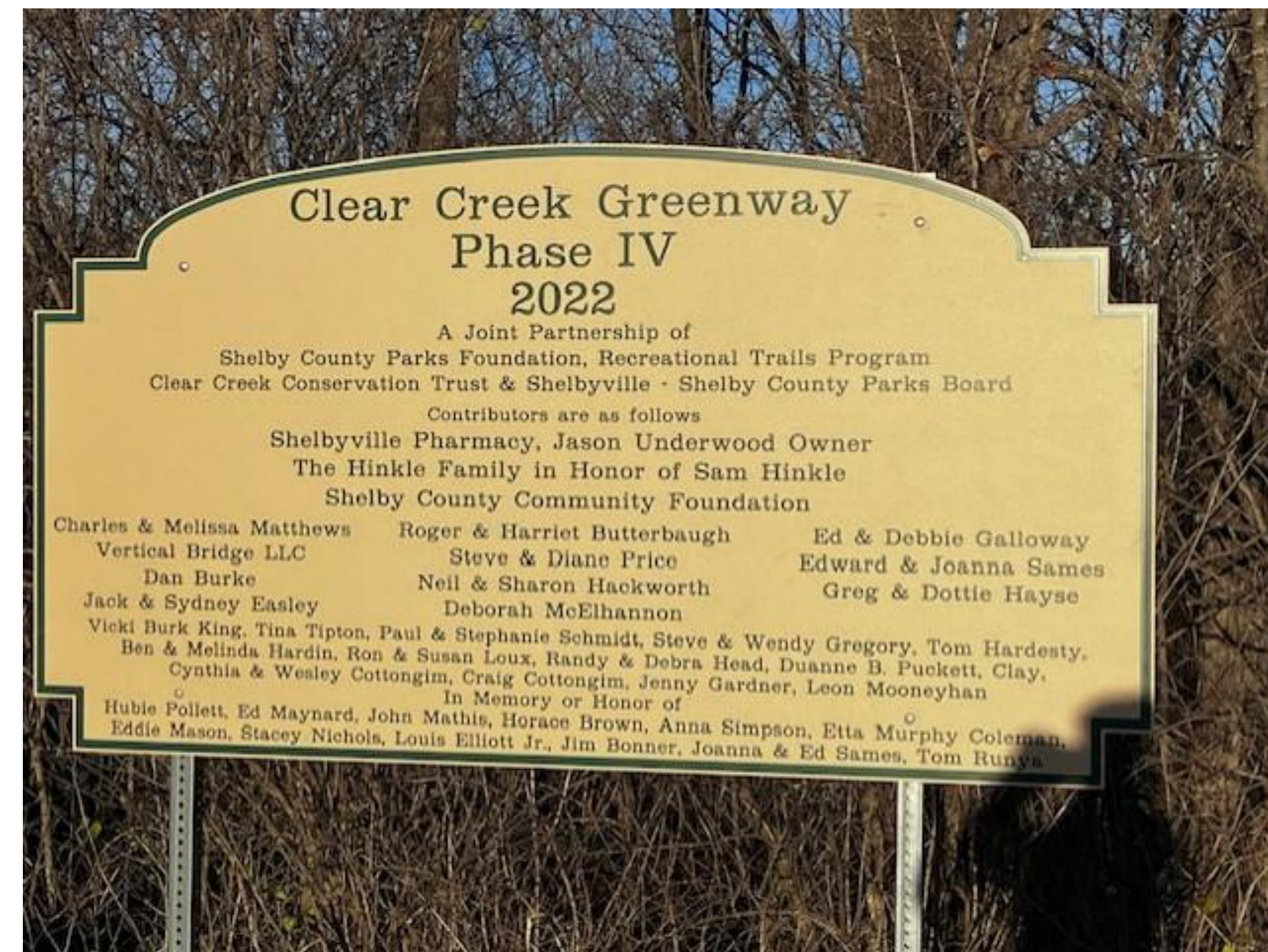


THE SHELBY COUNTY  
PARKS FOUNDATION

TEAM  
KENTUCKY®

My *New*  
Kentucky  
Home





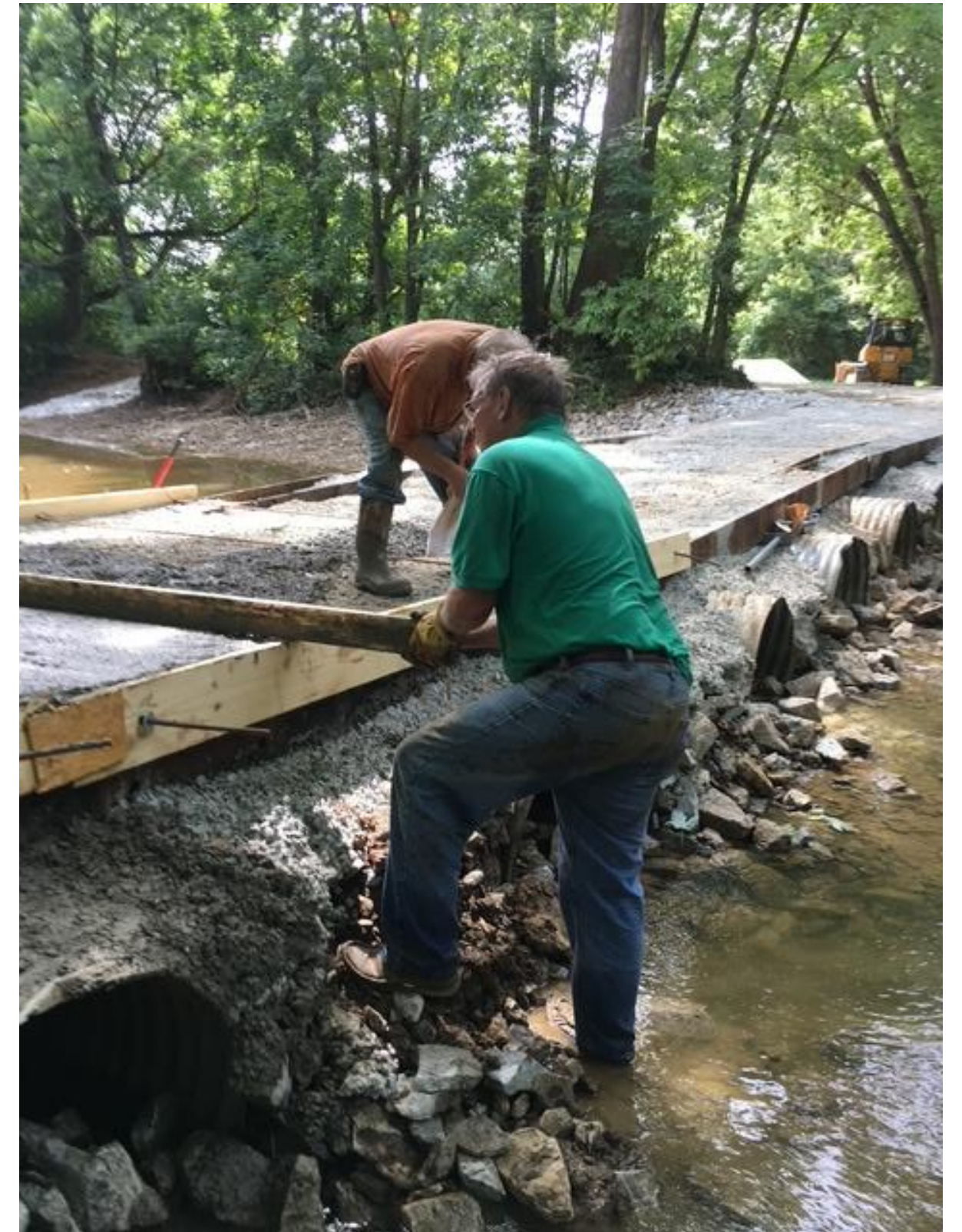












TEAM  
KENTUCKY®

My *New*  
Kentucky  
Home





TEAM  KENTUCKY®

My *New*  
Kentucky  
Home





TEAM  KENTUCKY®

My *New*  
Kentucky  
Home





# Questions?